FUNDAMENTALS: ISSUES AND TEXTS

Department Website: http://fundamentals.uchicago.edu

ABOUT FUNDAMENTALS

The Fundamentals program enables students to concentrate on questions and issues that intrigue them by reading texts that articulate and speak to these questions. It seeks to foster precise and thoughtful pursuit of these questions by means of (1) rigorous training in the interpretation of texts, supported by (2) extensive training in at least one foreign language, and by (3) the acquisition of the knowledge, approaches, and skills of various 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 texts (historical, religious, literary, scientific, political, and philosophical) in which the great writers articulate and examine questions in different and competing ways. These books, films, pieces of music, and artworks illuminate the persisting questions and speak to contemporary concerns because they are both the originators and exacting 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, government service, business, and education. Others have gone on to graduate school in numerous fields, including classics, comparative literature, English, history, philosophy, social thought, religious studies, psychology, political science, economics, mathematics, biology, and film studies.

FACULTY

The faculty of the Fundamentals program comprises scholars from various disciplines and divisions who represent interests and competencies in matters ancient and modern and expertise in different cultures and traditions. This diversity and pluralism exists within a common agreement about the primacy of fundamental questions and the centrality of important texts 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 Autumn Quarter of their second 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 Examination, for a total of 1500 units.

A. Course Work

1. **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.

2. **Text/Author Courses (7 courses).** The seven Text/Author courses are devoted to the study of one or two particular texts or the works 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).

3. **Supporting Courses (4 courses).** These are courses that complement 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.

4. **Foreign Language (1 course).** The Fundamentals language requirement is designed with the belief that the texts you study in the program should come from diverse cultures and be appreciated in their original languages. In many cases, two years of formal language study will provide enough proficiency to analyze a non-Anglophone text in part or in whole. However, this is not true of all languages or all language learners. In cases where the target language requires more study to reach fluency, a student can prove proficiency through alternative routes. For example, a student could take a course in which the text will be studied in English translation, but agree with the instructor to read the text, in whole or in part, in its original language. In these cases, the instructor must be proficient in that language and be able to certify (in a short email to the Fundamentals coordinator and chair) that the student has engaged deeply with the text in its original language. The student could also study the text in its original language in an Independent Study course. In rare cases, the student could study the text on the student’s own and be given a sight-reading exam. The last two options are left to the discretion of the instructor, who need not be a Fundamentals core faculty member. In both cases, the instructor communicates with the program coordinator about proficiency. All students should be prepared to be examined on their non-Anglophone text in their Senior Examination and must demonstrate proficiency therein by citing passages from the original-language text.

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 FNDL 29901, the Junior Paper Seminar, in the quarter in which they write the paper. Acceptance of a successful Junior Paper is a prerequisite for admission to the senior year of the program.

C. The Senior Examination

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 examination, 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>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Requirement</th>
<th>Units</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Gateway Course</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seven Text/Author Courses</td>
<td>700</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four Supporting Courses</td>
<td>400</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third quarter of second-year foreign language</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNDL 29901 Fundamentals Junior Paper Colloquium</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FNDL 29902 Fundamentals Senior Examination</td>
<td>100</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Units</strong></td>
<td><strong>1500</strong></td>
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* or credit for the equivalent, determined by petition

**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. Special attention is paid to both the Junior Paper and the Senior Exam.

**ACADEMIC YEAR 2024–25 COURSES**

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

**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

Prerequisite(s): open only to Fundamentals majors. all other majors need consent of instructor.

Equivalent Course(s): REES 22009, GNSE 21650

**The Junior Paper and Senior Examination**

**FNDL 29900. Reading Courses: Fundamentals. 100 Units.**

Open only to Fundamentals students with consent of faculty supervisor and program chair

Terms Offered: Summer

**FNDL 29901. Fundamentals Junior Paper Colloquium. 100 Units.**

Fundamentals students are required to register for and attend the Junior Paper Colloquium in Winter of their third year. This seminar provides structure and feedback during the Junior Paper writing process. Graded on a pass/fail basis, but unfinished Junior Papers will result in an ‘incomplete’ grade. Occasionally also offered in Spring if a significant number of students successfully petition to write the Junior Paper that quarter.

Terms Offered: Summer. Typically offered in Winter, occasionally offered in other quarters if multiple students are approved to write the JP late.

Prerequisite(s): Open only to third-year Fundamentals students.

**FNDL 29902. Fundamentals Senior Examination. 100 Units.**

Fundamentals students are required to register for this seminar in the quarter in which they will take their Senior Exam, typically in Spring. Exceptions to this can only be made with the consent of the program chair. This course does not have a set meeting time but is instead intended to create time in students’ schedules to prepare for the exam. This course must be taken for a Pass/Fail grade.

Terms Offered: Autumn Spring Summer Winter. Typically offered in Spring. Occasionally may be taken in Autumn or Winter for students taking their exams early.

Prerequisite(s): Open to fourth-year Fundamentals students.
AUTUMN QUARTER COURSES

FNDL 21104. Introduction to the Qur’an. 100 Units.
The primary goal of this course is to introduce students to the text and context of the Qurʾan. Emphasis is placed upon both the historical setting as well as the thematic and literary features, major biblical figures, and foundational narratives of the Qurʾan. Explorations of medieval exegetical literature on the Qurʾan and its reception in the early (8th - 10th century CE) and medieval periods (11th - 15th century CE) will feature in this course.
Instructor(s): Mehmetcan Akpinar
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 21104, NEHC 11040, ISLM 30040, MDVL 11040, NEHC 30040

FNDL 21103. Marsilio Ficino’s “On Love” 100 Units.
This course is first of all a close reading of Marsilio Ficino’s seminal book On Love (first Latin edition De amore 1484; Ficino’s own Italian translation 1544). Ficino’s philosophical masterpiece is the foundation of the Renaissance view of love from a Neo-Platonic perspective. It is impossible to overemphasize its influence on European culture. On Love is not just a radically new interpretation of Plato’s Symposium. It is the book through which sixteenth- and seventeenth-century Europe read the love experience. Our course will analyze its multiple classical sources and its spiritual connotations. During our close reading of Ficino’s text, we will show how European writers and philosophers appropriated specific parts of this Renaissance masterpiece. In particular, we will read extensive excerpts from some important love treatises, such as Castiglione’s The Courtier (Il cortigiano), Leone Ebreo’s Dialogues on Love, Tullia d’Aragona’s On the Infinity of Love, but also selections from a variety of European poets, such as Michelangelo’s canzoniere, Maurice Scève’s Délie, and Fray Luis de León’s Poesia.
Instructor(s): A. Maggi
Note(s): Course taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 26701, REMS 33900, ITAL 33900, ITAL 23900, CMLT 36701

FNDL 21300. James Joyce: Ulysses. 100 Units.
This course considers themes that include the problems of exile, homelessness, and nationality; the mysteries of paternity and maternity; the meaning of the Return; Joyce’s epistemology and his use of dream, fantasy, and hallucinations; and Joyce’s experimentation with and use of language.
Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21301

FNDL 21308. Vico’s New Science. 100 Units.
This course offers a close reading of Giambattista Vico’s masterpiece, "The New Science" (1744) - a work that sets out to refute “all opinions hitherto held about the principles of humanity.” Vico, who is acknowledged as the most resolute scourge of any form of rationalism, breathed new life into rhetoric, imagination, poetry, metaphor, history, and philosophy in order to promote in his readers that originary “wonder” and “pathos” which sets human beings on the search for truth. However, Vico argues, the truths that are most available and interesting to us are the ones humanity “authored” by means of its culture and history-creating activities. For this reason the study of myth and folklore as well as archeology, anthropology, and ethnology must all play a role in the rediscovery of man. “The New Science” builds an "alternative philosophy" for a new age and reads like a "novel of formation" recounting the (hi)story of the entire human race and our divine ancestors. In Vico, a prophetic spirit, one recognizes the fulfillment of the Renaissance, the spokesperson of a particular Enlightenment, the precursor of the Kantian revolution, and the forefather of the philosophy of history (Herder, Hegel, and Marx). "The New Science" remained a strong source of inspiration in the twentieth century (Cassirer, Gadamer, Berlin, Joyce, Beckett, etc.) and may prove relevant in disclosing our own responsibilities in postmodernity.
Instructor(s): A. Maggi
Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): Course taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 22501, CMLT 32501, ITAL 32900, ITAL 23900, CMLT 36701

