

CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES 101, FALL 2005
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Cultural Perspectives 101 is the first in a two-semester sequence that views the Western intellectual tradition within a global perspective. Through interdisciplinary study, students will increase their awareness of cultural, literary, religious, and historical influences on the development of civilizations.

This course is intended to expose students to the great thinkers of the Western intellectual tradition, with a nod in the direction of incorporating non-Western voices as well. Students should find the books and excerpts interesting and worthwhile in themselves. Nevertheless, I will emphasize several themes, which should provide coherence to the course. We will begin and end the semester by focusing almost exclusively on Europe, with a first section on Greek and Roman Classical civilization, and a final section on the Renaissance in Europe. The primary theme of the middle part of the course will be the way in which cultures and religions interact: the syncretism that existed as Classicism became absorbed by the Christian world, as Islam and Christianity (and Judaism) encountered one another, and as Europe spread to the Americas.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1) Develop critical reasoning skills through the reading of significant texts and the evaluation of different viewpoints and arguments; 2) Develop the ability to investigate an issue and construct a well-reasoned and coherent viewpoint; 3) Learn to communicate ideas and arguments clearly and persuasively through written and spoken means; 4) Understand the world through multiple perspectives and different world views; 5) Explore religious and moral dimensions of critical issues; 6) Appreciate how different disciplines advance understanding of cultures and civilizations and recognize the interconnectedness of the disciplines; and 7) Become a part of the larger intellectual community.

CLASS ASSIGNMENTS

I will require three papers and a final exam. Due dates are noted in the course outline, and topics will be provided for each paper. Every reading assignment will be accompanied by a quiz.

One quarter of the semester grade will be based on group work. I will, at the start of the semester, form four groups, which will serve as the basis for this collaboration. Group work will take several forms. First, each individual reading quiz will be followed by a group quiz; students will hand in the individual quiz, and take the same quiz as a group. Second, I will set aside eight class meetings for "Student Classes," to be run by groups. Students will determine the nature of these sessions in collaboration with me; they should explore topics and raise issues related to course subject matter. In several instances, students will plan classes based on specific needs in the course. In other instances, students will have far more latitude. Student Classes are noted in the syllabus, and I will send out a sign-up list on the second day of class. The first Student Class occurs on 7 September. Students will receive grades for all of their group work; these grades will be modified by formal Peer Evaluations done three times during the semester. Peer

Evaluations will reward students who work hard in group activities and penalize those who don't.

More generally, this student-oriented course will depend on student participation and attendance. It is your responsibility (to both fellow students and the professor) to attend class regularly and contribute to class discussions. At the same time, no student will fail solely for missing classes. Any student who misses more than three sessions will begin to lose percentage points from the 9% of the semester grade for class participation and attendance. More than six absences will result in a forfeiture of this portion of the class grade. It is also extremely difficult to receive good Peer Evaluation ratings if you consistently miss class.

Students should refer to their handbook in regard to questions of academic honesty and plagiarism. My hope is that I can treat you like adults and that these concerns will never arise.

Samford University complies with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the Americans with Disabilities Act. Students with disabilities who seek accommodations must make their request by contacting Disability Support Services, located in Counseling Services on the lower level of Pittman Hall (telephone number: 726-4078 or 726-2105). A faculty member will grant reasonable accommodations only upon written notification from Disability Support Services.

REQUIRED TEXTS, available in the bookstore:

Cultural Perspectives: A Sourcebook: Volume I
Sophocles, Antigone (from the Theban Trilogy)
Machiavelli, The Prince
Shakespeare, Richard III
Leon-Portilla, editor, The Broken Spears
Thomas Cahill, How the Irish Saved Civilization
Virgil, The Aeneid (Translated by Robert Fitzgerald)
Maria Rose Menocal, The Ornament of the World
Geoffrey Chaucer, The Canterbury Tales

I suggest that students read the New York Times regularly. It is available free of charge in dorms. It may serve a source for students as they plan Student Days.

