History 143: Foundations of European Thought: from Rome to the Renaissance

Fall 2017

**TR 10:30-12:00**

**Professor Ann Moyer**

**215C College Hall**

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**Office hours: T 2-4 and by appt.**

Readings: Grafton and Bell

Cicero, *On Duties (De Officiis)*

Bible (New Testament)

Benedict, *Rule*

Einhard and Notker, *Two Lives of Charlemagne*

Luther, *Three Treatises*

Additional readings on Blackboard site

Recommended: Gordon Harvey, *Writing with Sources*

**Theme for Fall 2017:**

In Search of a good life: what do we owe to society? What do we owe ourselves?

*How do our authors and our texts seek to address these issues through the act of writing? How are these writings to be read and used? How do we know?*

**Introduction; Roman Society and Obligations of those who Rule**

Aug. 29 Introduction to the course: Introduction to the Ancient World

Textbook:

Aug. 31 Culture and Society in Ancient Rome

Sept. 5 Cicero: with discussion

**Reading: Cicero,** ***On Obligations (De officiis****)*

**Religious Traditions and Sacred texts: Jesus and his Followers**

Textbook:

Sept. 7 Religions of the Book

Sept. 12 Jesus and the Roman World: with discussion

**Reading: NT 1: Matthew, John**

**New Heaven, New Earth: Christianity takes Shape**

Textbook:

Sept. 14 Paul and the Church

Sept. 19 Christian Scriptures and Practices: with discussion

**Reading: NT 2: Acts, Romans**

**Orders from Chaos**

Textbook:

Sept. 21 Late Rome, East and West

Sept. 26 Monastic communities: with discussion

**Reading**: **Rule of St Benedict**

**Carolingians and their Renaissance**

Sept. 28 Renovatio imperii **Essay 1 Due**

Oct. 3 Romans, Franks, and legendary leaders: with discussion

**Reading: Einhard and Notker**

**Oct. 5 No class: fall Break**

**Cities and their Reading public: devotions**

Textbook:

Oct. 10 Europe: New Growth

Oct. 12 Lay readers and devotional reading: with discussion

**Reading:  *Little Flowers of St. Francis***

**Even Religion can be a Science**

Oct. 17 Rise of Universities

Oct. 19 Theology: religion for the professionals: with discussion

**Reading: Aquinas, *Selected Writings Part 1***

**Men, Women, and Leisure Reading in Courts and Cities I**

Oct. 24 Courtly love and court culture

Oct. 26 Love and Society: with discussion

**Reading: begin Boccaccio, *Decameron* (selections)**

**Men, Women, and Leisure Reading in Courts and Cities II**

Oct. 31 Italy and urban culture

Nov. 2 Authors and story collectors: with discussion

**Reading: Boccaccio, *Decameron* (selections)**

**Humanists**

Textbook:

Nov. 7 Humanist movement

Nov. 9 Petrarch: with discussion

**Reading:**  **Petrarch, *On his own ignorance (and that of many others)***

**Women as Readers and as Authors**

Textbook:

Nov. 14 Women and the world of letters

**Reading: Isotta Nogarola**

**Reformers and Rulers**

Textbook:

Nov. 16 Reforms: Ideals and Authorities

Nov. 21 Luther, theology, rhetoric: with discussion

**Reading: Luther, *Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation***

**Introspection and Understanding**

Textbook:

Nov. 28 Montaigne and his world

Nov. 30 Essays for author and reader: with discussion

**Reading: Montaigne*, Essays* (selections)**

Week 15: **Conclusion**

Dec. 5 Republic of Letters

Dec. 7 European thought: works in progress

Reading: from Richardson, Writers and Readers

**Final examination: date TBA**

**Organization of the course:**

1. GRADES for the course will be based on

20% first essay

20% second essay

20% third essay

20% final exam

10% response papers (4)

10% discussion

Essays: you may choose from among a range of assigned topics for these argumentative and analytic essays. They are based on our texts and will not call for outside sources and will be approximately 1000-1200 words in length.

Response papers: four papers responding to one of the pre-circulated discussion questions, 300-500 words. Due in class on the discussion date for that text. You may choose the dates, but 2 must be submitted by February 28.

Deadlines for the essays are firm; late submissions will be penalized. No essays will be accepted after graded assignments have been returned to students.

**Course Goals**

This course offers a broad introduction to important writings and ideas in European culture. The works will cluster around some major themes. Through lecture, discussion, and written work, those in the course will gain familiarity and skill in several ways:

* **Major texts and authors:** these works helped shape Europeanculture and have found many years of readers.References to them will appear in many other contexts, courses, and subjects.
* **Historical narrative:** these works are examined in a broad historical context that offers a valuable introduction to major issues and events in European history.
* **Critical skills:** these books were composed with very different readerships in mind. Some have been read for entertainment, others for study, some as guidelines for organizing groups of people. We will examine not only the goals of the writers and their goals, but also the uses to which their writings have been put. In particular, this process will develop several skills:
  + Evidence and evaluation: assess and evaluate evidence as presented in written records
  + Critical analysis: analyze the argumentation and use of evidence in the writings of modern historical scholars
  + Argumentation: marshaling evidence to develop and present a convincing written argument

Our **class time** will have two main components:

* **lectures**  present a synthesis of  information and analysis about the topic at hand.
* **discussions** focus upon critical analysis of the week’s readings, and on questions they raise. Your copy of the reading should accompany you to class discussions.

**Our main readings**, of course, are the texts themselves. Nonetheless, since this introductory course assumes no prior background in European history, a textbook presents the essential narrative and serves as a reference. While the textbook will not normally figure in our class time, lectures and discussions will assume that you have read and mastered this necessary background.

Academic honesty is fundamental to our community. The Pennbook contains our Code of Academic Integrity. A violation of that Code in this course will result in failure for the course.