FNDL 21450. Coptic Bible. 100 Units.
The Coptic versions of the Bible present one of the earliest translations of Christian scripture as the new religion spread. Understanding how the Bible (canonical and non-canonical) was read and used in Egypt at this early stage implies studying the development of Christian communities in those agitated times, as well as paying attention to questions of literacy and linguistic environment, book production, Bible (both Greek and Coptic) on papyrus, and translation and interpretation in Antiquity. The course will draw on materials assembled from my work on the critical edition of the Gospel of Mark, but will also look into other materials like the Coptic Old Testament, and non-canonical scriptures such as Nag Hammadi and the Gnostic scriptures. No previous knowledge of Coptic is required. A brief introduction to the Coptic language will be part of the class, and parallel sessions of additional language instruction will be planned for those who are interested in learning more.
Instructor(s): S. Torallas
Terms Offered: Autumn
This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): NEHC 34118, RLST 21450, CLCV 24118, BIBL 31418, NEHC 24118, MDVL 24118, CLAS 34118
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): Rocco Rubini
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 33001, ITAL 23000, CMLT 25801, CMLT 35801

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
Prerequisite(s): open only to Fundamentals majors. all other majors need consent of instructor.
Equivalent Course(s): REES 22009, GNSE 21650

FNDL 21700. Le Roman de la Rose. 100 Units.
The “Roman de la Rose” (mid-13th century), a sprawling, encyclopedic summa composed by two separate authors, was arguably the single most influential vernacular text of the Middle Ages. Whether they hated or admired it, subsequent writers could not escape the long shadow cast by this magisterial œuvre. And, as Kate Soper’s recent opera adaptation of the “Rose” demonstrates, this labyrinthine work remains a source of creative inspiration. In this course we will read the “Rose” together. Each student will choose a critical lens (e.g. gender and sexuality, animal and/or ecocritical studies, ethics and philosophy, reception studies, manuscript studies, text & image, etc.) to structure their engagement with the text, and together we will collaborate to chart a rich and diverse set of interpretive paths through this complex work.
Instructor(s): Daisy Delogu Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): For French majors/minors, FREN 20500, 20503 or a previous literature course taught in French.
Note(s): All registered students will attend the cours magistral (taught in English). In addition, all registered students will select and attend either the French discussion section, or the critical theory section. Students are welcome to attend both.
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 37300, FREN 21700, GNSE 27300, FREN 31700, MDVL 21700

FNDL 21805. Introduction to Marx. 100 Units.
This introduction to Marx’s thought will divide into three parts: in the first, we will consider Marx’s theory of history; in the second, his account of capitalism; and in third, his conception of the state. (A)
Instructor(s): Anton Ford Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 21423

FNDL 21815. Karl Marx: Capital, Volume I. 100 Units.
In this seminar, we study Marx’s mature critique of political economy through a close reading of Capital, vol. 1. Our primary concern is to clarify the aims, method, and basic concepts of the text. Enrollment is limited to undergraduates who have completed their SOSC requirement.
Instructor(s): Sarah Johnson Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): Social Sciences Core
Note(s): Enrollment is limited to undergraduates who have completed their SOSC requirement.
Equivalent Course(s): LLSO 28038, PLSC 28038

FNDL 22035. The Acts of Paul and Thecla and the Pastoral Epistles. 100 Units.
In the early second century there were bitter battles over the legacy of Paul and his preserved letters in terms of gender, sexuality, family life, asceticism, church administration, and theological vision. We can see these well by reading the narrative text The Acts of Paul and Thecla alongside the “Pastoral Epistles” (1 and 2 Timothy, Titus), the former championing a female, cross-dressing ascetic Christ-missionary and the latter, in pseudepigraphical epistolary texts written in the dead Paul’s name, insisting on patriarchal family life and women’s adherence to traditional roles. In this course we shall read both sets of texts carefully in Greek, noting points of similarity and contestation, and test various models of how these sources-each of which seeks to “fix” the Pauline legacy in its own way-are related to one another. Time allowing, we shall also look at the later reception of the cult of Saint Thecla and late antique interpretations of “the apostle,” Paul, on these issues of sexuality and gender roles, and their perduring influence in contemporary debates.
Instructor(s): Margaret Mitchell Terms Offered: Autumn
Prerequisite(s): At least one year of Greek, or equivalent.
Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): BIBL 42035, RLST 22035, GNSE 22035, GREK 27423, HCHR 42035, GREK 37423, GNSE 42035
FNDL 22333. Cassandras: Truth-Telling in Times of Crisis. 100 Units.
In public life, why and how are some people accepted as truth-tellers while others are not? Is truth simply a problem of and for “correct” reasoning? What assumptions about argumentation and evidence go unexplored in this way of framing the problem? What if truth were a problem of truth-telling instead? When and how do social, racial, and gender hierarchies authorize received understandings of a (credible) truth-teller? What is credible telling usually thought to sound like? What are the conditions for listening and hearing the truth? To think through these questions, we take as a lens the archetype of Cassandra, the babbling prophetess of classical Greek myth and tragedy doomed not to be believed. Cassandra has served as a resource and source of inspiration for a range of critical thinkers, including but not limited to theorists, feminists, poets, and novelists. What is a “Cassandra”? Does her “deranged” way of seeing the world - her prophetic speech - disorient or destabilize? We will consider how, in her different representations, Cassandra places questions of language, patriarchy, and sexual violence at the center of general discussions of credibility and critique. Readings range from ancient Greek thought to 21st century theory.
Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 32333, PLSC 32333, GNSE 22333, CCCT 32333, PLSC 22333, CCCT 22333

FNDL 22822. Nietzsche's Gay Science. 100 Units.
Nietzsche describes The Gay Science as a distinctively affirmative work. Although still offering sharp challenges to rival views, the book also introduces many of Nietzsche’s own ideas about how life can be embraced. We will read the Gay Science from beginning to end, giving special attention to the affirmative aspects of Nietzsche's thought. (A)
Instructor(s): J. Fox Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): PHIL 22822

FNDL 23202. Li Zhi and 16th Century China: The Self, Tradition, and Dissent in Comparative Context. 100 Units.
The 16th century Chinese iconoclast Li Zhi (Li Zhuowu) has been rightly celebrated as a pioneer of individualism, one of history's great voices of social protest, an original mind powerfully arguing for genuine self-expression, and more. He was a Confucian official and erudite in the classics, yet in his sixties he takes the Buddhist tonsure, and late in life befriends the Jesuit Matteo Ricci. He sought refuge in a quiet monastery devoting his life to scholarship, yet invited constant scandal. His A Book to Burn "sold like hotcakes," and attracted enough trouble that reportedly readers would surreptitiously hide their copies tucked up their sleeves, and was later banned by the state soon after his death. In this seminar, we will place Li both within the context of the history of "Confucian" thought, and within the literary, religious, and philosophical conversations of the late Ming. Using his writings as a productive case study, we will think about topics including "religion," tradition and innovation, "spontaneity" and "authenticity," and the relationship between "classics" and commentaries. Throughout, we will bring our discussions into comparative analysis, considering views of thinkers and traditions from other times and places. Chinese not required; for those interested, we will read select essays of Li’s in Chinese and students may choose translation as a final project.
Instructor(s): Pauline Lee Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HREL 33202, HIST 34519, EALC 33202, DVPR 33202, HIST 24519, RLST 23202, EALC 23202

FNDL 23590. Nietzsche’s Beyond Good and Evil. 100 Units.
A close reading, in translation, of Nietzsche’s famous 1886 work, Beyond Good and Evil. We will consider its major themes and arguments, paying close attention to the transition which this book marks in Nietzsche's corpus as a whole. Themes to be discussed: the doctrine of the Will to Power, the Revaluation of Values, the doctrine of the Eternal Return, the critique of religion.
Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: not being offered 24-25
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 23590, GRMN 23590

FNDL 23600. Evil: Myth, Symbol and Reality. 100 Units.
From the horrors of the Shoah to violence suffered by individuals, the question of the origin, meaning, and reality of evil done by humans has vexed thinkers throughout the ages. This seminar is an inquiry into the problem of evil on three registers of reflection: myth, symbol, and reality. We will be exploring important philosophical, Jewish, and Christian texts. These include Martin Buber, Good and Evil, Hannah Arendt, Eichmann in Jerusalem, Immanuel Kant, Religion within the Limits of Reason Alone, Paul Ricoeur, The Symbolism of Evil, Edward Farley, Good and Evil, Hans Jonas, Mortality and Morality and Claudia Card, The Atrocity Paradigm. There will also be a viewing of the movie Seven (1995) directed by David Fincher and written by Andrew Kevin Walker. Accordingly, the seminar probes the reality of evil and the symbolic and mythic resources of religious traditions to articulate the meaning and origin of human evil. The question of “theodicy” is then not the primary focus given the seminar’s inquiry into the fact and reality of human evil. Each student will submit a 5-7 page critical review of either Jonathan Glover's Humanity: A Moral History of the 20th Century or Susan Neiman’s, Evil in Modern Thought. Each Student also will write a 15 page (double spaced;12pt font) paper on one or more of the texts read in the course with respect to her or his own research interests.
Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 23623, GRMN 33623, RLST 23600, JWSC 23600, RETH 33600, THEO 33600
FNDL 23810. Memory and Identity in French Literature: Proust to the Present. 100 Units.
This introductory-level course takes as its point of departure Marcel Proust’s conceptualization of memory as the foundation both for the self and for literature. For Proust, literary style conveys the singularity of an individual vision while rescuing experience from the contingencies of time. Literature, identity, and memory are inseparable. Later writers will follow Proust’s lead in defining literature as an art of memory; but they develop this art in different ways, whether by inventing new forms of life-writing or attempting to revive, via fiction, a lived connection to history. How does memory serve as the foundation of individual or collective identities? How does fiction imagine and give form to memory, and how does literature serve as a medium for cultural memory? How do literary works register the intermittence of memory; its failings and distortions, its fragility as well as its attachment to bodies and places? We will tackle these questions through close analysis of a range of texts. In addition to Proust, authors studied may include Yourcenar, Perec, Modiano, Roubaud, and Ernaux.
Instructor(s): Alison James Terms Offered: Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): FREN 23810, SIGN 26047
Note(s): Taught in English, with a weekly or biweekly session in French for those seeking FREN credit.

