Fundamentals: Issues and Texts

About Fundamentals

The Fundamentals program enables students to concentrate on fundamental questions by reading classic texts that articulate and speak to these questions. It seeks to foster precise and thoughtful pursuit of basic questions by means of (1) rigorous training in the interpretation of important texts, supported by (2) extensive training in at least one foreign language, and by (3) the acquisition of the knowledge, approaches, and skills of conventional disciplines: historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical.

Rationale

A richly informed question or concern formulated by each student guides the reading of texts. Classic texts are also informed by such questions; for example, Socrates asks: What is virtue? What is the good? What is justice? Aristotle and Cicero explore the relation of civic friendship to society. Freud asks: What is happiness? Can humans be happy? Milton investigates how poetic vocation may be related to political responsibility. Students who are engaged by these questions and others like them, and who find them both basic and urgent, may wish to continue to explore them more thoroughly and deeply within the structure of the program which provides the wherewithal to address them on a high level.

That wherewithal is to be found in the fundamental or classic texts (historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical) in which the great writers articulate and examine questions in different and competing ways. These books illuminate the persisting questions and speak to contemporary concerns because they are both the originators and exciting critics of our current opinions. These texts serve as colleagues who challenge us to think that something else might actually be the case than what we already think. The most important questions may, at bottom, be the most contested, and those most susceptible to, and most requiring, sustained, probing engagement.

This program emphasizes the firsthand experience and knowledge of major texts, read and reread and reread again. Because they are difficult and complex, only a small number of such works can be studied. Yet the program proposes that intensively studying a profound work and incorporating it into one's thought and imagination prepares one for reading any important book or reflecting on any important issue. Read rapidly, such books are merely assimilated into preexisting experience and opinions; read intensively, they can transform and deepen experience and thought.

Studying fundamental texts is, by itself, not enough. Even to understand the texts themselves, supporting studies and training are necessary: a solid foundation in at least one foreign language and in disciplines and subject matters pertinent to the main questions of students are essential parts of the major. Students benefit from knowledge of the historical contexts out of which certain problems emerged or in which authors wrote; knowledge of specific subject matters and methods; knowledge of the language in which a text was originally written, as well as an understanding of the shape a given language imparts to a given author; fundamental skills of analysis, gathering evidence, reasoning, and criticism; different approaches and perspectives of conventional disciplines. All these are integral parts of the educational task.

Individual Program Design

Genuine questions cannot be assigned to a student; they must arise from within. For this reason, a set curriculum is not imposed upon students. Each student's course of study must answer to his or her interests and concerns, and must begin from a distinctive concern. One student may be exercised about questions of science and religion; another about freedom and determinism; another about friendship and conversation; another by prudence, romance, and marriage; a fifth about distributive justice. Through close work with a suitably chosen faculty adviser, a student determines texts, text and author courses, and supporting courses as appropriate to address the student's Fundamentals question. Beginning with a student's questions and interests does not, however, imply an absence of standards or rigor; this program is most demanding.

Activities of Graduates

The Fundamentals program serves the purposes of liberal education, regarded as an end in itself, and offers no specific pre-professional training; yet Fundamentals graduates have successfully prepared for careers in the professions and in scholarship. Some are now pursuing work in law, medicine, journalism, ministry, government service, business, veterinary medicine, and secondary school teaching. Others have gone on to graduate schools in numerous fields, including classics, English, comparative literature, Slavic, history, philosophy, social thought, theology, religious studies, clinical psychology, political science, development economics, mathematics, film studies, and education.

Faculty

The faculty of the Fundamentals program comprises humanists and social scientists, representing interests and competencies in both the East and the West and scholarship in matters ancient and modern. This diversity and pluralism exists within a common agreement about the primacy of fundamental questions and the centrality of important books and reading them well. The intention is for the students to see and work with a variety of scholars presenting their approaches to and understanding of books that they love, that they know well, and that are central to their ongoing concerns.

Application to the Program

Students should apply in Spring Quarter of their first year to enter the program in their second year; the goals and requirements of the program are best met if students spend three years in the major. Students are interviewed and counseled
in order to discover whether or not their interests and intellectual commitments would be best served by this program. Admissions are decided on the basis of the application statement, interviews, and previous academic performance.

Program Requirements

The Fundamentals program comprises (a) 13 courses, (b) the Junior Paper, and (c) the Senior Exam, for a total of 1500 units.

A. Course Work

**Gateway Course (1 course) (Autumn Quarter or Winter Quarter):** This course is specifically designed for the incoming cohort of Fundamentals students and is a mandatory part of the program. It is devoted to the close reading of one or two texts or the works of a single author, chosen because they raise challenging questions and present important and competing answers. Through this course, students will study a variety of ways in which a text can respond to their concerns and can compel consideration of its own questions.

1. **Text/Author Courses (7 courses).** The seven Text/Author courses are devoted to the study of one or two particular texts or the work of a particular author. Text/Author courses are generally cross-listed as FNDL courses in Class Search (http://registrar.uchicago.edu/classes); if a relevant course is not cross-listed, the student should contact the coordinator to see if it can be counted towards the major. In years when the Gateway Course is offered in Autumn Quarter, entering students are required to take at least one Text/Author course in Winter Quarter; in years when the Gateway Course is offered in Winter Quarter, entering students are expected to take at least one Text/Author course in Autumn Quarter.

