

Core Curriculum CC 202: Core Humanities IV

“From Enlightenment and the Romantic Revolt to the Modern World”

Boston University College of Arts & Sciences

Spring 2020 Syllabus

LECTURES: Tuesdays 12:30-1:45 pm in CAS B18, 685 Commonwealth Avenue
Course Credits: 4.0

SEMINARS	B1 with Anita Patterson, <i>apatters@bu.edu</i> :	TR 9:30-10:45am in CAS 114A
	B2 with Maria Gapotchenko, <i>daisym@bu.edu</i> :	TR 11am-12:15pm in CAS 119
	B3 with Yuri Corrigan, <i>ycorriga@bu.edu</i> :	TR 11am-12:15pm in STH 409
	C1 with David Green, <i>ddgreen@bu.edu</i> :	MWF 11:15am-12:05pm in CAS 114B
	C2 with Christopher Ricks, <i>cricks@bu.edu</i> :	MWF 1:25-2:15pm in EIB 106
	C3 with David Green, <i>ddgreen@bu.edu</i> :	MWF 12:20-1:10pm in CAS 114B

COURSE COORDINATOR: Anita Patterson Department of English, 236 Bay State Road, Rm. 315
Phone: 617-358-2534 Email: *apatters@bu.edu*

Main Department Offices: CAS Room 119

Course Description. The four semesters of the Core Humanities follow a historical sequence so that works can be studied as an evolving conversation about the enduring questions of life. Throughout, our goal is to discover what the greatest works of the past have to say to us here, right now. In CC 202, the fourth and culminating semester of our humanities study, we take up questions including... What is Enlightenment? What is the supreme principle of morality? What constitutes a just society? How do works of philosophy, literature, and the arts inspire ethical reasoning, and can they guide our judgment about ethical questions at stake in the world today? We examine these and other questions of social hierarchy and political power, subjectivity and its relation to reason, in Kant, Mendelssohn, Voltaire, Rousseau, Goethe, Jane Austen, English Romantic poetry, Dickinson, Whitman, Nietzsche, Chekhov, and the music of Beethoven. The course ends in the 20th century with the art of the Weimar Republic, Du Bois' *The Souls of Black Folk*, and Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*.

COURSE OBJECTIVES & LEARNING OUTCOMES

Philosophical Inquiry and Life's Meanings

- To demonstrate knowledge of notable works in philosophical thought, make meaningful connections among them, and be able to relate those works to your own life and those of others.
- To demonstrate the reasoning skills and possess the vocabulary to reflect upon significant philosophical questions and topics such as what constitutes a good life, right action, meaningful activity, knowledge, truth, or a just society.

Ethical Reasoning

- To be able to identify, grapple with, and make a judgment about the ethical questions at stake in major contemporary public debates, and engage in a civil discussion about it with those who hold views different from your own.
- To demonstrate the skills and vocabulary needed to reflect on the ethical responsibilities that face individuals (or organizations, or societies or governments) as they grapple with issues affecting both the communities to which they belong and those identified as “other.”

Writing

- To write as a means to learn from and engage with important works of literature, philosophy, music, and art.

- To craft responsible, considered, and well-written arguments about these works, using modes of expression appropriate to the situation.
- To read with understanding, engagement, and critical judgment, and converse thoughtfully about these works.
- To share your written work, and to practice evaluating the validity of arguments, including your own.

Instructional Format, Course Pedagogy, and Approach to Learning. Students are required to attend all lectures and seminars. If a student is unavoidably absent from lecture, lecture video recordings will in most cases be available via www.bu.edu/core/cc202. This site, however, is intended for review purposes only, and is monitored. Individual seminar leaders will note attendance in seminar.

Lectures will focus on the cultural contexts, main concepts, and philosophical topics in the works studied, drawing connections among them and to the ongoing themes of the course. In seminar, students will explore key ideas raised in lecture, explore ethical questions posed by the works we are studying this semester, and address these questions within the context of major contemporary public debates, through civil discussion as well as through their own writing. Active participation is crucial. Reading and writing assignments will be distributed throughout the semester, including a final thesis-driven paper with ample opportunity for feedback on steps along the way. As designated by individual seminar leaders, students will also demonstrate their comprehension and critical evaluation of key ideas raised in lecture. Individual seminars will vary in the direction they take, but the common CC 202 final exam will focus on questions and topics specifically raised in lecture.