FNDL 23830. Simone Weil: Spirituality, Metaphysics, and Politics. 100 Units.
Simone Weil, one of the most important philosophers of the twentieth century, developed her thought as an extension of her spirituality and her political commitments. In this course, then, we will read her principal works together in order to see how these three themes hang together: spirituality, metaphysics, and politics.
Instructor(s): Kevin Hector Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RLS 23830, DVPR 43830

FNDL 23908. Bergson and China: Buddhist and Confucian Reboots. 100 Units.
This course will explore Henri Bergson’s philosophy as set forth in Time and Free Will, Matter and Memory, and Creative Evolution, and its reception in late Imperial and early Republican China (late 19th and early 20th centuries). Of special interest will be the role played by Bergsonian ideas in the Yogacara revival and the formation of New Confcucianism during this period, with particular focus on figures like Zhang Taiyan, Xiong Shili and Liang Shumin. This will require us to deeply engage Bergson’s idea of “duration” (durée) and its interpretation, particularly in relation to a reconsideration of the Yogacara Buddhist notion of alyana-consciousness (storehouse consciousness) and the Confucian idea of ceaseless generation and regeneration (shengsheng bu xi) as derived from interpretive traditions centered on the Book of Changes (Yijing).
Instructor(s): Brook Ziporyn Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): All readings will be available in English. Chinese reading proficiency is recommended but not required. This course meets the HS or CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 33908, EALC 33908, RLS 23908, EALC 23908, HREL 33908

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 and -disempowerment, 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, and 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): CMLT 24419, GRMN 24419

FNDL 24635. Means, Motive, Murder: German Crime Fiction. 100 Units.
Edgar Allan Poe, when accused of being too much under the influence of German literary sources, claimed that: “if in many of my productions terror has been the thesis, I maintain that terror is not of Germany, but of the soul.” In this course, we will read a selection of German crime fiction not only to be in a better position to judge Poe’s protestations, but more importantly, to familiarize ourselves with a selection of canonical German writers as well as with the history and the characteristics of the genre. Why is crime fiction one of the most popular literary genres today? How does the German tradition differ from well-known whodunnits such as those by Arthur Conan Doyle or Agatha Christie? What is the relationship between the genre and society? We will consider - among other questions - the figure of the detective, the history of policing, different concepts of justice and guilt, the status of clues, indices, evidence. Readings will include Poe, E.T.A. Hoffmann, Kleist, Schiller, Droste-Hülshoff, and others. Readings and discussions in English.
Instructor(s): Margareta Ingrid Christian Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 24635

FNDL 24921. Robert Musil: Altered States. 100 Units.
This course is an introduction to the work of Robert Musil, one of the major novelists of the twentieth century. We will focus on Musil’s idea of the “Other Condition” [der andere Zustand], which he once described-in contrast
to our normal way of life—as a "secret rising and ebbing of our being with that of things and other people." What is this "Other Condition": what are its ethics and aesthetics, and how can it be expressed in literature? We will begin with readings from Musil's critical writings and early narrative prose, then devote the majority of the quarter to his unfinished magnum opus, The Man without Qualities. Particular attention will be paid to Musil's experimentations with narrative form and his development of the genre of "essayism. Readings and discussion in English.

Instructor(s): Sophie Salvo Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): GRMN 34921, GRMN 24921

FNDL 25001. Molière: Comedy, Power and Subversion. 100 Units.

Molière crafted a new form of satirical comedy that revolutionized European theater, though it encountered strong opposition from powerful institutions. We will read the plays in the context of the literary, dramatic, and theatrical/performance traditions which he reworked (farce, comedia dell'arte, Latin comedy, Spanish Golden Age theater, satiric poetry, the novel), while considering the relationship of laughter to social norms, with particular emphasis on sexuality, gender roles, and cultural identities.

Instructor(s): Larry Norman Terms Offered: Course not offered in 24-25.
Prerequisite(s): FREN 20500 or FREN 20503.

Note(s): Taught in French.
Equivalent Course(s): TAPS 28470, TAPS 38470, FREN 35000, FREN 25000

FNDL 25306. Deconstruction and Religion. 100 Units.

In this seminar we will carefully consider selected works by French philosopher Jacques Derrida. We will address the emergence of religious themes in his early work and reconsider the relation between deconstruction and theology as divergent modes of discourse. We will then examine the roles of messianism, belief, and confession in his later work.

Instructor(s): Ryan Coyne Terms Offered: Autumn
Note(s): This course meets the CS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 50112, THEO 50112, RLST 23112

FNDL 25714. An Introduction to Wittgenstein’s Tractatus. 100 Units.

This will be an introductory course on Wittgenstein’s Tractatus. The seminar will be organized around the following proposal: the book is meant to reveal the sort of understanding that is at stake whenever a philosophical problem arises. It teaches that such understanding is not a form of knowledge - and in particular not scientific knowledge- of whether or why something is the case. Its clarification of the sort of understanding at issue here allows for a reading according to which the Tractatus, contrary to what most commentators assume, seeks to affirm rather than to cancel philosophy. It affirms it as a fundamental concern with understanding distinct from science or from reason.

Instructor(s): Irad Kimhi Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2024
Prerequisite(s): Background in philosophy for Undergrads.
Note(s): Undergrads require the Instructor’s consent to register.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTh 35714, PHIL 25714, SCTh 25714, PHIL 35714

FNDL 25715. Aristotle: Action, Embodied Agents and Value in Acting. 100 Units.

The aim of the course is to understand and assess central aspects of Aristotle’s account of actions and agency. We will locate his views within the context of his discussion of (a) the relation between psychological and physical states, processes, and activities and (b) the value of acting well. The course is aimed at graduates and advanced undergraduates (seniors and juniors) in Philosophy or Classics.

Instructor(s): David Charles Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2024
Prerequisite(s): Knowledge of Greek is not required.
Note(s): Only senior Undergraduates with the instructor’s consent can register. No consent is required for Graduate Students. Auditors are allowed subject to enrollment and with the instructor’s permission. Auditors will be expected to attend all classes, complete all reading assignments, and participate in class discussions, but not to complete writing assignments.
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 35924, SCTh 35715, CLCV 25924, SCTh 25715, PHIL 25715, PHIL 35715

FNDL 26102. Chris Marker. 100 Units.

Chris Marker (1921-2012) is one of the most influential and important filmmakers to emerge in the post-war era in France, yet he remains relatively unknown to a wider audience. Marker's multifaceted work encompasses writing, photography, filmmaking, videography, gallery installation, television, and digital multimedia. He directed over 60 films and is known foremost for his "essay films," a hybrid of documentary and personal reflection, which he invigorated if not invented with films like Lettre de Siberie (Letter from Siberia, 1958) or Sans Soleil (Sunless, 1983). His most famous film, La Jetée (1962), his only (science) fiction film made up almost entirely of black-and-white still photographs, was the inspiration for Terry Gilliam's 12 Monkeys (1995). In 1990, he created his first multi-media installation, Zapping Zone, and in 1997 he experimented with the format of the CD-Rom to create a multi-layered, multimedia memoir (Immemory). In 2008, he continued his venture into digital spaces with Ouvroir, realized on the platform of Second Life. Marker was a passionate traveler who documented the journeys he took, the people he met, and revolutionary upheavals at home and afar. We will follow Marker's travels through time, space, and media, during which we will also encounter artists with whom he crossed paths, with whom he collaborated, or who were inspired by his work.
Instructor(s): Dominique Bluher Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): MADD 13303, CMST 26303, CMST 36303, ARTV 20032

FNDL 27005. Thucydides' History of the Peloponnesian War. 100 Units.  
Description TBD  
Instructor(s): Jamie Redfield Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 31933