   The Text/Author Courses and the Gateway Course—eight courses total—give each student the opportunity to develop a list of six texts that will become the basis of his or her Senior Exam (see below). This list should contain works in the area of the student’s primary interest that examine that interest from diverse perspectives. One of the six must be studied in an original language other than English, the same language in which the student establishes competency (any exceptions must be approved by the chair).

2. **Supporting Courses (4 courses).** These courses are complement that the student's program, providing historical context, theoretical and methodological training, or other complements. They do not have to be listed as FNDL to satisfy this requirement, but they must be explicitly identified as supporting courses in consultation with the student's adviser.

3. **Foreign Language (1 course).** Students in the program are expected to achieve a level of proficiency in a foreign language sufficient to enable them to study in the original language (other than English) one of the texts on their examination list. Such training ordinarily requires two years of formal language instruction or its equivalent. The third quarter of the second year of the language is counted toward the major. In addition, students are required to take a course where they study a text in that language; the instructor of the course may be asked to provide an evaluation of the student's linguistic proficiency on the basis of this work. Students and instructors should work closely together in determining how the student will demonstrate competency in the language. As the achievement of proficiency may differ vis-à-vis length of study from language to language, it may prove harder for students of some languages to read a text in its entirety even after completing two years of instruction. Any students who believe that their language is so difficult that doing so is unrealistic may petition to have the requirement met by reading a clearly marked-out portion of the text—perhaps a chapter or two, or series of smaller sections. To be considered, the petition must set out a clear plan and must be signed by the instructor of the text in question.

B. The Junior Paper

In the Winter or Spring Quarter of their junior year, students write an extended essay called the Junior Paper. This project provides the opportunity for students to originate and formulate a serious inquiry into an important issue arising out of their work and to pursue the inquiry extensively and in depth in a paper of about twenty to twenty-five pages (roughly 8,000 to 10,000 words). At every stage in the preparation of the paper, students work closely with their Fundamentals faculty adviser. Students register in the independent study course FNDL 29901 in the quarter in which they write the paper; they are also expected to participate in the Junior Paper Colloquium that takes place in the Winter Quarter. Acceptance of a successful Junior Paper is a prerequisite for admission to the senior year of the program.

C. The Senior Exam

At the end of Week Six in the Spring Quarter of their senior year, students are examined on six texts they have studied in the context of their Text/Author courses and approved independent study courses. Preparation for this examination allows students to review and integrate their full course of study. During a three-day period, students write two substantial essays on questions designed for them by the associated faculty. The examination has a pedagogical intention, more than a qualifying one; its purpose is to allow students to demonstrate how they have related and integrated their questions, texts, and disciplinary studies. To take the exam, students register in FNDL 29902 in the Spring Quarter (or, with the consent of the chair, in the Autumn or Winter Quarters if there are scheduling issues).

Summary of Requirements

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Credits</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Gateway Course</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seven Text/Author Courses</td>
<td>700</td>
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### Fundamentals: Issues and Texts

Four Supporting Courses  400
Third quarter of second-year foreign language *  100
FNDL 29901 Independent Study: Junior Paper  100
FNDL 29902 Independent Study: Senior Examination  100
Total Units  1500

* or credit for the equivalent, determined by petition

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**Grading, Advising, and Honors**

**Grading.** The Junior Paper and Senior Examination (FNDL 29901 and FNDL 29902) are graded Pass/Fail; all other courses within the major must be taken for quality grades. Independent study courses must include a term paper, and students should be prepared to request statements of reference or evaluation from faculty with whom they have worked in this capacity.

**Advising.** Each student has a faculty adviser who is assigned to the student on the basis of their mutual interests and areas of expertise. The adviser closely monitors the student’s choice of texts, courses, and language studies, allowing for the gradual development of a fitting and coherent program. The faculty adviser may also oversee the student’s Junior Paper and is responsible for approving the final list of texts for the Senior Exam. In addition, the program coordinator is available for advice and consultation on all aspects of the program.

**Honors.** Honors are awarded by the Fundamentals faculty to students who have performed with distinction in the program. An overall GPA of 3.5 is necessary to be considered for honors, and special attention is paid to both the Junior Paper and the Senior Exam.

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### Academic Year 2019–20 Courses

**Gateway Course (required for all incoming Fundamentals majors)**

**FNDL 20200. Dostoevsky’s Brothers Karamazov. 100 Units.**

We will read and interpret The Brothers Karamazov by Dostoevsky. Among major themes are the relation to God and religion to the larger society and state; the problem of evil; and the nature of sin and how it enters into religious beliefs; human "freedom," and what the word might have meant to Dostoevsky; and love.

Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Required of new Fundamentals majors; open to others with consent of instructor.
Note(s): Fundamentals majors get first priority
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 28206, REES 20200

**Independent Study (for registering for the Junior Paper and Senior Examination)**

**FNDL 29901. Independent Study: Junior Paper. 100 Units.**

Students who are on campus will be required to attend a series of colloquium meetings in Winter Quarter, but should enroll in the quarter that they will write the Junior Paper. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for P/F grading.

Terms Offered: Autumn, Winter, Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open only to Fundamentals students with consent of faculty supervisor and program chair.

