

## Introduction to Contemporary Civilization in the West I

This course invites students to engage with the central themes, questions, and concepts in core texts of the Western philosophical and religious tradition. Questions raised by these texts include (but aren't limited to!):

- How does one live a full, meaningful life?
- What is justice? What is goodness? *Why* should we be good or act justly?
- What does it mean to claim that something is 'natural'? Is something 'natural' likely to be good?
- Can one have faith without giving up reason or critical thinking?
- What is freedom? *Who* is able to be free?
- Where does authority come from, if it exists?
- What is the best way to organize society and government and why is it the best way?
- What is the proper relationship between the individual and the community?

Through the course of the semester, students will have the opportunity to consider not just questions like these but also the purpose of the course itself. What is the purpose of a course like CC? In the end, each student will determine the terms of their own engagement with the material. It can be just a class taken for a grade; it can be an ongoing appreciation of the roots of Western culture; it can be a running critique of the oppressive ideas of dead white men. It can be all these and more, at once.

We read texts as primary sources in order to make larger conceptual connections with the overarching themes and questions embedded within them. It would be impossible to master any of the texts we discuss in the time we have to discuss them, and mastery of the texts is not an aim of the course.

Students will be encouraged to find what insights, if any, the texts can bring to their lives as well as ways they can enrich their understanding of the world. After all, many of these texts have helped build the contemporary intellectual, moral, and cultural world we inhabit. This course therefore presents the opportunity to explore the intellectual foundations of the world we find ourselves in, together.

### Learning Objectives:

- Students will come to a critical understanding of key questions in moral and political thought.
- Students will improve their persuasive and analytical writing skills.
- Students will learn habits and techniques of close textual reading.
- Students will enrich their understanding of the world and of their place within it.

## **Course Expectations and Grading:**

Attendance is mandatory. Class may not be missed except in case of exceptional emergency, religious observance, or illness *with a doctor's note*, and notification must come as far ahead of time as possible. Absences harm not only the participation grade, but affect grading of all other work since the student's understanding of and engagement with the relevant texts is obscured. Make-up work in the form of an additional posting will be assigned for absences.

The format of the course is primarily discussion-based. The discussion is meant to be a collaborative discourse, involving the close reading of texts and addressing each others' thoughts and questions. For this reason, you must be prepared to participate every day. This means you must bring your texts to class every day, having read, annotated and thought about them. This applies to online texts as well, which must be printed out. *No laptop or tablet computers are allowed in class* because they harm discussion. This is a reading-intensive class for which the reading assignments will take up a good deal of time. Be sure to plan accordingly. Your participation grade will be based on your contributions to discussion.

### 25% Participation

Participation is based on attendance, preparedness, and contribution to the class, both orally and in discussion board postings. Students are responsible for 12 top-level postings and 12 comments in response to others' postings on the discussion board through the semester, 6 of each before and after the midterm.

### 25% Writing Assignments

There will be a total of four paper assignments which are described below.

### 25% Midterm Exam

The exam consists of two parts: identifications and an essay portion. There will be choice in the IDs and on at least one of the essay questions.

### 25% Final Exam

The final exam will be identical in structure to the midterm, but longer.

## **Writing Assignments:**

The writing assignments of this course are designed to promote good persuasive and analytical writing. The assignments are structured stepwise to develop and demonstrate the skills necessary for such writing. Specifically, the assignments require students to 1) demonstrate careful and close readings and understanding of assigned texts, 2) analyze and reconstruct arguments, 3) formulate and defend theses, and 4) demonstrate their ability to produce descriptive, persuasive and analytical essays.

Late papers will lose 10% of possible points per day.

1) **Short Assignments:**

Students write four short papers. These allow students to practice different aspects of persuasive and analytical writing, including summarizing, paraphrasing and comparing arguments as well as making counterarguments and developing standpoints about the texts. Students have the opportunity to revise one of the first three papers for regrading.

