

CONTEMPORARY WESTERN CIVILIZATION I (Fall 2005)

F1101x – Section 056 • 607 Hamilton Hall • MW 6:10-8pm

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Structure and Course Requirements:

The course is structured as a seminar, with new readings assigned for each class. Discussion is important to this course, and you can expect to be called upon to give your views (if you don't volunteer them).

Readings and Participation: CC is a discussion seminar, not a lecture. Accordingly, your active participation is essential to the success of the class. You will be expected to complete the assigned readings before the class for which they are assigned, to bring the texts under discussion with you to class, and to come to class prepared to discuss them.

Attendance: Attendance is mandatory. According to a course-wide policy, students who accumulate more than four unexcused absences may be dropped from the course. More than three unexcused absences will result in your final grade falling by one third of a grade (e.g. A to A-). If you miss class, please e-mail me in advance (ab2058@columbia.edu). The only grounds on which absence will be excused are religious holidays, family crises, or illness; absence for the last two reasons must be explained by a note from a Dean or a doctor.

Courseworks: You are required to post two (significant) questions no later than 2pm of the day of class. So, for example, for a Monday class at 6pm you should post by Monday at 2pm. You can skip four postings during the semester. Missing more than four will result in a substantial grade reduction (see below.)

In class presentations: Two in class presentations during the semester. Presentations can be focused exclusively on the assigned readings. The main goal is to pose a few significant questions inspired by the readings to the rest of the class. Presentations can be given in groups of two.

Quizzes: If necessary, I will assign some short in-class quizzes to test your completion of the daily readings.

In class examinations: Midterm (on 10.24.2005) and Final (on 12.16.2005, from 12.30 to 3.30)

Written Assignments: Two papers, 1200 to 1600 words each. The first paper is due in class on Monday, October 10; the second paper is due in class on Monday, November 21. Papers should be typed in Times New Roman, size 12 font, double-spaced, and all the page margins should measure one inch. Paper topics will be distributed one week-ten days in advance.

Required Texts:

Required texts include the standard CC package *plus* the following book available at the Columbia Bookstore:

Epicurus, *The Essential Epicurus* (Prometheus Books)

The CC package, in part available at the Columbia Bookstore and in part accessible online from the CC home page, <http://www.college.columbia.edu/core> (top right corner), contains:

Plato, *Republic* (Hackett)

Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford)

Aristotle, *Politics* (Hackett)

Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations* (Penguin)

Augustine, *City of God* (Penguin)

Bible: Revised Standard Version (Meridian)

Al-Qur'an (Penguin)

Aquinas, *Treatise On Law* (Hackett)

Descartes, *Discourse On Method and Meditations On First Philosophy* (Hackett)

Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings* (Hackett)

Hillerbrand, ed., *The Protestant Reformation* (Harper & Row)

Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford)

Locke, *Political Writings Of John Locke* (NAL/Mentor)

Grade Breakdown:

Courseworks/in-class presentations/quizzes/participation: 30%

Papers: 20% each

Midterm: 15%

Final: 15%

Penalties: In order to pass the class you are required to do *all* the coursework (e.g. completing one out of two papers will result in failing the class). Late papers incur in a penalty of one third of a letter grade per day (e.g. from A to A-). As for Courseworks, for each unexcused missing answer beyond the fourth a penalty of one third of a letter grade will be applied to your overall final grade.

Office Hours:

My office hours are Th from 3 to 4 in 301 Philosophy. I am also on campus at other times, and you can make an appointment to see me by e-mail (ab2058@columbia.edu). Please don't hesitate to get in touch with me about any aspect of the course.

Schedule:**Week 1**

9.7 Introduction

Week 2

9.12 Plato, *Republic*: Books I-II

9.14 Plato, *Republic*: Books VI: 109-121; V: 122-137, 144-145; VI: 186-197; VIII; IX: 241-250

Week 3

9.19 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*: Books I-III

9.21 Aristotle, *Nichomachean Ethics*: Books VII-X

Week 4

9.26 Aristotle, *Politics*: I: 1-9, 12-13; II: 1-5; III: 1-5; IV: 4-10; VII: 1-3

9.28 Epicurus, *The Essential Epicurus*
PAPER #1 TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

9.30 Required CC course-wide lecture by Martha Nussbaum: "The Arbitrariness of Canons: The Neglect of Hellenistic Philosophy and why it is a Bad Thing"

Week 5

10.3 Marcus Aurelius, *The Meditations*: II, III, IV, VII, IX, X, XII

10.5 Augustine, *City of God*: I; XII

Week 6

10.10 Augustine, *City of God*: XIV: 1-25; XIX; XXII: 24, 30
PAPER #1 DUE

10.12 *Hebrew Bible*: *Exodus* 20: 3-17; 34:11-27; *Deuteronomy*: 4:1-13; 5: 7-21; 15:1-19; 21:10-23; 27:11-26 *Isaiah*: 7:14-25; 9:2, 6-7

Week 7

10.17 *New Testament*: *Matthew*, *Mark*, *Romans*, and *Letter of James*

10.19 *Al-Qu'ran*: Suras 1, 114, 112, 12, 2

Week 8

10.24 **MIDTERM**

10.26 Al Ghazali: "The Rescuer From Error"; Averroes: "Conclusion: The Canon of Interpretation" and "On Proving God's Existence" [CC Web]

Week 9

10.31 Aquinas, *Treatise On Law*: Q90-Q97

11.2 Descartes, *Meditations* (entire)
#2 PAPER TOPICS DISTRIBUTED

Week 10

11.7 ELECTION DAY, ACADEMIC HOLIDAY

11.9 The New World: Selections from works about the Spanish Colonization of the New World. [CC web]

Week 11

11.14 The Reformation: Luther “The Freedom of a Christian Man”; Calvin “The Institutes of the Christian Religion” [all in Hillerbrand]

11.16 Machiavelli: *The Prince*

Week 12

11.21 Machiavelli: selections from *The Discourses (Selected Political Writings*, 81-97, 110-32, 150-75, 187-200, 215-217)
DUE PAPER #2

11.23 THANKSGIVING BREAK

Week 13

11.28 Hobbes, *Leviathan*: 1-11

11.30 Hobbes, *Leviathan*: 13-19; 21; 32

Week 14

12.5 Locke, *Second Treatise of Government*: I-IX; XVI; XIX

12.7 Locke, *Letter Concerning Toleration*

Week 15

12.12 Western Civilization I: Conclusions

12.16 **FINAL** (12.30pm to 15.30pm)

Assigned reading over the winter break: Voltaire, *Candide* (CC Web)