**FNDL 29902. Independent Study: Senior Examination. 100 Units.**

Students should expect to register for this independent study in the Spring of their final year, the quarter in which they will take their Senior Exam. Exceptions to this can only be made with the consent of the program chair. Students are required to submit the College Reading and Research Course Form. Must be taken for P/F grading.

Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open only to Fundamentals students with consent of faculty supervisor and program chair.

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**Autumn Quarter**

**FNDL 20210. Kant’s Ethics. 100 Units.**

In this course we will read, write, and think about Kant’s ethics. After giving careful attention to the arguments in the Second Critique, portions of the Third Critique, the Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals, the Metaphysics of Morals, and several other primary texts, we will conclude by working through some contemporary neo-Kantian moral philosophy, paying close attention to work by Christine Korsgaard, David Velleman, Stephen Engstrom, and others. (A) (I)

Instructor(s): C. Vogler
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 20210, PHIL 30210
FNDL 21404. Shakespeare II: Tragedies and Romances. 100 Units.
This course explores mainly major plays representing the genres of tragedy and romance; most (but not all) date from the latter half of Shakespeare's career. After having examined how Shakespeare develops and deepens the conventions of tragedy in Hamlet, Othello, Macbeth, King Lear, and Antony and Cleopatra, we will turn our attention to how he complicates and even subverts these conventions in The Winter's Tale and The Tempest. Throughout, we will treat the plays as literary texts, performance prompts, and historical documents. Section attendance is required. This course is part of the College Course Cluster, The Renaissance. (Pre-1650, Drama)
Instructor(s): Timothy Harrison Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 28406, ENGL 16600

FNDL 21414. The Art of Leonardo da Vinci. 100 Units.
The central focus of this course will be on the small, damaged and disputed body of paintings that Leonardo has left to us, the wealth of his drawings that help us make sense of that problematic heritage and provide the most direct route into his creative thinking, and the hundreds of pages of text in the form of notes in mirror-image handwriting that comment on art and so many other subjects. Our structure will be roughly chronological, including his late fifteenth-century Florentine artistic and social context; his two long periods in Milan as a court artist; his triumphant return to Florence and rivalry with the young Michelangelo; his brief and unsatisfying stay in papal Rome; and his final years in France. Among the themes that will be critically examined are: Leonardo's role in the creation of what is still grandiosely called the High Renaissance; the value and problematic aspects of thinking of him as the quintessential artist-scientist; the significance of the fact that he has been a figure of such obsessive art-historical and broader cultural significance for over 500 years; and the ways in which recent scientific examination and digital imaging have shed surprising amounts of new light on his art. Through the concentrated study of the works of Leonardo and his artistic context, the course will take seriously the attempt to introduce students with little or no background in art history to some of the major avenues for analysis and interpretation in this field.
Instructor(s): C. Cohen Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Students must attend first class to confirm enrollment. This course meets the general education requirement in the arts.
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 17121

FNDL 21603. Machiavelli and Machiavellism. 100 Units.
This course is a comprehensive introduction to Machiavelli's The Prince in light of his vast and varied literary corpus and European reception. The course includes discussion of Machiavelli as playwright ("The Mandrake"), fiction writer ("Belfagor," "The Golden Ass"), and historian ("Discourses," "Florentine Histories"). We will also closely investigate the emergence of myths surrounding Machiavelli (Machiavellism and anti-Machiavellism) in Italy (Guicciardini, Botero, Boccalini), France (Bodin and Gentillet), Spain (Ribadeneyra), and Northern Europe (Hobbes, Grotius, Spinoza) during the Counter Reformation and beyond.
Instructor(s): R. Rubini Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 35801, ITAL 33001, CMLT 25801, ITAL 23000

FNDL 22001. Foucault and The History of Sexuality. 100 Units.
This course centers on a close reading of the first volume of Michel Foucault's "The History of Sexuality", with some attention to his writings on the history of ancient conceptualizations of sex. How should a history of sexuality take into account scientific theories, social relations of power, and different experiences of the self? We discuss the contrasting descriptions and conceptions of sexual behavior before and after the emergence of a science of sexuality. Other writers influenced by and critical of Foucault are also discussed.
Instructor(s): A. Davidson Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): One prior philosophy course is strongly recommended.
Equivalent Course(s): Rlst 24800, FREN 24801, GNSE 23100, CMLT 25001, KNOW 27002, HIPS 24300, PHIL 24800

FNDL 22901. Dracula: History and Legend. 100 Units.
Since the publication of Bram Stoker's novel "Dracula" in 1897, his story of a vampire from Transylvania has often been linked to the history of Vlad III Dracula, also known as Vlad the Impaler or Vlad Tepes (died 1476 or 1477). Vlad earned a reputation as a bloodthirsty and cruel warrior (even during his own lifetime) as he fought to rule along the dangerous political and military frontier between the Hungarians and the Ottoman Turks. His savage reputation is the reason why he has been identified as the inspiration for the cold-blooded vampire count, but there is much more to the stories of both the historical and the fictional Dracula. In this course, we will examine the life and career of Vlad III Dracula, setting him in the context of the world of fifteenth-century Christian-Muslim interactions in Eastern Europe, before turning to the later Dracula legend as depicted in Stoker's novel and subsequent films. Throughout the course, we will examine the ways in which Transylvania and neighboring regions have straddled the divide between East and West, Christian Europe and mysterious/violent "other" in both history and popular culture. Open to all undergraduates.
Instructor(s): J. Lyon Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): History Gateways are introductory courses meant to appeal to first- through third-year students who may not have done previous course work on the topic of the course; topics cover the globe and span the ages.
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 11901
FNDL 23315. Marx: Themes and Variations. 100 Units.
We will begin with an intensive survey of major themes in the work of Marx and Engels, with attention to their antecedents in philosophy and political economics and their course of development from the early to the late work. We will then revisit these themes through some of their most prominent variations in contemporary political theory, sounding them out through the Frankfurt School, Black studies, structuralist and post-structuralist thought, analytic philosophy and feminist critique.
Instructor(s): Dawn Herrera Helphand Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): MAPS 33313