Courseware and Communication: Course communication will take place via announcements and handouts in lecture and seminar, and email messages sent from core@bu.edu and from the accounts of individual seminar instructors. Lecture media, handouts, and readings can be accessed via www.bu.edu/core/cc202.

On the Core website you will find reading lists, a calendar of academic and community events, Writing Fellow contact information, writing FAQs, and other resources: www.bu.edu/core.

Your seminar leader may make use of a course site specific to your section, for sharing assignment materials, readings, and other resources. Seminar-specific courses sites can be accessed via www.learn.bu.edu.

Study Space. On Sunday evenings from 2-6 PM, the Core office, CAS 119, is staffed for an open study period. All Core students are welcome to attend, to make use of the quiet study space, the meeting tables, the Core reference library, and the free coffee station.

Writing Support. Two Core Writing Fellows, Rachel Ravina and Dylan Maldonado, are available for help throughout the semester. Fellows are graduate students who have been trained in grammar and compositional skills and are familiar with the works read in the Core. To book an appointment, consult the online reservation instructions at www.bu.edu/core/writing, where you will find a link to each Writing Fellow's booking calendar.

ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING CRITERIA

Grading Rubric. Your seminar instructor determines your final grade, based on the following components: participation 20%; seminar papers 60%; final exam 20%. Attendance at lectures and seminar discussions is an important part of the course. Absences from lecture and seminar will be weighed seriously by your seminar leader, and will bring down your final grade.

Writing will be a main focus of this course and, accordingly, writing assignments and reflective consideration on the nature of good writing will be ongoing throughout the course. Although specific writing assignments will vary from seminar to seminar, assignments will include both short and longer, comprehensive thesis-driven papers. Ongoing work on such papers will include such elements as submission of a proposal, outline, annotated bibliography, draft introduction and preliminary draft. For the final paper in particular, you will have multiple opportunities for feedback before submitting the paper. Other possible assignments will include reflective papers on genre-specific writing, summaries and analysis as a means to better understand the works studied, and peer-review of written works.

Because this course is based on your own engagement with the texts and ideas we will encounter, attendance at lectures and seminar is crucial. Consistent, thorough, daily preparation and vigorous class participation are keys to success. In short, read the books and be prepared to think and speak. Laptops are not allowed in lecture, as we will all require your complete attention. This is a matter of courtesy as well as good practice for future courses and meetings.

A comprehensive **final exam** is also required for this course. The exam will be largely essay-driven and possible prompts for the essay portion of the exam will be distributed at least a week before the exam.

COMMUNITY OF LEARNING: CLASS AND UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Learning and testing accommodation. Boston University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student who needs academic accommodations because of a documented disability, you should contact your seminar leader and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at access@bu.edu and 617-353-3658. Letters of accommodation should be presented as soon as possible to ensure that student needs are addressed from the start of the course. Learn more at www.bu.edu/disability/policies-procedures.

Learning Environment and Attendance. See above for your responsibility to create a positive learning environment and attend the course regularly (more than three unexcused absences will reduce your grade by one letter). In addition to these responsibilities, please note the following:

Religious Observance. Boston University's policy on religious observance will be adhered to in this course.

Dates, and Policies Regarding Late Work and Exams. Your seminar leaders will determine how papers and other work should be submitted, as well as the penalties assigned for late work. It is possible for you to take a make-up version of the final exam if you have an exam scheduling conflict or three exams scheduled on the same day. Contact the office via core@bu.edu, and your seminar leader, if this is the case. Please be sure to keep a backup copy of all papers written.

Academic Misconduct. Plagiarism or other forms of academic misconduct in this course will result in a failing grade for the course and/or referral of the case to the CAS Academic Conduct Committee, which may impose penalties up to and including expulsion from the University. Please consult your instructor or the University's Academic Conduct Code if you have questions about the kinds of actions that constitute plagiarism. Your best rule is to make sure you cite every source you employ, use quotations marks and provide a citation whenever you use someone else's words. The syllabus, course description, and all class lectures are copyright by the respective faculty. Lectures may not be reproduced in any form or otherwise copied, displayed, or distributed without the written permission of the instructor. Please note in particular that selling or buying lecture notes or summaries is prohibited in this class and may result in disciplinary action under the B.U. Code of Student Responsibilities. You may consult the BU academic conduct code at www.bu.edu/academics/policies/academic-conduct-code.