FNDL 27006. The Iliad as a Whole. 100 Units.  
After a review of the textual history of the Iliad and a consideration of the probable conditions of its composition, a close reading of the text will explore the interrelations of the story on a collective level-military and political-with the personal stories of the leading characters. Some acquaintance with the text in the original  
Instructor(s): Jamie Redfield Terms Offered: Autumn. Autumn 2023  
Prerequisite(s): Instructor’s consent is required for Undergrads.  
Note(s): This course will be more valuable to students with some knowledge of the text in the original.  
Equivalent Course(s): CLCV 23923, SCTH 31934, SCTH 21934, CLAS 31923

FNDL 27800. Kant's 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) (IV)  
Instructor(s): Thomas Pendlebury Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): CHSS 37901, HIPS 25001, PHIL 27500, PHIL 37500

FNDL 28290. Samuel Richardson's Clarissa. 100 Units.  
This course will examine the very long and possibly-very probably-the greatest novel in the English language. We’ll consider the effect of Richardson’s decision to conduct his novel as a series of letters, and we’ll pay particular attention to his extraordinary effectiveness in creating complexity in a fairly simple plot and in tracking an ever-expanding cast of characters. The Penguin edition we’ll be using comes to 1499 pages, and they are over-sized pages. This is a course for committed readers! (1650-1830; 18th/19th)  
Instructor(s): Frances Ferguson Terms Offered: Autumn  
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 38290, ENGL 28290

FNDL 28401. Pasolini. 100 Units.  
This course examines each aspect of Pasolini’s artistic production according to the most recent literary and cultural theories, including Gender Studies. We shall analyze his poetry (in particular “Le Ceneri di Gramsci” and “Poesie informa di rosa”), some of his novels (“Ragazzi di vita,” “Una vita violenta,” “Teorema,” “Petrolio”), and his numerous essays on the relationship between standard Italian and dialects, semiotics and cinema, and the role of intellectuals in contemporary Western culture. We shall also discuss the following films: “Accattone,” “La ricotta,” “Edipo Re,” “Teorema,” and “Salo”.  
Instructor(s): Armando Maggi  
Note(s): Taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.  
Equivalent Course(s): CMST 23500, ITAL 38400, CMST 33500, GNSE 28600, GNSE 38600, ITAL 28400

FNDL 28500. Petrarch and the Birth of Western Modernity. 100 Units.  
This course offers a close reading of the theoretical works of Petrarch (known as the “father of humanism” or “first modern man”) with the aim of pinpointing the literary and rhetorical skills, as well as the self-conscious agenda, that went into the proclamation of a new era in Western history: the “Renaissance.” How do we at once pay homage to and overcome a time-honored past without severing our ties to history altogether? Is Petrarch’s model still viable today in efforts to forge a new beginning? We will pay special attention to Petrarch’s fraught relationship with religious and secular models such as Saint Augustine and Cicero, to Petrarch’s legacy in notable Renaissance humanists (Pico, Poliziano, Erasmus, Montaigne, etc.), and to the correlation of Petrarchian inquiry with modern concerns and methodologies in textual and social analysis, including German hermeneutics (Gadamer) and critical theory (Gramsci).  
Instructor(s): Rocco Rubini  
Note(s): Taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.  
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 28500, ITAL 38500

FNDL 29305. Machiavelli: Politics and Theater. 100 Units.  
Arguably the most debated political theorist of all time due to The Prince, Machiavelli genuinely aspired to be remembered for his creative prowess. He explored various literary genres, such as short stories, dialogues, satirical poetry, letter writing, and, notably, theater, where he demonstrated mastery with The Mandrake, an exemplary Renaissance comedy. This course aims to reintegrate these two aspects of Machiavelli: the serious politician and the facetious performer, a Janus-faced figure who serves as a precursor of both Hobbes and Montaigne. We will revive the image of this “Renaissance man,” and, through him, shed light on his era and fellow humanists by restoring their intellectual unity of prescription and laughter. Indeed, we will discover that Machiavelli encourages us not to take things, including him and ourselves, too seriously! Taught in English.
and intimate violence was inspired by an eclectic range of source material. Generations of critical thinkers from religion, civilization, and force. His insistence on cultivating technologies of the self as a response to both colonial the brutalities of modernity, Gandhi's thought encompassed concepts of sovereignty, the state, self and society, ninety volumes of public speeches, personal correspondence, and published essays. A modernist arrayed against the twentieth century. For a man so devoted to periodic vows of silence and withdrawal, he nevertheless left over

The moral and political writings of M.K. Gandhi constitute one of the most influential archives of ethics in the stereotyes, freedom of speech, and the limits of dissent. Please note that this course is rated Mature for adult 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.

Aristophanes' extant plays (in translation) in order to address topics such as the performative, ritual, and political more mundane experiences of Athenians in the fifth century BCE. This course will examine closely a number of genres and the different works, review scholarly theories about the texts and about ideas in them, and situate them in the history of Israel and Judea and in the culture of ancient Southwest Asia. We will also engage theories of history, literature, and narrative. The course includes a weekly Discussion Section for mixed-modes activities and conceptual discussions.

Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for RLST majors/minors.

Instructor(s): J. Hall Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 33608, ANCM 33900, LLISO 20803, HIST 30803, HIST 20803, CLCV 23608

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 a number of Aristophanes' 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, ANCM 33900, LLISO 20803, HIST 30803, HIST 20803, CLCV 23608

FNDL 23907. Gandhi and His Critics. 100 Units.
The moral and political writings of M.K. Gandhi constitute one of the most influential archives of ethics in the twentieth century. For a man so devoted to periodic vows of silence and withdrawal, he nevertheless left over ninety volumes of public speeches, personal correspondence, and published essays. A modernist arrayed against the brutalities of modernity, Gandhi’s thought encompassed concepts of sovereignty, the state, self and society, religion, civilization, and force. His insistence on cultivating technologies of the self as a response to both colonial and intimate violence was inspired by an ecletic range of source material. Generations of critical thinkers from
around the world, including Black, feminist, Communist, and Dalit political activists, engaged with his ideas. This course explores several themes in Gandhi’s ethical thought and the responses they have generated.

Instructor(s): Anand Venkatkrishnan Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): HREL 33907, CRES 23907, RLST 23907, RETH 33907

FNDL 24601. Martin and Malcolm: Life and Belief. 100 Units.
This course examines the religious, social, cultural, political, and personal factors that went into the making of the two most prominent public leaders and public intellectuals emerging from the African American community in the 1950s and 1960s: Malcolm X and Martin Luther King, Jr. We will review their autobiographies, the domestic trends within the USA, and the larger international forces operating during their times. Their life stories provide the contexts for the sharp differences and surprising commonalities in their political thought and religious beliefs. At the end of their lives, were they still radical contrasts, sharing the same views, or had their beliefs shifted - did Malcolm become Martin and Martin become Malcolm?

Instructor(s): Dwight Hopkins Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): AMER 24601, RDIN 24601, RLST 24601, HIST 27209

FNDL 24920. Primo Levi. 100 Units.
Witness, novelist, essayist, translator, linguist, chemist, and even entomologist. Primo Levi is a polyhedral author, and this course revisits his work in all its facets. We will privilege the most hybrid of his texts: The Search for Roots, an anthology that collects the author’s favorite readings—a book assembled through the books of the others, but which represents Levi’s most authentic portrait. By using this work as an entry point into Levi’s universe, we will later explore his other texts, addressing issues such as the unsettling relationship between survival and testimony, the “sinful” choice of fiction, the oblique path towards autobiography, and the paradoxes of witnessing by proxy.

Instructor(s): Maria Anna Mariani Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Open to advanced undergrads with consent of instructor.
Note(s): Taught in Italian.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 24920, ITAL 34920, JWSC 24920

FNDL 25002. Plato’s Symposium. 100 Units.
The seminar is devoted to close readings and extended discussions of Plato’s Symposium. We will explore the views on Eros presented in the various speeches comprising the dialogue, among them: love’s relationship to physical beauty and human desire; its potential for prompting heroic action and forging moral education; its significance for the soul and place in the cosmos. We will also analyze the literary aspects of the work (plot, action, allegory); the dialogue’s historical setting (democratic Athens beset by domestic conspiracies and engaged in an apocalyptic war); its implications for political philosophy; and the function of a symposium in classical Athens. We will devote several sessions at the end of term to major interpretations of the dialogue.

Instructor(s): D. Kasimis, J. McCormick Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): PLSC 25807, PLSC 35807

FNDL 25307. Milton and Blake: Conceptions of the Christian Epic. 100 Units.
Milton wrote Paradise Lost to capture in epic form the essence of Christianity; Blake wrote Jerusalem to correct Milton’s mistakes. We’ll read them together to get in on the debate.