FNDL 23915. Plato's Republic. 100 Units.
This course is devoted to reading and discussion of Plato's Republic and some secondary work with attention to justice in the city and the soul, war and warriors, psychology, education, theology, poetry, gender, eros, and cities in speech and actually existing cities. (A)
Instructor(s): N. Tarcov
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor required.
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23915, CLAS 33915, PLSC 33915, PLSC 23915

FNDL 24001. James Joyce: Ulysses. 100 Units.
This course takes students through Joyce's novel and exposes them to various recent critical approaches, with some excursions also into materials contemporary to Ulysses that can be placed in dialogue with the novel.
Instructor(s): L. Ruddick Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 24000

FNDL 24406. Heidegger's Being and Time Division I. 100 Units.
We propose a cursive reading of the section I of the masterpiece of Heidegger Being and Time looking for the very connection, as our very leading question, between the idea of being in general and the discovery of the being of human being named by Heidegger - Dasein.
Instructor(s): R. Moati Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 24400

FNDL 24419. Kafka: Acrobatics of Reading. 100 Units.
In a universe determined by power such as Kafka's - patriarchal, legal, governmental, colonial power, but also physical constraints such as gravity and entropy - everything depends on one's ability or inability to perform. Against such determination, Kafka's texts work as exercises in self-empowerment, acts that constitute their power to perform through their very performance. Taking Kafka's short prose as a test case, the course investigates the relationship between two things: First, the acrobatics performed in and by the texts that not only feature a cast of tightrope walkers, hunger artists, bucket riders, and other performers, but can more generally be read as a series of kinetic experiments involving plot, description, imagery, sound, or grammar. Second, the acrobatics it takes us, the audience, to engage these texts-demanding a similar artistry of performance that includes casting highly flexible, improbable, and often risky readerly strategies in response. From the short prose, the course broadens its focus to include the longer texts and the diary, as well as excerpts from the fragments Amerika, The Trial, and The Castle. Readings and discussion in English.
Instructor(s): Florian Klinger Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 24419

FNDL 25008. Changing Worlds: J.G. Ballard's Apocalyptic Quartet. 100 Units.
Between 1961 and 1966, the English novelist and short story writer J.G. Ballard produced four novels (THE WIND FROM NOWHERE, THE DROWNED WORLD, THE BURNING WORLD, and THE CRYSTAL WORLD) that depict, poetically and concretely, global changes to the earth and its human inhabitants, n particular their imaginations. The relation of these lyrical apocalypses to science fiction, visual art, ecology and the philosophy of time, as well as their awkward coordination into a cycle, will concern us. We will conclude the course by reading Anna Kavan's 1967 ICE, which in a way complements and completes Ballard's cycle.
Instructor(s): Andrei Pop Terms Offered: Autumn. Course to be taught Autumn 2019
Note(s): Open to undergraduates.
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 35008, SCTR 35008
FNDL 25805. *Popol Vuh, Epic of the Americas. 100 Units.*

One of the oldest and grandest stories of world creation in the native Americas, the Mayan *Popol Vuh* has been called “the Bible of America.” It tells a story of cosmological origins and continued historical change, spanning mythic, classic, colonial, and contemporary times. In this class, we’ll read this full work closely (in multiple translations, while engaging its original K’iche’ Mayan language), attending to the important way in which its structure relates myth and history, or foundations and change. In this light, we’ll examine its mirroring in Genesis, Odyssey, Beowulf, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, and Díez Bahane’ to consider how epics struggle with a simultaneity of origins and historiography. In highlighting this tension between cosmos and politics, we’ll examine contemporary adaptations of the *Popol Vuh* by Miguel Ángel Asturias, Ernesto Cardenal, Diego Rivera, Dennis Tedlock, Humberto Ak’ab’al, Xpetra Ermundex, Patricia Amlin, Gregory Nava, and Werner Herzog. As we cast the Guatemalan *Popol Vuh* as a contemporary work of hemispheric American literature (with North American, Latin American, Latinx, and Indigenous literary engagement), we will take into account the intellectual contribution of Central America and the diaspora of Central Americans in the U.S. today. As a capstone, we will visit the original manuscript of the *Popol Vuh* held at the Newberry Library in Chicago, thinking about how this story of world creation implicates us to this day. (Poetry, Fiction)

Instructor(s): Edgar Garcia Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Note: students who cross-list from RLL will read Spanish-language texts in their original Spanish
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 25805, LACS 25805

FNDL 26206. *Gramsci. 100 Units.*

In this course we read selections from Antonio Gramsci’s *Letters and Prison Notebooks* side by side with their sources. Gramsci’s influential interpretations of the Italian Renaissance, Risorgimento, and Fascism are reviewed testi alla mano with the aim of reassessing some major turning points in Italian intellectual history. Readings and notions introduced include, for the Renaissance, Petrarch (the cosmopolitan intellectual), Savonarola (the disarmed prophet), Machiavelli (the modern prince), and Guicciardini (the particular); for Italy’s long Risorgimento, Vico (living philology), Cuoco (passive revolution), Manzoni (questione della lingua), Gioberti (clericalism), and De Sanctis (the Man of Guicciardini); and Croce (the anti-Croce) and Pirandello (theater and national-popular literature), for Italy’s twentieth century.

