

GREAT BOOKS IV
SYLLABUS
Spring 2010

Course Goals

The primary objectives of this seminar course include the following:

- 1) The demonstration of devoted and close reading of the texts,
- 2) The production of writing that is creative and primarily analytical in nature, and
- 3) Class participation that demonstrates an honest dedication to an accurate understanding of the text as well as a propensity to discuss the works as based on interpretive questions.
- 4) Since this is the final great books course in the (Western) colloquium, each student is expected to be full participatory and desirous of perfecting their abilities as excellent writers, thinkers, speakers, and knowledge experts on the subject at hand. Raise the bar for yourself.

Ultimately, I desire that each one of you attains a level of creativity and autonomy that will benefit you not only in other classes, but in life itself. Thus, our goal as co-learners in this class is to actively seek to reinforce the idea that: "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

Instructor

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Office Hours

M 1-2, T 1-2, R 1-2, F 9-10

Reading List

Kierkegaard, Soren. Fear and Trembling. Trans. Alastair Hannay. New York: PenguinBooks, 1985.
Nietzsche, Friedrich. On the Genealogy of Morals. Trans. Walter Kaufmann. Vintage Books. 1989.
Dostoevsky, Fyodor. The Brothers Karamazov. Trans. Constance Garnett. New York: Norton Critical Edition, 1976.
Darwin, Charles. The Origin of Species. Signet Classics. 2003.

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

Kawabata, Yasunari. *Beauty and Sadness*. Trans. Howard S. Hibbett. New York: Vintage Books, 1975.

Szyborska, Wislawa. *View With a Grain of Sand*. Trans. Stanislaw Baranczak and Clare Cavanagh. New York: Harcourt Brace, 1993.

Discussion (5%)

Each student is expected to be participatory on a daily basis. Make it a consistent habit to be prepared with several interpretive questions daily. Your participation will be graded each day based on the quality, quantity, insight, textual application and knowledge that you offer.

Class Cancellation Days

I am out of town on February 5 & March 26. For these days, class will not meet, but I expect you to keep up with the reading.

Attendance

You have two free absences beyond the cancellation dates just listed. After that, your final course grade will be lowered 1.5% per absence. Use the two free ones wisely.

Biweekly Writing Assignments (20%)

Each writing assignment is based on a prompt given by the instructor, as a function of the current reading material we are covering. Each paper is to be two pages in length, and is to be turned at the beginning of class on hard copy adhering to basic MLA format. The papers are due on the following dates: January 19; February 2, 16; March 16; April 6, 20. Late papers receive a score of zero. NO ELECTRONIC SUBMITTALS. Be prepared to share your writing with the class – that is, be prepared both to receive and to give constructive criticism.

The nature of each biweekly writing assignment will be determined by the instructor. They each will be one of the following: interpretive/analytic, genre mode, great ideas “Syntopicon” based, instructor wildcard, or student freestyle. Aim for professional quality writing worthy of publication, wherein there is a distinct thesis, a clear argument, and creative thought. Use text judiciously and with discrimination. Avoid using first person. Be sure to form a definite position that can be explicated via the text. You may only use texts from the Great Books Colloquium reading list. Each paper should be a product of analytical thought and careful analysis presented in a creative form. Each paper will be graded as follows: Title and Opening – 1 point, Thesis – 3 points, Argument – 3 points, Text Selection and Analysis – 2 points, Editing – 1 point. Total – 10 points.

Reading/Discussion Schedule (days)

Kierkegaard – 3, Nietzsche – 4, Dostoevsky – 11, Darwin – 3, Kawabata – 2, Szyborska – 3

Daily Reading

The best way to read the Great Books is as a daily habit. Accordingly, please refer to the suggested reading schedule on this course's home page:

http://dt.pepperdine.edu/courses/greatbooks_iv/gbiv_101/gbiv%20reading%20schedule%20spring%202010.pdf

Extended Writing (75%)

You must complete three extended writing assignments, in the form of papers that represent a fully developed version of one or more of your biweekly writing assignments.

The first paper, worth 15%, is to be 4 -5 pages in length, and is to be based solely on **Kierkegaard**. This paper is due **January 23 at 11:59 p.m.**

The second paper, worth 35%, is to be 8-9 pages in length, and is to be based on **Nietzsche and Dostoevsky**. This paper is due by **March 28 at 11:59 p.m.**

The last paper, worth 25%, is to be 6-7 pages in length, and is to touch on at least three authors from this course, at least one of whom must be **Kawabata, Szymborska, or Darwin**. It is due **April 29 at 11:59 p.m.**

Each extended writing submittal is graded on the following basis:

Thesis	
Thesis Statement	10
Well Structured Plan	10
Analysis	
Thesis Execution	10
Logical Completeness	5
Logical Flow	5
Text	
Appropriately Chosen	10
Sufficiently Explained	10
Risk/Interest	
Interesting Reading	10
Creativity	5
Strong Conclusion	5
Language	
Mature Vocabulary	5
Varied/Interesting	
Sentence Structure	5
Mechanics	
Punctuation	5
Spelling	5
Total	100

Anonymity

All writing is to be submitted with no name. Instead, affix your College Wide ID to the paper on the back page, after the "Works Cited" section. This will ensure that I evaluate your writing objectively and honestly.

Rough Drafts

Rough drafts are always welcome and may be submitted up to 24 hours prior any paper deadline. Please submit these anonymously and electronically.