Instructor(s): Richard Rosengarten Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 26411, ENGL 36401, RLVC 36401, RLST 26401

FNDL 25502. Simone de Beauvoir as Philosopher. 100 Units.
This class will survey the philosophical work of twentieth-century Existentialist thinker Simone de Beauvoir. Best known as the author of the landmark second-wave feminist book, The Second Sex, de Beauvoir wrote extensively on topics in ethics, politics, and phenomenology. She also published several novels, one of which (The Mandarins) won the prestigious Prix Goncourt. Even so, the vast majority of de Beauvoir’s work is rarely studied in either France or the United States. Our goal in this class will be to take de Beauvoir seriously as one of the most important philosophical thinkers of the twentieth century. We will aim to understand her intellectual program holistically, with emphasis on the way in which her Existentialist concerns informed her work in literature and feminism. Works to be read include The Ethics of Ambiguity, The Second Sex, The Mandarins, Memoirs of a Dutiful Daughter, and selected essays. Classes and readings will be in English; background knowledge of post-Kantian European philosophy is helpful but not necessary.

Instructor(s): ELIZA LITTLE Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 20679

FNDL 25822. Topics in EALC: Themes in Traditional Chinese Thought. 100 Units.
An introduction to ideas and ways of thinking in traditional China, and to some extent East Asia more broadly. This year, we will focus on ideas of qi (“breath,” “vital energy,” “psycho-physical stuff”), and related ideas about the human place in the cosmos, from their earliest appearance through their use in Neo-Confucian thought.

Instructor(s): P. Copp Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Not offered in 2023-24.
Equivalent Course(s): EALC 10717
FNDL 25911. bell hooks and Cornel West: Education for Resistance. 100 Units.
Cornell West and bell hooks are two of the most influential philosophers and cultural critics of the past half-century. Their writings—including their co-authored book-address pressing questions about politics, religion, race, education, film, and gender. In different ways, they each find resources for hope, love, and liberation in an unjust social order. In this course, we will read selections from their writings over the last forty years alongside the authors who influenced their thinking (including Du Bois, Freire, Morrison, King, and Baldwin). We will pay special attention to how hooks and West communicate to popular audiences, how they engage religious traditions (their own and others), and the role of dialogue in their thought and practice. The goal of the course is not just to think about hooks and West, but to think with them about ethics, writing, American culture, and the aims of education. No prior familiarity with either author is required.
Instructor(s): Russell Johnson Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 22910, RLST 25910, GNSE 25910

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. Justin Steinberg
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 22000, ITAL 32000, MDVL 22003

FNDL 27203. Žižek, The Sublime Object of Ideology. 100 Units.
tbd
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): REES 27203

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: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Familiarity with classical Chinese required.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTR 37512, CMLT 37512, CMLT 27512, EALC 27512, EALC 37512

FNDL 27517. Metaphysics, Morbidity, & Modernity: Mann’s The Magic Mountain. 100 Units.
Our main task in this course is to explore in detail one of the most significant novels of the twentieth century, Thomas Mann’s The Magic Mountain. But this novel is also a window onto the entirety of modern European thought, and it provides, at the same time, a telling perspective of the crisis of European culture prior to and following on World War I. It is, in Thomas Mann’s formulation, a time-novel: a novel about its time, but also a novel about human being in time. For anyone interested in the configuration of European intellectual life in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, Mann’s great (and challenging) novel is indispensible reading. Lectures will relate Mann’s novel to its great European counterparts (e.g., Proust, Joyce, Musil), to the traditions of European thought from Voltaire to Georg Lukacs, from Schopenhauer to Heidegger, from Marx to Max Weber.
Instructor(s): David Wellbery Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 27517, GRMN 27517, SIGN 26086

FNDL 27523. Reading Kierkegaard. 100 Units.
This will be a discussion-centered seminar that facilitates close readings some of Kierkegaard texts: The Present Age, Fear and Trembling, Sickness Unto Death, and The Lily of the Field and the Bird of the Air. Topics to be considered will include: living in clichés and self-satisfaction, despair, absolute requirements, the demands of ethical life, and becoming a human being. We shall also consider Kierkegaard’s forms of writing and manners of persuasion. Students will be expected to write comments each week and to read the comments of others. Our reading each week will be determined by the pace of the group. (IV)
Instructor(s): Jonathan Lear Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): This seminar is intended for undergraduate majors in Philosophy and Fundamentals and for graduate students in Social Thought and Philosophy. Permission of Instructor required.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTR 27523, PHIL 27523, SCTR 37523, PHIL 37523

FNDL 27908. Tocqueville in America, from Then to Now. 100 Units.
Ever since Alexis de Tocqueville visited the United States during the Jacksonian Era, his account of what he saw there, _Democracy in America_, has become a kind of latter-day founding document to which Americans turn
again and again to understand themselves and their past. Although he was an aristocrat manqué and a failed politician—or perhaps because of it—Tocqueville saw into the heart of democratic society as it had advanced in North America, for better and for worse. In the decades since, generations of commentators and intellectuals have returned to his insights to develop an account of what makes democracy in America distinctive, and what ties it to the broader currents of the unfolding modern world. To explore this rich palimpsest of insight we will read Tocqueville’s masterpiece along with the contemporary and subsequent responses to it that have inscribed his analysis indelibly into the American political tradition. Coursework will culminate in an independent research project on the legacy of Tocqueville in America.

Instructor(s): J. Spanrow & E. Slauder
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 27908, LLSO 27908, ENGL 27908, DEEMS 27908, AMER 27908

FNDL 28202. Introduction to the New Testament: Texts and Contexts of Interpretation. 100 Units.
This class introduces students to the texts that make up the New Testament through close readings of representative examples. Through course lectures and readings, students will gain familiarity with the historical, geographical, social, religious, cultural, and political contexts of New Testament literature and the events they narrate. We will also learn about the central literary genres found within the collection of texts that came to form the canonical New Testament, including “gospels,” “acts,” “letters,” and “apocalypses”), and will we examine how awareness of genre conventions enhances our reading of these works. Students will also learn about the distinctive theological and cultural viewpoints contained within various New Testament texts. As we learn about the history of biblical scholarship, especially the goals and methods of biblical interpretation, we will practice refining our questions. Assignments and discussion will allow students to develop their skills as attuned readers of both ancient texts as well as modern biblical scholarship. PQ: No prior knowledge of biblical literature, the ancient world, or Christianity is expected. The only expectation is commitment to engaged discussion about the challenges of interpretation with classmates holding various viewpoints.
Instructor(s): Erin Walsh
Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): This course meets the HS or LMCS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students. This course counts as a Gateway course for Rlst majors/minors.
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 12500, Rlst 12000, CLCV 32524, CLAS 32524, BIBL 32500

FNDL 29205. The Simultaneity of Time: Reading Jorge Luis Borges in the 21st Century. 100 Units.
The Simultaneity of Time: Reading Jorge Luis Borges in the 21st Century
Instructor(s): Mauricio Menozio
Terms Offered: Winter
Equivalent Course(s): HIST 26307

FNDL 29405. La Princesse de Clèves and the Genesis of the Modern Novel. 100 Units.
Madame de La Fayette’s 1678 novel represents a turning point in the international development of the psychological novel and historical fiction. Set in a Renaissance past of courtly international intrigue, the novel plumbs its characters’ interiorized struggles with erotic desire, marriage, and adultery, forging a path for later novelists such as Flaubert, George Eliot, and Tolstoy. We will examine debates about its literary form and moral impact, as well as around gender and women’s writing, placing the novel in a transnational context (Spanish, Italian, and English romances, drama, and moral philosophy) and its later reception, including film adaptations and its role in heated contemporary controversies around the place of the humanities in society. Students are encouraged to undertake individual comparative research projects in relation to the novel. Course taught in English but reading ability in French required.
Instructor(s): Larry Norman
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): Consent of instructor required for undergrads; those seeking FREN credit must have completed at least one French literature course, 21700 or higher.
Note(s): All work in French for students seeking FREN credit; written work may be in English for those taking course for CMLT, SCTH, or FNDL credit.
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 38990, FREN 38900, FREN 28900, CMLT 28990

FNDL 29416. Dreaming and Interpreting. 100 Units.
What is a dream? In this course, we will explore this ancient question through a close engagement with the founding texts of psychoanalysis. Sigmund Freud’s The Interpretation of Dreams, published on the eve of the year 1900, offered a revolutionary account of the human mind and imagination. We will read this challenging text in its entirety before turning to the powerful critique posed by Freud’s contemporary, Carl Jung. Charismatic disciple turned adversary, Jung diverged from Freud to develop his own influential interpretation of dreams and what they reveal about the structure of the mind. As we chart the complex rivalry between these two great thinkers (and dreamers), we will try to understand how and why their mutually opposed theories are also closely intertwined. Among other topics, we will focus on the content and the form of dreams and dreaming; the image of the dream vs. the text of analysis; the stakes of interpretation, both theoretical and therapeutic; individual vs. collective symbols; the autobiographical elements in both Freud and Jung’s theories of dreaming; and the relation between dreams and mental illness, madness, and trauma. Throughout, we will ask what possibilities these ideas hold for us today in our own efforts to imagine and interpret our world.
Instructor(s): Emma Lunbeck
Terms Offered: Winter
Prerequisite(s): None
Note(s): Undergraduate Seminar
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 20682
**SPRING QUARTER COURSES**