- a) Short Assignment One (Analytical Summary/Paraphrase): This assignment requires students to restate an assigned argument without relying on quotation. The aim of this assignment is to demonstrate analysis of arguments through reconstructive analysis. (3 pages in 12 point font, double spaced)
- b) Short Assignment Two (Compare and Contrast): This assignment requires students to compare and contrast the arguments of two text selections. The aim is to promote close reading and analytical comparison of the content of texts. (3 pages in 12 point font, double spaced)
- c) Short Assignment Three (Argument Outline): This assignment poses a question and requires that students articulate and support their own thesis statement in response to it. It aims to develop skills of formulating a clear thesis, developing an argument based on textual evidence to support it, and responding to contrary arguments in preparation for writing a persuasive essay. (4 pages in 12 point font, double spaced)
- d) Final Paper (Persuasive Essay): This assignment poses a question and requires that students articulate and support their own thesis in response to it and to support that thesis with textual evidence that is thoroughly analyzed. It draws on the skills acquired throughout the semester. (5-8 pages in 12 point font, double spaced)

**Academic Integrity:**

Columbia University is dedicated to the highest ideals of integrity in academia. Therefore, in CC, any instance of academic dishonesty, attempted or actual, will be reported to the faculty chair of the course and to the dean of the Core Curriculum, who will review the case with the expectation that a student guilty of academic dishonesty will receive the grade of F in the course and be referred to the dean's discipline for further institutional action.

Academic dishonesty is defined as violations of the Honor Code endorsed by the students of Columbia College and General Studies at the end of the spring semester of 2013. The code includes a pledge and requires students to affirm a statement with respect to all assignments.

- All students are responsible for the following pledge: "We, the undergraduate students of Columbia University, hereby pledge to value the integrity of our ideas and the ideas of others through honestly presenting our work, respecting authorship, and striving not simply for answers but for understanding in the pursuit of our common scholastic goals. In this way, we seek to foster an academic community governed by our collective efforts, diligence, and Code of Honor."
- The Honor Code requires that for all assignments students affirm the following statement with their signature: "I affirm that I will not plagiarize, use unauthorized materials, or give or receive illegitimate help on assignments, papers, and examinations. I will also uphold equity and

honesty in the evaluation of my work and the work of others. I do so to sustain a community built around this Code of Honor.”

Consequently, this affirmation will appear on all assignments and must be returned, signed, with all assignments.

### **Disability Services and other University Resources:**

Also, Columbia and I personally are committed to making this an inclusive and supportive academic community. If you have special learning requirements or require an accommodation for a disability, please register with Disability Services to receive accommodation. Disability Services is located in Wien Hall and can be found at (<https://health.columbia.edu/disability-services>). For registration, see (<https://health.columbia.edu/getting-care/register-disability-services>).

Columbia has a wealth of academic, professional, and community resources available to students. These include health and psychological services right here on campus. If you have *any* need of them, please take advantage of them. Health Services can be found here (<https://health.columbia.edu/>) and Psychological Services can be found here (<https://health.columbia.edu/counseling-and-psychological-services>). Library resources, including the very helpful Quicksearch, can be found here (<http://library.columbia.edu/>). If you have specific questions about these or other resources, please let me know.

### **Required Texts:**

- \*Plato, *Five Dialogues* (Hackett)
- Plato, *Republic* (Hackett)
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics* (Oxford World’s Classics)
- Aristotle, *Politics* (Hackett)
- \*Epictetus, *Handbook (Encheiridion)*
- *New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha* (Oxford)
- Augustine, *City of God* (Penguin)
- *The Qur’an*, Abdel Haleem (ed.) (Oxford World’s Classics)
- Machiavelli, *The Prince* (Hackett)
- Machiavelli, *The Discourses* (Penguin)
- *The Protestant Reformation*, Hillerbrand, (ed.) (Harper & Row)
- Hobbes, *Leviathan* (Oxford World’s Classics)
- Locke, *Political Writings*, Wootton, ed. (Hackett) (978-08722067)

Starred works (\*) are not standard CC texts and will be made available through Courseworks. All other texts will also be made available through Courseworks.