Required textbooks are available at the BU Bookstore. Be sure to obtain these *specific* editions:

- Voltaire, *Candide*, trans. Wootton (Hackett: 9780872205468)
- Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Confessions*, trans. Scholar (OUP: 9780199540037)
- Immanuel Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*, trans. Gregor & Timmermann (CUP: 9781107401068)
- Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe's Faust*, trans. Kauffmann (Anchor: 9780385031141)
- Jane Austen, *Pride and Prejudice*, ed. Jones (Penguin: 9780141439518)
- *English Romantic Poetry: An Anthology*, ed. Appelbaum (Dover: 9780486292823)
- Walt Whitman, *Leaves of Grass* (Signet: 9780451419170)
- Emily Dickinson, selected poems (will be distributed)
- Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morality*, trans. Diethelme (CUP: 9780521691635)
- Anton Chekhov, *The Cherry Orchard*, trans. Nelson, Pevear & Volokhonsky (TCG: 9781559364843)
- W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Souls of Black Folk* (Signet: 9780451532053)
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Houghton Mifflin Harcourt: 9780156628709)

An online writing handbook is available on the Core website via www.bu.edu/core/writing.

CC 202 Spring 2020 Schedule of Lectures and Exams

1) Tues. 1/21: Kant (1724-1804), Mendelssohn (1729-1786), Voltaire (1694-1778) // Lecturer: James Schmidt [History]. Reading: Kant, "What Is Enlightenment?," Mendelssohn's remarks on Kant's essay, and *Candide*

2) Tues. 1/28: Rousseau (1712-1788) // Lecturer: Charles Griswold [Philosophy]
Reading: selections from *Confessions* (Books 1 and 2; Book 7, pp.309-13, the Zuletta episode; and Book 8, pp.340-3, one account of the so-called "illumination of Vincennes"; and p.643, the start of the Appendix), and the second letter to Malesherbes, another account of the "illumination" (handout)

3) Tues. 2/4: Kant (1724-1804) // Lecturer: Sally Sedgwick [Philosophy]
Reading: Kant, *Groundwork of the Metaphysics of Morals*

4) Tues. 2/11: Goethe (1749-1832) // Lecturer: Peter Schwartz [World Languages and Literatures]
Reading: *Faust*

Tues. 2/18: No lecture; substitute Monday schedule
Reading: *Pride and Prejudice*

5) Tues. 2/25: Austen (1775-1817) // Lecturer: Joseph Rezek [English]
Reading: *Pride and Prejudice*

6) Tues. 3/3: Beethoven (1770-1827) // Lecturer: Elizabeth Seitz [Boston Conservatory at Berklee]
Listening: Ninth Symphony via www.bu.edu/core/cc202

Tues. 3/10: Spring Break

7) Tues. 3/17: English Romantic Poetry // Lecturer: Karl Kirchwey [English]
Reading: selections from *English Romantic Poetry*

8) Tues. 3/24: Dickinson and Whitman // Lecturer: Anita Patterson [English]
Reading: selections from Dickinson and *Leaves of Grass*

9) Tues. 3/31 : Nietzsche (1844-1900) // Lecturer: Peter Schwartz [World Languages and Literatures]
Reading: *On the Genealogy of Morality*

10) Tues. 4/7: Chekhov (1860-1904) // Lecturer: Yuri Corrigan [World Languages and Literatures]
Reading: *The Cherry Orchard*

11) Tues. 4/14: Du Bois (1868-1963) // Lecturer: Cornel West [Harvard University]
Reading: *The Souls of Black Folk*

12) Tues. 4/21: The Visual Arts in Weimar Germany// Lecturer: Gregory Williams [History of Art and Architecture]
Viewing: selected works via www.bu.edu/core/cc202

Mon. 4/27: The Annual Core Banquet

13) Tues. 4/28: Woolf (1882-1941) // Lecturer: Jonathan Foltz [English]
Reading: *Mrs. Dalloway*

Last day of classes, Thurs. April 30
STUDY PERIOD: May 1 – 4

Final Exam: date and location TBA.