**FNDL 20700. Aquinas: On God, Being and Evil. 100 Units.**
This course considers sections from Saint Thomas Aquinas's Summa Theologica. Among the topics considered are God’s existence; the relationship between God and Being; and human nature.
Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 20700, CLCV 23712, RLST 23605

**FNDL 21300. James Joyce: Ulysses. 100 Units.**
This course considers themes that include the problems of exile, homelessness, and nationality; the mysteries of paternity and maternity; the meaning of the Return; Joyce’s epistemology and his use of dream, fantasy, and hallucinations; and Joyce’s experimentation with and use of language.
Instructor(s): S. Meredith
Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): ENGL 21301

**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. Justin Steinberg
Terms Offered: Winter
Note(s): Taught in English.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 33502, MDVL 23502, ITAL 23502

**FNDL 21772. Three Comedies of Sexual Revolution. 100 Units.**
This seminar will discuss three comedies of sexual revolution from three different times and places. Aristophanes’s Assemblywomen recounts how under the leadership of the able Praxagora the women of Athens take over the Assembly and legislate a new regime in which private property is replaced by communism and sexual equity is achieved in favor of the old and unattractive at the expense of the young and attractive. Machiavelli’s Mandragola dramatizes the tricks by which young Callimaco manages with the aid of the trickster parasite Ligurio to have sex with Lucrezia, the beautiful young wife of the elderly lawyer Nicomaco, with the consent of both her and her husband, ushering in a new regime in which all are satisfied. In Shakespeare’s Measure for Measure Angelo the interim duke of Vienna institutes a repressive sexual regime in which the brothels are closed and extramarital sex is a capital crime. What might we learn about sexual relations from these diverse plays? Why are they comedies?
Instructor(s): Nathan Tarcov & Glenn Most
Terms Offered: Spring, Spring 2024
Prerequisite(s): Undergraduates need the Instructor’s permission to register.
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 25823, CLAS 37623, PLSC 25997, GNSE 25997, CMLT 27623, CMLT 25823, GNSE 35997, SCTH 35997, PLSC 35997

**FNDL 21804. Dante’s Divine Comedy III: Paradiso. 100 Units.**
An in-depth study of the third cantica of Dante’s masterpiece, considered the most difficult but in many ways also the most innovative. Read alongside his scientific treatise the "Convivio" and his political manifesto the "Monarchia."
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg
Prerequisite(s): Completion of the previous courses in the sequence not required, but students should familiarize themselves with the "Inferno" and the "Purgatorio" before the first day of class.
Note(s): Course conducted in English. Those seeking Italian credit will do all work in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 22101, MDVL 22101, ITAL 32101

**FNDL 21810. Italo Calvino. 100 Units.**
Italo Calvino is one of the most important authors of the twentieth century. We will read some of his most famous books in Italian. Among others, we will study Le Cita, Invisibili, Gli Amori Difficili, Il Barone Rampante, Se Una Notte D’Inverno Un Viaggiatore. Reading Calvino is an essential experience for all students of Italian culture. We will place his books and his poetics in the context of modern Italian culture and Western European post-modernism.
Instructor(s): A. Maggi
Note(s): Taught in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 21800

**FNDL 21820. Italo Calvino: the Dark Side. 100 Units.**
An intense reading of Italo Calvino’s later works: we will contemplate the orbital debris of “Cosmomics” and “t zero,” and we will follow the labyrinthine threads of “The Castle of Crossed Destinities” and the “Invisible
Cities.” After stumbling upon the suspended multiple beginnings of “If On a Winter’s Night a Traveler,” we will probe the possibilities of literature with the essays collected in "Una pietra sopra.” Finally, we will encounter "Mr Palomar," who will provide us with a set of instructions on how to neutralize the self and "learn how to be dead.” The approach will be both philosophical and historical, focusing on Calvino’s ambiguous fascination with science, his critique of the aporias of reason and the "dementia” of the intellectual, and his engagement with the nuclear threat of total annihilation.

Instructor(s): Maria Anna Mariani
Note(s): Taught in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 31820, ITAL 21820

FNDL 22204. Italian Renaissance: Petrarch, Machiavelli, and the Wars of Popes and Kings. 100 Units.
Florence, Rome, and the Italian city-states in the age of plagues and cathedrals, Petrarch and Machiavelli, Medici and Borgia (1250-1600), with a focus on literature, philosophy, primary sources, the revival of antiquity, and the papacy’s entanglement with pan-European politics. We will examine humanism, patronage, politics, corruption, assassination, feuds, art, music, magic, censorship, education, science, heresy, and the roots of the Reformation. Writing assignments focus on higher level writing skills, with a creative writing component linked to our in-class role-played reenactment of a Renaissance papal election (LARP). First-year students and non-History majors welcome.
Instructor(s): A. Palmer Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Graduate students by consent only; register for the course as HIST 90000 Reading and Research: History.
Note(s): Assignments: short papers, alternative projects.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 16000, HIST 12203, CLCV 22216, SIGN 26034, MDVL 12203, RLST 22203, KNOW 12203, RENS 12203

FNDL 22312. Englished Homer. 100 Units.
From the strong, rapid fourteeners of Chapman’s Elizabethan English to the taut rhythms of Alice Oswald’s Memorial, Homer’s Iliad takes on new meaning and feel each time the poem is translated anew. This workshop-style course will engage the many English versions of Homeric poetry, attending to theme, image, word, line, paragraph, and meter; noting what is kept and what is changed. We will also consider the theory and practice of translation, especially as it has been understood by these poets over the last four centuries. No knowledge of Greek is required.
Instructor(s): E. Austin Terms Offered: Spring

FNDL 22601. The Making and Unmaking of Petrarch’s Canzoniere. 100 Units.
This course is an intensive reading of Petrarch’s influential and groundbreaking self-anthology. Petrarch’s collecting and ordering of his own work is in many ways without precedent. We examine in particular the historical redactions of the Canzoniere, its status as a work-in-progress, what Petrarch excluded from its various forms (especially the Rime disperse), early drafts, and authorial variants. The emergence of a new role for the vernacular author and the shifting space of handwriting and the book are central concerns in our discussions, and we make frequent use of facsimiles and diplomatic editions.
Instructor(s): J. Steinberg
Note(s): Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 32600, ITAL 22600

FNDL 22418. The Scopes Trial in Historical Perspective. 100 Units.
This course will explore in depth and in detail the 1925 Scopes Trial in Dayton, Tennessee, especially in light of its centennial. We will examine the transcript of the trial, newspaper editorials, cartoons, scholarly analyses, and various contemporary observations on the meaning and significance of the trial. Among the topics covered are the fundamentalist/modernist controversy of the 1920s and its consequences, interpretations of the origins and tenacity of the anti-evolution campaign, and broader debates about science and religion and the contested authority of experts in American society. Though much of the historical analysis will focus on the 1920s, some attention will be paid to the implications of this highly publicized trial and what it came to signify about larger cultural, political, and religious divisions in the United States.
Instructor(s): Curtis Evans Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the HS or SCSR Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): AMER 22418, RAME 32418, HCHR 32418, AMER 32418, RLST 22418, HIST 27609, HIST 37609

FNDL 22707. Rumi: Poetry, Wisdom, and Metaphysics. 100 Units.
Hailed as one of the world’s greatest mystical poets, Jalal al-Din Rumi (d. 1273) transcends the boundaries of language, religion and ethnicity. Today Rumi’s poems can be heard in mosques, monasteries, churches and synagogues. This course examines Rumi’s teachings, the metaphysics of love and his perennial wisdom through translations of his sublime verse, the quintessential art form of the Sufis. Students will engage with the field of Persian Sufi literature and understand the methods employed by scholars in studying Sufi poetry.
Instructor(s): Mukhtar Ali Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 22707, NEHC 22707
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 Freund, 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): MUSI 24520, CMST 32119, GRMN 23419, GRMN 33419, MUSI 32520, CMST 22119

FNDL 23599. Christian and Anti-Christian: Kierkegaard and Nietzsche on Religion and Morality. 100 Units.
This course explores two radically different assessments of religion and morality, one by the Protestant thinker Søren Kierkegaard, and the other by an arch-critic of religion and “morality,” Friedrich Nietzsche. The course will focus on their assessments of religious faith and its relation to morality and the human good. We will explore Kierkegaard’s Fear and Trembling and also Nietzsche’s works, On the Genealogy of Morals. The course moves in interlocking moments: an inquiry into Kierkegaard’s and Nietzsche’s account of religion and its moral outlook, and their outlooks on how best to live given their assessments of religion and morality. Additionally, the course will explore their styles of writing and the relation between style and the purpose and content of their thought. The general aim of the course, then, is to explore two seminal minds in the development of Western thought with the question in mind of their possible contribution to current religious and ethical thinking.
Instructor(s): William Schweiker Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): RLST 23599, RETH 33599, THEO 33599