**Schedule of Sessions** Note: Total pages for each day in italics and underlined at the end of each assignment.

9/7	Introduction and Welcome	1
9/12	Plato I Plato, Selections from <i>Euthyphro</i> Plato, <i>Apology</i> Plato, <i>Crito</i> ( <u>49 pp.</u> )	2
9/14	Plato II Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books I-III ( <u>92 pp.</u> )	3
9/19	Plato III Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books IV-VII ( <u>118 pp.</u> ) <i>1<sup>st</sup> Short Assignment handed out</i>	4
9/21	Plato IV Plato, <i>Republic</i> , Books VIII-XI ( <u>80 pp.</u> )	5
9/26	Aristotle I Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book I (Chapters 1-5, 7-12); Bk. II; Bk. III (Ch. 5); Bk. VI (Chs. 1-2); Bk. VII (Chs. 11-14); Bk. VIII (Chs. 1-8); Bk. X (Chs. 1-8). ( <u>67 pp.</u> )	6
9/27	<i>1<sup>st</sup> Short Assignment Due</i>	
9/28	Aristotle II Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , Book V; Bk. X (Chapter 9); Bk. VIII (9-11) Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book I (Ch. 1), Bk. VII (Chs. 1-3, 13-14); Bk. I (Ch. 2-13); Bk. II (Chs. 1-5), Bk. VIII (Ch. 1). ( <u>80 pp.</u> ) <i>2<sup>nd</sup> Short Assignment handed out</i>	7
10/3	Aristotle III Aristotle, <i>Politics</i> , Book Bk. III (Chs. 1, 4-13, 16-7); Bk. IV (Chapters 1-4, 9, 11, 13); Bk. V (Chs. 1, 5, 9); Bk. VI (Chs. 1-5). ( <u>66 pp.</u> )	8
10/5	Stoicism and Epicureanism Epicurus, <i>Letter to Menoecus</i> Epicurus, <i>Principal Doctrines</i> Epicurus, Selections from <i>Vatican Sayings</i> Epictetus, <i>Handbook (Encheiridion)</i> ( <u>32 pp.</u> )	9
10/7	<i>2<sup>nd</sup> Short Assignment Due</i>	
10/10	The Hebrew Bible <i>New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha</i> <i>Exodus</i> (Chapters 1-24) <i>Deuteronomy</i> (Chs. 1-6) <i>Job</i> (Chs. 1-15, 21, 32-42) <i>Ecclesiastes</i> ( <u>86 pp.</u> )	10
10/12	The New Testament <i>New Oxford Annotated Bible with Apocrypha</i> <i>Matthew</i> <i>Romans</i> <i>Galatians</i> ( <u>71 pp.</u> )	11