Instructor(s): R. Rubini Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 26000, CMLT 26002, CMLT 36002, ITAL 36000

FNDL 27029. *Survival. 100 Units.*

This course will discuss the complex experience of survival, its forms and conceptualizations. Not limited to a historical discourse, the course’s content and scope are framed by modernity, beginning in the 19th century biological notion of survival through its subsequent milestone articulation by Franz Rosenzweig and concluding in the selective reading from a plethora of post-Holocaust writings. What does it mean to survive? According to those who during WWII lived on the narrow threshold between life and death and survived its precariousness, survival depended on diverse rational and irrational factors such as faith (extrinsic or intrinsic), health, age, wealth, egoism, coincidence, hope, and luck that often verge on the miraculous; thus, no discursive centrality would be ascribed to any of the forms of survival under our investigation. During the course we will become familiar with historical, philosophical, and biographical accounts of survival.

Instructor(s): Bozena Shallcross Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): JWSC 27029, REES 27029, REES 37029

FNDL 27800. *Kant: Critique of Pure Reason. 100 Units.*

This will be a careful reading of what is widely regarded as the greatest work of modern philosophy, Immanuel Kant’s *Critique of Pure Reason*. Our principal aims will be to understand the problems Kant seeks to address and the significance of his famous doctrine of “transcendental idealism.” Topics will include: the role of mind in the constitution of experience; the nature of space and time; the relation between self-knowledge and knowledge of objects; how causal claims can be justified by experience; whether free will is possible; the relation between appearance and reality; the possibility of metaphysics. (B) (V)

Instructor(s): M. Boyle Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CHSS 37901, PHIL 27500, PHIL 37500, HIPS 25001

FNDL 29132. *Philosophical Fables: Bacon’s New Atlantis & Descartes’ Discourse On Method OD. 100 Units.*

A philosophical and literary study of two works fundamental to understanding the character and development of modern life.

Instructor(s): Ralph Lerner and Stuart Warner Terms Offered: Autumn. Course to be taught autumn 2019
Prerequisite(s): Open to undergrads
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 39132
Winter Quarter

**FNDL 20107. Introduction to Sartre. 100 Units.**
This course will be devoted Jean-Paul Sartre as a philosopher, as a writer, as a literary essayist and as an existential psychoanalysis. Sartre exposed most of his « existentialist » philosophy, based on the discovery of the absolute freedom of the human being and of her being-thrown in an meaningless world, through philosophical dry treatises, but also in using more accessible literary forms, like novels and theaters plays. In exploring Sartre's multiple ways of dealing with abstract philosophical thesis (contingency of being, threwness of the human being, absolute practical responsibility of individuals), we will raise with Sartre the question about the relation between the form mobilized and the metaphysical content deployed in each case and show in which way the first is never optional to the second. Another aspect of our exploration will be to make sense of Sartre's practice of the literary essay about other writers through the form of the portrait. That practice is related and works as exemplifications of what Sartre calls « Existential psychoanalysis ». The main idea of Sartre's practice of the « portrait » is to discover « modes of phenomenalization » of the contingent thing-in-itself, specific to each individual.

By that means, Sartre's Existential psychoanalysis is supposed to lead us to the discovery of the main specific world of each other writers Sartre writes about in order to make sense of the hidden meaning of their literary works.

Instructor(s): R. Moati Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 20107

**FNDL 20228. William Blake: Poet, Painter, and Prophet. 100 Units.**
William Blake is arguably the most unusual figure in the history of English poetry and visual art. Recognized now as an essential part of the canon of Romantic poetry, he was almost completely unknown in his own time. His paintings, poems, and illuminated books were objects of fascination for a small group of admirers, but it was not until the late 19th century that his work began to be collected by William Butler Yeats, and not until the 1960s that he was recognized as a major figure in the history of art and literature. Dismissed as insane in his own time, his prophetic and visionary works are now seen as anticipating some of the most radical strands of modern thought, including Freud, Marx, and Nietzsche. We will study Blake's work from a variety of perspectives, placing his poetry in relation to the prophetic ambitions of Milton and his visual images in the European iconographic tradition of Michelangelo and Durer, Goya and Fuseli. The course will emphasize close readings of his lyric poems, and attempt to open up the mythic cosmology of his allegorical, epic, and prophetic books.

(Poetry, 1650-1830, Theory; 18th/19th)
Instructor(s): W. J. T. Mitchell Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 20228, ARTH 30228, ENGL 30228, ENGL 20228

**FNDL 20301. Beginning the Chinese Novel. 100 Units.**
This course will look at the four great novels of sixteenth-century China: Romance of the Three Kingdoms, Water Margin, Journey to the West, and Plum in the Golden Vase. Deeply self-conscious about the process of their own creation and their place within the larger literary canon, these novels deploy multiple frames, philosophical disquisitions, invented histories, and false starts before the story can properly begin. By focusing on the first twelve chapters of each novel, this course will serve as both an introduction to the masterworks of Chinese vernacular literature and an exploration of the fraught beginnings of a new genre.