FNDL 24806. History of Sexuality and Sin. 100 Units.
Since Foucault’s groundbreaking work on the History of Sexuality, we have become attuned to the effects of power and the political implications of the science of sexuality. While Foucault’s text has offered a critical avenue to examine the secular state’s administrations of sexuality, it begins with Christianity’s techniques of power based on the confession of one’s sex. The Christian formulation of the relationship between ‘sex’ and ‘sin’ is essential to understanding the techniques of power that connect sexuality, legality, criminality, normality, and transgression in modern secular contexts. In this class, we will begin with the critical questions of the History of Sexuality, then turn to primary texts in order to examine the way ‘sex’ and ‘sin’ became conceptually connected in Christianity, and finally interrogate the effects of this relation for medieval and modern politics. Over the course of these readings, we will trace the relation between the concepts and their effects to discern the histories of sexuality that lie at the root of contemporary debates on freedom, power, resistance, and desire. No prerequisites.
Instructor(s): Maureen Kelly Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): RSL 24803, GNSE 23152, MDVL 24803, HIPS 24803

FNDL 25218. Suhrawardi and His Interpreters. 100 Units.
Shihāb al-Din Suhrawardī (d. 1191), the founder of the ishrāqī philosophical tradition, is undoubtedly one of the most innovative and influential philosophers in the history of Islamic thought. In this seminar, we will examine major themes in the writings of Suhrwardī along with excerpts from Arabic commentaries by Muslim and Jewish authors such as Ibn Kammūnah (d. 1284), Shahrazūrī (d. 1288), Quʾb al-Dīn Shīrāzī (d. 1311), Dawānī (d. 1502), Daštakī (d. 1542), Qarabāḡhī (d. 1625) and Harawī (d. 1689). Topics include, Suhrwardī’s understanding of the history of philosophy, light and the order of existence, virtues and human happiness, self-knowledge and self-awareness, conceptual and non-conceptual knowledge, and theory of ritual actions.
Instructor(s): Nariman Aavanī Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): 2 years of Arabic.
Note(s): This course meets the CS Committee distribution requirement for Divinity students.
Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 25218, ISLM 35218, NEHC 25218, NEHC 35218, RLST 25218

FNDL 25308. Black Theology: Hopkins Versus Cone. 100 Units.
Black Theology of Liberation, an indigenous USA discipline and movement, began on July 31, 1966 and spread nationally and internationally when James H. Cone published his first book in March 1969. Since that time, a second generation has emerged. In this course, we will create a debate between the second generation (represented by Dwight N. Hopkins) and the first generation (represented by James H. Cone). We will look at the political, economic, cultural, gender, and sexual orientation parts of this debate.
Instructor(s): Dwight Hopkins Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): AMER 23111, GLST 23111, RLST 23111, CRES 23111

FNDL 25311. Pale Fire. 100 Units.
This course is an intensive reading of Pale Fire by Nabokov.
Instructor(s): M. Sternstein Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): GNSE 23152, RLST 24803

FNDL 25405. The Bible in U.S. Politics: The Use and Abuse of Sacred Texts in the Public. 100 Units.
People across the political spectrum continue to cite the Bible to justify their viewpoints. Black Lives Matter protestors carried signs citing scriptural support for the rights of African Americans to life and justice, while some of those who stormed the U.S. Capitol on January 6th first marched around their state capitols in recreation
of biblical Israel’s circling of the doomed city Jericho. How can the same book serve the political ends of such ideologically distinct movements? In this course, we will explore the variety of ways in which the Bible, especially the Christian New Testament, informs contemporary political discourse. We will discuss what the Bible is and where it comes from, and how an interpreter’s social location and culturally and historically-bound assumptions shape their interpretation. We will build upon this foundation by examining several contentious political issues in which the Bible is commonly invoked, including abortion, sexuality, immigration, and gun rights. We will analyze the key passages used by supporters of various policy positions to support their claims, situating these texts in their original contexts and highlighting the historical distance that problematizes their use today. Prior familiarity with biblical literature is not required.

Instructor(s): Heinrich Meier Terms Offered: Spring. Course will be taught Spring 2022.

FNDL 25424. Spiritual Exercises: Giving Form to Thought and Life from Plato to Descartes. 100 Units.

This course will examine the tradition of spiritual exercises from antiquity to the early modern period. Spiritual exercises were at the core of classical paideia, the regimen of self-formation designed and promoted by ancient philosophers, orators, and other pedagogues. As Pierre Hadot and Michel Foucault have demonstrated, ancient philosophy first and foremost has to be understood as a “way of life,” as a set of techniques and practices for shaping the self according to wisdom. It was not until philosophy’s critical turn with Kant that it shed its practical dimension and became a “theoretical” discipline. Early Christianity, stylizing itself as the “true philosophy,” eagerly adopted the ancient spiritual exercises and retooled them for its salvational ends. Throughout the middle ages and early modern period spiritual exercises and meditative techniques informed a host of religious, cultural, and artistic practices and media such as prayer and devotional reading, religious art and poetry, but also theatrical performances and musical works. We will focus on individual exercises like the meditation, the examination of conscience, the discernment of spirits, the application of senses, prosoche (attention), consolation, contemplation, etc., and discuss authors such as Epictetus, Seneca, Marcus Aurelius, John Cassian, Augustine, Bonaventure, Ignatius, Descartes, and others.

Instructor(s): Christopher Wild Terms Offered: Spring.

Equivalent Course(s): RLVC 35424, GRMN 25424, COGS 22017, CLCV 25423, CLAS 35423, GRMN 35424, RLST 25424, CMLT 35424, CMLT 25424

FNDL 26401. Torquato Tasso. 100 Units.

This course investigates the entire corpus of Torquato Tasso, the major Italian poet of the second half of the sixteenth century. We read in detail the “Gerusalemme Liberata” and “Aminta,” his two most famous works, in the context of their specific literary genre. We then spend some time examining the intricacies of his vast collection of lyric poetry, including passages from his poem “Il mondo creato.” We also consider some of his dialogues in prose that address essential issues of Renaissance culture, such as the theories of love, emblematic expression, and the meaning of friendship.

Instructor(s): A. Maggi

Note(s): Taught in Italian. Course not offered in 24-25.

Equivalent Course(s): ITAL 36401, ITAL 26401

FNDL 27002. Reading Augustine’s Confessions. 100 Units.

This course will carry out a close reading of Augustine’s Confessions. We will study the work not only as a spiritual autobiography—a common approach—but also as a philosophical argument against alternatives to Christian faith and practice in the late fourth century. That argument will invite us to examine the implications of religious faith for human well-being and how religious convictions affect the quality of human relationships, self-knowledge, and the emotions. We’ll thus examine how Confessions interrogates the quality of human love, fear, hatred, and regret; moral responsibilities to ourselves and others; the (anxious) awareness that we are limited in body and time; and how to craft an honest narrative of self-understanding. We will ask (among other things), Is religion a source of personal healing and health, or an obstacle to it? What sorts of problems is religion meant to cure? What problems do religious beliefs create? How does religion bear on the self’s loves, its past, its mortality, its doubts? Along the way we’ll ask whether it is possible to want to do evil, whether it is possible to love or grieve too much, whether we are responsible for what happens in our dreams, what it means to be a friend to others—and how Augustine’s answers to these questions presuppose a wider account of divine justice, charity, and the ordering of the cosmos.

Instructor(s): Richard B. Miller Terms Offered: Autumn

Equivalent Course(s): MDVL 25102, RLST 25102

FNDL 27003. Philosophy and Comedy: Leo Strauss’s “Socrates and Aristophanes” 100 Units.

Leo Strauss’s Socrates and Aristophanes (1966) discusses not only the most important and most influential of all comedies, The Clouds, but also all the other comedies by Aristophanes that have come down to us. The book is the only writing of Strauss’s that deals with the whole corpus of a philosopher or poet. And it is the most intense and most demanding interpretation of Aristophanes a philosopher has presented up to now. In Socrates and Aristophanes Strauss carries on a dialogue with Aristophanes on the wisdom of the poet, on the just and unjust speech, on philosophy and politics, on the diversity of human natures, and on an œuvre that asks the question: quid est deus? what is a god?

Instructor(s): Heinrich Meier Terms Offered: Spring. Course will be taught Spring 2022.