GRADE BREAKDOWN

Individual Grades:		Group Grades (modified by Peer Evaluations)	
3 Papers, 12 percent each	36%	30 Quizzes, 0.5% each	15%
Final Exam	15%	Student Class Performance	10%
30 Quizzes, 0.5% percent each	15%		
Class Participation and Attendance	9%		

COURSE OUTLINE

Weeks 1-4. Classical Civilization

29 August: Introduction

31 August: The Theater and Classical Greek Civilization

Sophocles, pp 11-30, 389-392
2 September: Antigone
 Sophocles, pp 57-90
5 September: Antigone
 Sophocles, pp 91-129, 35-53
7 September: Student Class: Updating Antigone
9 September: Knowledge and the good life in Classical Greece
 Readings by Plato and Thucydides, Chapters 1, 2 and 5 in Sourcebook (SB)
12 September: Student Class: Art in Greece and Rome
14 September: The Aeneid
 Virgil, pp 3-92, 403-417 (Postscript)
16 September: The Aeneid
 Virgil, pp 93-193
19 September: The Aeneid
 Virgil, pp 193-290
21 September: The Aeneid
 Virgil, pp 291-402
23 September: Student Class: Updating Classicism
Paper Due 23 September

Weeks 5-8. From Classicism to Early Christianity to the Middle Ages

26 September: Augustine and the fall of Classicism
 Cahill, pp 3-67
28 September: St. Patrick's Christianity
 Cahill, pp 71-144
30 September: How the Irish (among others) saved civilization
 Cahill, pp 147-218
3 October: Religion in (non-muslim, non-Irish) medieval Europe
 Readings by Gregory VII, Innocent III, Aquinas and Kempe, Ch's 11, 12, 14, 19 in SB
5 October: Medieval literature
 Readings by Capellanus and the Lais, Chapters 15 and 16 in SB
7 October: Geoffrey Chaucer and late-Medieval Europe
 Chaucer, Introduction and Prologue
10 October: The Wife of Bath
 Chaucer, pp 182-239
12 October: The Merchant, Pardoner, and Prioress' Tales
 Chaucer, pp 240-295, 338-383
14 October: Student Class on Medieval Europe
17 October: No Class
Paper due 17 October

Weeks 9-12: Islam, Christianity, Spain and the Americas

19 October: The Quran
 The Holy Quran, Chapter 13 in SB
21 October: Islam and its spread to Spain

Menocal, pp 3-49
24 October: Fall Break
26 October: The Rise and Fall of Cordoba
Menocal, pp 53-129
28 October: Multiculturalism and conflict in Medieval Spain
Menocal, pp 130-215
31 October: The fall, and legacy, of multicultural Spain
Menocal, pp 216-283
2 November: Guest Lecture by Dr. Mary McCullough on Women and Islam
4 November: Student class on Spain and multiculturalism
7 November: Lecture on indigenous Americans
9 November: European perspectives on the Americas
Readings by Montaigne, Sepulveda and Las Casas, Chapters 24-26 in SB
11 November: Europeans encounter "the other:" Spanish conquest in the Americas I
Leon-Portilla, Foreword, Introduction, Chapters 1-6
14 November: Europeans encounter "the other:" Spanish conquest in the Americas II
Leon-Portilla, Chapters 7-16
16 November: Student Class on European/non-European encounters
Paper due 16 November

Weeks 12-15: The Renaissance

18 November: From Medieval to Renaissance
Readings by Petrarch, Della Mirandola and Castiglione, Chs. 17, 18, 20 and 22 in SB
21 November: Lecture on the Renaissance
28 November: Machiavelli and Machiavellianism I
Machiavelli, Introduction, Books I-X
30 November: Machiavelli and Machiavellianism II
Machiavelli, Books XI-XXVI
2 December: Student Class on Renaissance Art and Architecture
5 December: Renaissance England and Shakespeare
Richard III, pp 1-124
7 December: Machiavelli in Shakespeare?
Richard III, pp 125-252
9 December: Student Class on Machiavellianism
Final Exam Wednesday 14 December 10:30

TWO STUDENTS PER SESSION PLEASE

9 September: Updating Antigone

- 1.
- 2.

16 September: Classical Art and Architecture

- 1.
- 2.

23 September: Updating Classicism

- 1.
- 2.

12 October: The Year 1000 Outside Europe

- 1.
- 2.

2 November: Renaissance Art and Architecture

- 1.
- 2.

9 November: Broadening Machiavelli

- 1.
- 2.

9 November: Updating Machiavelli

- 1.
- 2.

18 November: Updating Shakespeare

- 1.
- 2.

2 December: Alternative Colonialisms

- 1.
- 2.

9 December: Updating Colonialism

- 1.
- 2.

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

Week 7

Week 8

Week 9 (two days)

Week 10

Week 11

Week 12

Week 13 (one day)

Week 14

Week 15