10/17	<b>Augustine I</b> <i>Augustine, City of God</i> Book I (Preface, Chapters 1-4, 15-36); Bk. II (Ch. 2); Bk. III (Ch. 31); Bk. IV (Chs. 1-4); Bk. V (Preface, Chs. 1, 8-21, 24-25); Bk. VI (Preface); Bk. VIII (Chs. 1-12); Bk. X (Ch. 32 [final paragraph only]). <u>(88 pp.)</u>	12
10/19	<b>Augustine II</b> <i>Augustine, City of God</i> Book XI (Chapter 1); Bk. XII (Chs. 6-8, 22-23, 28); Bk. XIII (Chs. 1-8, 13-15); Bk. XIV (Chs. 1-4, 10-19, 22-28); Bk. XVIII (Chs. 1, 54 [final paragraph only]); Bk. XIX (Chs. 1 [first paragraph only], 4, 13-17, 21, 24, 26-28); Bk. XXII (Chs. 30) <u>(82 pp.)</u>	13
10/24	MIDTERM	14
10/26	<b>The Qur'an</b> <i>The Qur'an</i> Suras 1, 2, 114, 112, 109, 107, 102, 98, 96, 68, 63, 56, 39, 26, 17, 12, 2-3. (NOTE: Read in this order). <u>(81 pp.)</u>	15
10/31	<b>Medieval Philosophy I</b> Al-Ghazali, <i>The Rescuer from Error</i> Ibn Tufayl, Selections from <i>Hayy ibn Yaqzan</i> <u>(66 pp.)</u> <i>3<sup>rd</sup> Short Assignment handed out</i>	16
11/2	<b>Medieval Philosophy II</b> Thomas Aquinas, Selections from <i>St. Thomas on Politics and Ethics</i> <u>(76 pp.)</u>	17
11/7	ELECTION DAY (NO CLASS)	
11/9	<b>Machiavelli I</b> Machiavelli, <i>The Discourses</i> Book I (Preface, Chapters 1-6, 9-13, 16-18, 29, 32, 34, 55, 58); Bk. II (Preface, Chs. 1-3, 29); Bk. III (Chs. 1, 3, 7-9, 34, 43 [first paragraph only]). <u>(116 pp.)</u>	18
11/11	<i>3<sup>rd</sup> Short Assignment Due</i>	
11/14	<b>Machiavelli II</b> Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> <u>(80 pp.)</u>	19
11/16	<b>The Protestant Reformation</b> Hillerbrand (ed.) <i>The Protestant Reformation</i> Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian Man" Luther, "On Government Authority" "The Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants" Luther, "Friendly Admonition to Peace Concerning the Twelve Articles of the Swabian Peasants." <u>(73 pp.)</u>	20
11/21	<b>The New World Debate</b> Sepulveda, "Democrates Alter, Or, On the Just Causes for War Against the Indians" De las Casas, "Thirty Very Juridical Propositions" Vitoria, "On the American Indians," (pp. 231-51, 264-5, 271-2, 277-91). <u>(48 pp.)</u>	21

11/23	<b>The Scientific Revolution</b> Descartes, <i>Principles of Philosophy</i> , (Introduction and Preface) Descartes, Selections from Correspondence with Elisabeth Descartes, <i>Passions of the Soul</i> , (§ 1-12, 17-27, 31, 35-50, 151-6, 211-2). <u>(69 pp.)</u>	22
11/28	<b>Hobbes I</b> Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I (Introduction, Chapters 2, 3 [Paragraphs 10-12 only], 4-5, 7, 9, 11, 13-15). <u>(56 pp.)</u>	23
11/30	<b>Hobbes II</b> Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I (Chapters 16 [Paragraphs 1-8, 13-15 only]); Part II (Chs. 17, 20-21, 26, 29)). <u>(68 pp.)</u> <i>Final Paper Assignment handed out</i>	24
12/2	<i>Revision of 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, or 3<sup>rd</sup> Assignment Due</i>	
12/5	<b>Hobbes III</b> Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> , Part I (Chapter 12); Part III (Chs. 32, 34 [Paragraphs 1-4, 24], 35 [¶s 1-5, 11-13], 36 [¶s 19-20] 37, 38 [¶s 1-14], 42 [¶s 1-2, 4-11, 13-14, 36-37, 42-44, 67-68, 70, 79-80], 43); Part IV (Ch. 47). <u>(70 pp.)</u>	25
12/7	<b>Locke I</b> Locke, <i>Letter on Toleration</i> . Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 1-6. <u>(84 pp.)</u>	26
12/12	<b>Locke II</b> Locke, <i>Second Treatise of Government</i> , Chapters 7-19. <u>(87 pp.)</u>	27
12/16	<b>FINAL EXAM, *1-4pm*</b>	
12/19	<i>Final Paper Assignment Due</i>	