Prerequisite(s): Open to undergraduates with instructor consent.
FNDL 27004. Politics and Philosophy: Leo Strauss' s “The City and Man” 100 Units.
The City and Man is a philosophical discussion of the complex relation between politics and philosophy. In chapter 1 (on Aristotle) politics is considered from the perspective of the citizen or statesman; in chapter 2 (on Plato’s Republic) it is reflected on from the point of view of the philosopher; and in chapter 3 (on Thucydides’ History) it is seen within the horizon of the prephilosophical political community. The center of the book is Strauss’s dialogue with Plato’s Republic. Strauss interprets “the broadest and deepest analysis of political idealism ever made” as a work of education. This education has a moderating effect on political ambition and leads its best readers to the philosophic life. The longest and perhaps most intriguing chapter, Strauss’s discussion of Thucydides, focuses on the political life and leads up to the question “what is a god?”
Instructor(s): Heinrich Meier Terms Offered: Spring
Note(s): Monday/Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.*, during the first five weeks of the term (March 28 – April 27, 2022).
Equivalent Course(s): CLAS 37521, PLSC 37324, SCTH 37324, PHIL 37324

FNDL 27007. Leo Strauss’ Philosophical “Autobiography” 100 Units.
Leo Strauss did not write an autobiography. However, he did mark out his path of thought through autobiographical reflections on the decisive challenges to which his oeuvre responded. The philosophically most demanding confrontation that Strauss presented on the question of how he became what he was is the so-called Autobiographical Preface of 1965, which he included in the American translation of his first book, “Spinoza’s Critique of Religion” (originally published in 1930). Two decades earlier, in the lecture The Living Issues of German Postwar Philosophy (1940), he made a first autobiographical attempt to publicly ascertain himself and determine his position. And in 1970 he published the concise retrospective A Giving of Accounts. The seminar will make these writings - which illuminate the significance of Nietzsche and Heidegger for Strauss and address his early engagement with revealed religion and politics, in a constellation ranging from Hermann Cohen and Franz Rosenzweig to Karl Barth and Carl Schmitt - the subject of a close reading. Selected letters to Karl Löwith, Gershom Scholem and others will be used as supplementary texts.
Instructor(s): Heinrich Meier Terms Offered: Spring, Spring 2024
Prerequisite(s): Undergraduates Need the Instructor’s Permission to Register.
Note(s): Monday/Wednesday, 10:30 a.m. – 1:20 p.m.*, during the first five weeks of the term (March 20 – April 19, 2023).
Equivalent Course(s): SCTH 37325, CLCV 27422, CLAS 37422, PHIL 27325, PHIL 37325

FNDL 27200. Dante’s Divine Comedy 1: Inferno. 100 Units.
This is the first part of a sequence focusing on Dante’s masterpiece. We examine Dante’s Inferno in its cultural (i.e., historical, artistic, philosophical, sociopolitical) context. In particular, we study Dante’s poem alongside other crucial Latin and vernacular texts of his age. They include selections from the Bible, Virgil’s Aeneid, Augustine’s Confessions, Ovid’s Metamorphoses, and the stilnovist and Siculo-Tuscan poets. Political turmoil, economic transformation, changing philosophical and theological paradigms, and social and religious conflict all converge in the making of the Inferno.
Instructor(s): H. Justin Steinberg
Note(s): Taught in English. Course not offered in 24-25.
Equivalent Course(s): DVPR 37326, SCTH 37326, SCTH 27326, PHIL 27326, CLCV 27423, CLAS 37423, PHIL 37326

FNDL 27603. Greek Oratory. 100 Units.
Aeschines and Demosthenes. These two orators were fierce rivals in Athens; the luck of textual transmission allows us to read both of them smearing the other, and to explore what apparently passed for valid argument in the Athenian lawcourts. Demosthenes produced his finest work in attacking Aeschines; in this class we will explore both men’s writings in depth.
Terms Offered: Spring. Topic: Aeschines and Demosthenes
Prerequisite(s): Two years or more of Greek.
Note(s): This course will not be offered 2022-23 will be offered 2025-26.
Equivalent Course(s): GREK 31900, GREK 21900

FNDL 28005. Ella Deloria’s Iron Hawk and the Lakȟóta Literary Tradition. 100 Units.
This course explores the Lakȟóta epic poem Iron Hawk, composed bilingually in the 1920s and 1930s from a centuries-old oral storytelling tradition. We will discuss the poem’s major themes of mythic etiology and communal kinship, as expressed in the words of its two named authors, oral poet Makȟúla and anthropologist Ella Deloria. Our close reading is grounded in the poem’s cultural origins among the Očhéthi Šakówiŋ nation, and we will think carefully about how this story of generosity and kinship implicates indigenous and non-indigenous American readers today. Supplementary readings from Julian Rice, Robert Brighurst, and David Teuber will help contextualize the poem as a fundamental text of indigenous American literature.
Instructor(s): J. Marsan Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CRES 28005
FNDL 28280. The Good Place and the Bad Place: Judgement, Punishment, and Living a Good Life. 100 Units.
Do you believe that you are a good person and, if so, why are you good? This course will investigate the connections between personal intentions to be a “good person” and the fear of punishment. What do we owe each other as ethical actors? Do the intentions of our actions matter or only the results of our actions? How can one be good in an increasingly complicated web of intersecting needs, social developments, and understandings of morality? This course will examine conceptions of hell, eternal punishment, and justice in a variety of religious traditions. In addition to reading authors such as Dante and John Milton, students will critically engage The Good Place, a sitcom which tackles deep questions of faith, morality, and the complexity of the human person.
We will think through competing understandings of justice (retributive, distributive, and restorative) alongside our individual beliefs surrounding fairness and deserveness. No prior knowledge of religious studies or ethics is expected.
Instructor(s): Foster Pinkney Terms Offered: Spring
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28280, RLST 28280

FNDL 28332. Dostoevsky’s Demons (1871-72) 100 Units.
In this course we will be reading closely and discussing the controversial novel by Fyodor Dostoevsky, Demons (Bezby, 1871-72) about political tension and terrorism in late nineteenth century Russia. Based on the historical incident of the “Nechaev cell,” a group that killed one of their own members as an act of political provocation, the novel gives a broad picture of the socio-political landscape, ideas about human agency in society, and the sensibilities of different social groups and classes in the late nineteenth century, and offers a philosophical meditation on the nature of political evil. We will read and discuss the novel in Russian. The final paper can be written in Russian or English. Taught in Russian.
Instructor(s): O. Solovieva Terms Offered: Spring

FNDL 28872. Jews in Nazi Germany: Lion Feuchtwanger’s novel The Oppermanns in historical context. 100 Units.
Recently republished in 2022, Lion Feuchtwanger’s 1933 best-seller The Oppermanns depicts a Jewish family who grapple with the Nazi seizure of power in Germany. Like many at the time, the Oppermanns think that the regime will be short-lived, but Feuchtwanger’s prescient novel anticipates the entrenchment of Nazi power and the creeping curtailing of Jewish life in Germany with uncanny accuracy—from the thugs attacking individuals to the Ministry of Propaganda’s demonization of Jewish Germans in mass media, via the enforced “Aryanization” of businesses required to employ non-Jewish managers. Discussion will focus on Feuchtwanger’s nuanced portrayal of the distinct ways in which family members react to these assaults, supplemented by historical texts, including the analysis of Nazi language (1946) by Victor Klemperer, a Jewish-German survivor, and documents in the Weimar Republic Sourcebook.
Instructor(s): Loren Kruger Terms Offered: Spring
Prerequisite(s): Required: Complete HUM core
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 28872, GRMN 28872, ENGL 28872, JWSC 28872

FNDL 29947. Autotheory/Autofiction. 100 Units.
A resurgence of contemporary life writing has been characterized by the terms “autotheory” and “autofiction.” These terms point to ways in which contemporary life writing complicates narrative presentations of selfhood by inflecting autobiography through generically estranged kinds of writing, theory and fiction. Narrative exposition may be further complicated by issues of non-monolingualism and gender insecurity that invite non-narrative exploration within the presentation of a life project. In this course we will examine contemporary exemplars of autotheory and autofiction in light of exemplars from earlier phases of modernity. Readings will include: Fernando Pessoa, Virginia Woolf, Jorge Luis Borges, Roland Barthes, Robert Glück, Lyn Hejinian, Clarice Lispector, Rachel Cusk, Cecilia Vicuña, Paul Freiçado, Gloria Anzaldúa, and Raquel Salas-Rivera. All readings will be in English, although there will be an opportunity to discuss texts in French and Spanish in the original language.
Instructor(s): Mark Payne Terms Offered: Autumn
Equivalent Course(s): CMLT 29947

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.

ANTH 20009   Embodiment: Governance, Resistance, Ethics       100
ANTH 20701   Introduction to African Civilization I       100
ANTH 20702   Introduction to African Civilization II      100
ANTH 20703   Introduction to African Civilization III     100
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