

Great Books III
GSHU 123.02
M/R 10-12, PLC 101
Syllabus
Fall 2009

Course Goals

This is a seminar course devoted to close reading and discussion of classical works of Western civilization. This section of the course also gives students extensive practice in critical and thoughtful writing. “The goal of the Great Books program is to instill in the student the habits of mind that characterize a self-reliant thinker, reader, and learner.”¹ Now that you are in your third semester of the great books colloquium, you should be comfortable with the shared inquiry discussion method as well as expressing your ideas in writing. Therefore, the greatest goal of this third course is to move past the communicative aspects toward creativity and autonomy. The best way to determine whether you are a liberally educated person is to test whether you can think independently and creatively. Furthermore, every student is expected to integrate the works of the first two great books courses into their thinking for this course.

Instructor

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RAC 132

Office Hours

M 2-3, T 10-11, W 11-12, R 2-3

Reading List

Descartes. Discourse on Method and the Meditations. Penguin.
Milton. Paradise Lost. Norton.
Locke. Second Treatise of Government. Hackett.
Rousseau. Basic Political Writings. Hackett.
Voltaire. Candide. Penguin.
Kant. Foundations of the Metaphysics of Morals. Library of Liberal Arts.
Shelley. Frankenstein. Signet.
Emerson. Selected Essays. Penguin.

Discussion (10%)

To participate in the great books colloquium is to be prepared and ready to discuss each day. This means that each person should anticipate each class session as if they themselves were responsible for leading the discussion that day. Every student is expected to be fully participatory.

Attendance

Our class lives by virtue of you, the students enrolled in, attending, and participating in it. As such, the discussion and inquiry into these texts cannot occur fully if you are absent. All students have two free absences, following which any and all absences will result in

¹ An Introduction to Shared Inquiry. Third Edition. The Great Books Foundation. 1992. p. ix.

the lowering of student's final class grade by 1.5% for each subsequent absence. This means, for example, that every two absences beyond the two excused absences will result in lowering your grade by one +/- grade level.

Short Writing (12%)

In order to keep us all on task with respect to both reading the material and reflecting on its meaning, each student is asked to submit a weekly writing assignments that will be collected at the beginning of each Monday's class. Students must deliver their writing in person at the beginning of class. These writings will serve as discussion prompts and pre-extended writing ideas. Anonymous drafts may be submitted up to 24 hours prior to the due date for direct feedback. Weekly writing will **not** be due on September 28 or November 2. Your first weekly writing is due – electronically – September 7 by 11:59 p.m.

Reading, Discussion, & Writing Schedule

Descartes (4) Aug 31; Sep 3, 10, 14
Milton (5) Sep 17, 21, 24, 28; Oct 1
Locke (2) Oct 5, 8
Rousseau (3) Oct 12, 19, 22
Voltaire (2) Oct 26, 29
Kant (4) Nov 2, 9, 12, 16
Shelley (2) Nov 19, 23
Emerson (4) Nov 30; Dec 3, 7, 10

Extended Writing (3 x 26%)

You are to submit three finished works of writing, each of which is at least 10 pages long, elaborating on an idea of your weekly writing or another topic or question. The first paper should focus on Milton or Descartes. The second paper must draw from at least two authors, not including the author you chose in the first paper. The last paper must draw from three other authors from this course. These papers are due on Oct 3, Nov 4, and Dec 17 – all papers are to be submitted electronically by 11:59 pm on the due date. Anonymous drafts may be submitted up to 24 hours prior to the due date for direct feedback.

Please submit all written work without your name affixed. Simply write your college wide ID on the back of the last page. This ensures that my grading of your work will be objective and honest.