Instructor(s): A. Fox Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Open to MAPH students.
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 35100, EALC 15100

**FNDL 20801. Machiavelli's Literary Works. 100 Units.**
A reading of THE PRINCE as literature and of Machiavelli's plays, poetry, novella and a selection of his letters with attention to his great themes of politics, love, and war.
Instructor(s): Nathan Tarcov and Christopher Lynch Terms Offered: Winter. course will be taught winter 2020
Prerequisite(s): Undergrads by consent only.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 31701, LLSO 20802, PLSC 32101, PLSC 20801

**FNDL 21005. Greek Philosophy. 100 Units.**
The Phaedrus is one of the most fascinating and compelling of Plato's Dialogues. Beginning with a playful treatment of the theme of erotic passion, it continues with a consideration of the nature of inspiration, love, and knowledge. The centerpiece is one the the most famous of the Platonic myths, the moving description of the charioteer and its allegory of the vision, fall, and incarnation of the soul.

Instructor(s): E. Asmis Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 21200, BBIL 31200, GREK 21216, GREK 31216

**FNDL 21403. Shakespeare I: Histories and Comedies. 100 Units.**
An exploration of some of Shakespeare's major plays from the first half of his professional career when the genres in which he primarily worked were comedies and (English) histories. Plays to be studied include The Comedy of Errors, The Taming of the Shrew, A Midsummer Night's Dream, Twelfth Night, Richard III, Richard II, Henry IV Parts 1 and 2, and Henry V. A shorter and a longer paper will be required. (Pre-1650, Drama)
Instructor(s): Richard Strier Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): general education requirement in the humanities
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 16500, TAPS 28405
FNDL 21714. Boccaccio’s Decameron. 100 Units.
One of the most important and influential works of the middle ages—and a lot funnier than the “Divine Comedy.” Written in the midst of the social disruption caused by the Black Death (1348), the “Decameron” may have held readers attention for centuries because of its bawdiness, but it is also a profound exploration into the basis of faith and the meaning of death, the status of language, the construction of social hierarchy and social order, and the nature of crisis and historical change. Framed by a storytelling contest between seven young ladies and three young men who have left the city to avoid the plague, the one hundred stories of Boccaccio’s “Decameron” form a structural masterpiece that anticipates the Renaissance epics, Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales,” and the modern short story. Students will be encouraged to further explore in individual projects the many topics raised by the text, including (and in addition to the themes mentioned above) magic, the visual arts, mercantile culture, travel and discovery, and new religious practices.
Instructor(s): H.J. Steinberg Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 33502, ITAL 23502

FNDL 23608. Aristophanes’s Athens. 100 Units.
The comedies of Aristophanes are as uproarious, biting, and ribald today as they were more than 2,400 years ago. But they also offer a unique window onto the societal norms, expectations, and concerns as well as the more mundane experiences of Athenians in the fifth century BCE. This course will examine closely all eleven of Aristophanes’s extant plays (in translation) in order to address topics such as the performative, ritual, and political contexts of Attic comedy, the constituency of audiences, the relationship of comedy to satire, the use of dramatic stereotypes, freedom of speech, and the limits of dissent. Please note that this course is rated Mature for adult themes and language.
Instructor(s): J. Hall Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 33608, CLCV 23608, HIST 20803, HIST 30803, LLSO 20803, ANCM 33900

FNDL 25106. Thomas Mann’s Novel: Lotte in Weimar (1939) 100 Units.
In this course, we will read in German Thomas Mann’s Lotte in Weimar (1939), a novel written in response to the famous story by Wolfgang von Goethe Leiden des Jungen Werthers (1774). We will discuss the relation between these two texts, Thomas Mann’s understanding of the relations between art, love, society and politics as seen in this novel, and the book’s cinematic adaptation. All readings and discussion will be conducted in German so an adequate level of language proficiency is required.
Instructor(s): Olga Solovieva Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Ability to read and discuss in German
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 25106

FNDL 25311. Pale Fire. 100 Units.
This course is an intensive reading of Pale Fire by Nabokov.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 29610, ENGL 22817, REES 20020, REES 30020, GNSE 39610

FNDL 26580. Le rouge et le noir de Stendhal. 100 Units.
Ce cours portera sur Le Rouge et le noir de Stendhal vu romancier et comme témoin de son temps. À cheval sur les Lumières et l’époque romantique, à la fois inspiré et hanté par la figure de Napoléon, cet auteur à mille masques ne cesse de se déguiser pour s’imposer aux “Happy few”. A travers ses personnages il rêve d’une grandeur qu’il sait impossible et en même temps il formule un commentaire puissant sur son époque.
Instructor(s): R. Morrissey
Note(s): Readings and discussion in French; writing in French or English.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 36580, FREN 26580

FNDL 27301. Weimar Political Theology: Schmitt and Strauss. 100 Units.
This course is devoted to the idea of “political theology” that developed during the interwar period in twentieth-century Central Europe, specifically Germany’s Weimar Republic. The course’s agenda is set by Carl Schmitt, who claimed that both serious intellectual endeavors and political authority require extra-rational and transcendent foundations. Along with Schmitt’s works from the period, such as Political Theology and the Concept of the Political, we read and discuss the related writings of perhaps his greatest interlocutor, Leo Strauss.
Instructor(s): J. McCormick Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 27301, PLSC 37301

FNDL 28010. Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil. 100 Units.
This course will be a close reading of (most of) one of the major works of Nietzsche’s mature period, Beyond Good and Evil (1886), which allows us to consider the major themes of his thought: his conception of philosophy and philosophical method, the relation between philosophy and psychology, his critique of morality and objections to democracy, his idea of will to power, and his reflections on the nature and value of truth and knowledge. Some background in philosophy (especially Plato and Kant) will be useful, but is not required. We will occasionally look at other texts of Nietzsche’s and some relevant secondary literature in conjunction with the primary text.
Instructor(s): B. Leiter Terms Offered: Winter
Spring Quarter

**FNDL 21214. The Iliad. 100 Units.**

In this course we will read the ILIAD in translation, supplemented by selections from the ODYSSEY and other texts from the archaic period, including the Epic Cycle fragments and the Hesiodic CATALOGUE OF WOMEN. We will also make some turns toward recent Iliadic ventures in English: not least Christopher Logue's WAR MUSIC and Alice Oswald's MEMORIAL. "The poem of force" according to Simone Weil, the ILIAD is also the poem of marriage, homosociality/ the "Mannerbund", and exchange. Among our concerns will be: the poetics of traditionality; the political economy of epic; the ILIAD's construction of social order; the uses of reciprocity; gender in the Homeric poems. Although no knowledge of Greek is required for this course, there will be assignment options for those who wish to do reading in Greek.

Instructor(s): Laura Slatkin Terms Offered: Spring. course will be taught spring 2020
Prerequisite(s): Requirements: weekly readings; response paper for each class meeting; final paper.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 31210, CLAS 44300

**FNDL 21650. Kafka’s The Trial. 100 Units.**

This very close reading of Kafka's arguably most well known unfinished novel means to move away from megalithic glosses of Kafka as a writer of allegory-of bureaucratic oppression, social alienation, and a world abandoned by God, etc.-instead to look deeply at Kafka's precision, and strategic imprecision, of language, language as trauma, wound, and axe. Knowledge of German is not necessary.

Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): REES 22009

**FNDL 21722. Thomas Aquinas’s Commentary on Aristotle’s Nicomachean Ethics. 100 Units.**

We will read through and discuss the commentary, looking at it both as an interpretation of the Ethics and as a philosophical work in its own right. (A) (IV)

Instructor(s): S. Brock Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): For the undergraduates, those who are not Philosophy or Fundamentals majors should seek permission to enroll.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 31722, PHIL 21722

**FNDL 23419. Richard Wagner’s Ring of the Nibelung in Performance. 100 Units.**

This seminar, open to undergraduates and beginning graduate students, serves as a critical introduction to and intensive exploration of Richard Wagner's 19th century tetralogy. In addition to critical readings (e.g., by Wagner, Adorno, Nietzsche, Badiou, Dahlhaus, et al.) and screenings of a host of productions, we will travel downtown to Lyric Opera to attend performances of the Ring cycle in David Pountney's new production. Our discussions of the Chicago production will be supplemented by conversations with members of the Lyric Opera production team, including Anthony Freud, Lyric Opera's General Director. No previous knowledge is required although a curiosity about opera, German culture, media history, and/or theater & performance studies will be essential.

Instructor(s): David Levin Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 26519, CMST 32119, MUSI 32520, GRMN 23419, MUSI 24520, GRMN 33419, CMST 22119, TAPS 36519

**FNDL 23710. Rousseau’s Confessions: Texte et Contexte. 100 Units.**

Les Confessions de Rousseau est un texte-clé pour comprendre la constitution du moi moderne. Comme personne avant lui, Rousseau décrit tout ce qui est en jeu dans la définition et l'affirmation de soi. "Les Confessions" brossent un vaste tableau critique de la société française à l'Âge des Lumières. Dans ce cours nous lirons cette œuvre fondamentale en dialogue avec les textes théoriques de Rousseau afin de mieux comprendre la place à la fois centrale et paradoxale qu'il occupe dans la pensée des Lumières.

Instructor(s): R. Morrissey Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Open to advanced undergraduates with consent of instructor.
Note(s): Readings in French; discussion in French or English. Papers in French or English, depending on student's field of study.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 33710, FREN 23710

**FNDL 24901. Tolkien: Medieval and Modern. 100 Units.**

J. R. R. Tolkien’s "The Lord of the Rings" is one of the most popular works of imaginative literature of the twentieth century. This course seeks to understand its appeal by situating Tolkien’s creation within the context of Tolkien’s own work as both artist and scholar alongside its medieval sources and modern parallels. Themes to be addressed include the problem of genre and the uses of tradition; the nature of history and its relationship to place; the activity of creation and its relationship to language, beauty, evil, and power; the role of monsters in imagination and criticism; the twinned challenges of death and immortality, fate and free will; and the interaction between the world of “faerie” and religious belief.

Instructor(s): R. Fulton Brown Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Must have read "The Lord of the Rings" prior to first day.
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 22400, HIST 29902, MDVL 29902
FNDL 25007. Manet, Mallarmé, and Modernism. 100 Units.
Much of the theory, as well as the look and sound of modern art, as it developed in the late nineteenth century, is the result of the individual efforts as well as the friendly collaboration of the Parisian painter Édouard Manet and the Parisian poet and English teacher Stéphane Mallarmé. This course will introduce them, examine their major collaborations (Le Courbeau, L’Après-Midi d’un Faune), and place them within the developing consensus in experimental art and thought at the fin de siècle, which for reasons having to do with the reception Mallarmé, came to be called symbolism.

Instructor(s): A. Pop Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 34721, ARTH 24721, SCTH 35007

FNDL 25331. Beauvoir: The Second Sex. 100 Units.
In 1949, Simone de Beauvoir’s Le Deuxième Sexe took up the old question of sexual difference; it was never the same question again. Her attention to the situation and “situatedness” of women resulted in new ways of thinking about freedom, destiny, reciprocity, and subjectivity; it brought literature, autobiography, and cultural studies into philosophical reflection; and it contributed significantly to twentieth century transformations of women’s social, political, and cultural situations. We will engage a close reading of The Second Sex in English translation and with some reference to the original French.

Instructor(s): K. Culp Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 34721, ARTH 24721, SCTH 35007

FNDL 25007. Manet, Mallarmé, and Modernism. 100 Units.
Much of the theory, as well as the look and sound of modern art, as it developed in the late nineteenth century, is the result of the individual efforts as well as the friendly collaboration of the Parisian painter Édouard Manet and the Parisian poet and English teacher Stéphane Mallarmé. This course will introduce them, examine their major collaborations (Le Courbeau, L’Après-Midi d’un Faune), and place them within the developing consensus in experimental art and thought at the fin de siècle, which for reasons having to do with the reception Mallarmé, came to be called symbolism.

Instructor(s): A. Pop Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ARTH 34721, ARTH 24721, SCTH 35007

FNDL 26028. The Yi Jing. 100 Units.
In this course, we will survey the creation and development of the I Ching or Yi Jing, one of the most unique classics in world literature. Originally used as a divination manual, the Yi Jing came to be viewed as the paramount wisdom text in the Chinese intellectual tradition. We will pay equal attention to how the text was first created and to how it came to be interpreted over the course of Chinese history. All readings will be in English, though students taking the course for graduate credit will be encouraged to extend their readings to Chinese sources.

Instructor(s): E. Shaughnessy Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 26206, EALC 36206

FNDL 27202. Dante’s Divine Comedy II: Purgatorio. 100 Units.
This course is an intense study of the middle cantica of the “Divine Comedy” and its relationship with Dante’s early masterpiece, the “Vita Nuova.” The very middleness of the Purgatorio provides Dante the opportunity to explore a variety of problems dealing with our life here, now, on earth: contemporary politics, the relationship between body and soul, poetry and the literary canon, art and imagination, the nature of dreams, and, of course, love and desire. The Purgatorio is also Dante’s most original contribution to the imagination of the underworld, equally influenced by new conceptualizations of “merchant time” and by contemporary travel writing and fantastic voyages.

Instructor(s): H.J. Steinberg Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 22000, ITAL 32000

FNDL 27322. Jerusalem and Athens - On the Conflict between Revelation and Philosophy. 100 Units.
I shall discuss the subject on the basis of 4 lectures Leo Strauss gave on “Jerusalem and Athens” and “Reason and Revelation” in the period 1946-1967.

Instructor(s): Heinrich Meier Terms Offered: Spring. course will be taught spring 2020
Note(s): Open to undergrads by consent only. This course will be taught the first five weeks of the quarter.
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 37322, SCTH 37322, PLSC 37322

FNDL 27512. Dream of the Red Chamber: Forgetting About the Author. 100 Units.
The great Chinese-Manchu novel _Honglou meng_ (ca. 1750) has been assigned one major author, Cao Xueqin, whose life has been the subject of much investigation. But before 1922 little was known about Cao, and interpreters of the novel were forced to make headway solely on the basis of textual clues. The so-called “Three Commentators” edition (_Sanjia ping Shitou ji_) shows these readers at their creative, polemical, and far-fetched best. We will be reading the first 80 chapters of the novel and discussing its reception in the first 130 years of its published existence (1792-1922), with special attention to hermeneutical strategies and claims of authorial purpose. Familiarity with classical Chinese required.

Instructor(s): Haun Saussy Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Familiarity with classical Chinese required.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 37512, CMLT 37512, EALC 37512, EALC 37512

FNDL 28204. Hegel's Philosophy of Right. 100 Units.
TBD

Instructor(s): M. Haase Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 38203, PHIL 28203

Possible Supporting Courses
Supporting Courses are intended to provide further methodological training, historical context, and conceptual frameworks to enrich the student’s engagement with the texts, topics, and ideas relevant to his or her project; the selection of such courses will therefore vary considerably from person to person. The list below is a selection of what Fundamentals students might consider as their Supporting Courses, but it is by no means an exhaustive or prescriptive list. Students are encouraged to make a habit of reading the catalogs of other relevant departments and to comb through Class Search (https://coursesearch.uchicago.edu) to locate courses that speak to their interests. The program coordinator and the student’s advisers are also valuable resources to consult when planning out the academic year.
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Font Notice

This document should contain certain fonts with restrictive licenses. For this draft, substitutions were made using less legally restrictive fonts. Specifically:

- Times was used instead of Trajan.
- Times was used instead of Palatino.

The editor may contact Leepfrog for a draft with the correct fonts in place.