

Honors 3001:
The Renaissance,
The Reformation,
and the Enlightenment

Professors:

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We have designed Honors 3001 to acquaint Honors Students with salient elements of European thought and culture from the Italian Renaissance into the English eighteenth century, using intensive reading, discussion, and writing assignments supplemented by lectures. Topics in literary, institutional, social, intellectual, and artistic history will be developed in roughly chronological order, but there will be no pretense of “coverage” of history, literary or political. This interdisciplinary approach yields significant returns to those who read each assignment intensively and form the habit of inquiring for assumptions, implications, and other intellectual and historical connections or relationships.

Reading assignments are indicated below for each class date on the syllabus. More detailed assignments for works requiring more than one class period or specific assignments will be announced in class. Everyone should complete the readings by the day the work is to be discussed. Any detailed assignments will be made at the beginning of the appropriate section in the course. Lectures and questions addressed to you will assume your timely and intelligent reading of the materials.

There will be four papers assigned throughout the semester, with the following due dates: September 22, October 17, November 7, and November 26. Papers must be turned in to Room 102 in the French House by 3 p.m. on the days they are due. Paper topics will be handed out in class approximately a week to ten days before the due date. There will be some opportunity to rewrite papers to improve writing, insight, and grades. (Included in the packet is a two-page summary of what is expected for your essays.)

Grade Breakdown:

Four (4) papers, 3 to 3 1/2 pages (each paper is worth 15%) 60%
Final Exam, essay 30%
Class participation 10%

Textbooks for the Course

Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, ed. Musa and Bondanella (Norton) (D)
Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (DM)
Locke, *A Letter Concerning Toleration* (LT)
Machiavelli, *The Prince*, tr. Mansfield (Chicago) (P)
Milton, *Paradise Lost*, ed. Ellege (Norton) (PL)
Montesquieu, *Persian Letters* (PerL)
More, *Utopia* (U)
Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, ed. Raffel (Norton) (GP)
Ross and McLaughlin, eds., *The Portable Renaissance Reader* (Penguin) (PRR)
Williams, ed., *English Renaissance Poetry* (Arkansas) (ERP)
Packet of Renaissance Readings and Handouts, available at Serve-U-Center, outside south gates of LSU (Packet)

In addition, we will be reading three Shakespeare plays, *Hamlet*, *Henry V*,

and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*. If you already have copies of these plays, please use them, for we will refer to passages by act, scene, and line number. If you are an English major, you might want to consider getting the Norton Shakespeare (based on the Oxford edition). If you are short of money, Dover Publications offers these plays for \$1 to \$2 each.

PART I: THE RENAISSANCE AND THE REFORMATION

8-26 T Introduction to the Renaissance: Continuity and Change
Handout: Dante and Petrarch
Packet #1

8-28 Th Renaissance: Men, Women, and the City, I
Boccaccio, D, pp. 1-107

9-2 T Renaissance: Men, Women, and the City, II
Boccaccio, D, pp. 109-16, 128-43
PRR: pp. 79-116, 480-92

9-4 Th Early Renaissance Poetry
Packet #2
ERP: pp. 25-33, 47, 61-70, 137-42, 148-55, 183-89, 196-200,
243-45, 258, 292-96, 311-21, 334
PRR: pp. 120-46, 421-29

9-9 T More and Erasmus: Worldly Wisdom
PRR: pp. 492-500
Erasmus, "The Sileni of Alcibiades," in U, pp. 169-91
More, U, pp. 40-89

9-11 Th More's Utopian Vision
More, U, pp. 90-160, 166-68

9-16 T Machiavelli's Prince: Acquiring One's Own Arms
Machiavelli, P, pp. 3-60 (Dedicatory Letter and Chaps. 1-14)

9-18 Th Machiavelli's Prince: Virtue and Fortune
Machiavelli, P, pp. 61-111 (Chaps. 15-26, Letter to Vettori)

***** PAPER 1 DUE ON MONDAY, 9-22 *****

9-23 T Love, Poetry, and the Courtier
Packet #3
PRR: pp. 421-49, 328-47

9-25 Th Reformation: The Church
Packet #4
PRR: pp. 615-76

9-30 T Reformation: The Christian
PRR: pp. 677-754

10-2 Th Fall Holiday

PART II: THE NEW WORLD THE POETS CONSTRUCTED

10-7 T The World Writ Large
Rabelais, GP, Bks. I and II
PRR: pp. 340-47

10-9 Th Describing, Enumerating, and Knowing the World
Rabelais, GP, Book 3, pp. 237-83, 343-75; Book 4, pp. 379-95, 430-54, 474-85, 501-7; Book 5, pp. 525-28, 598-623

10-14 T Love, Marriage, and the City: A Midsummer Night's Dream
Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream

10-16 Th Poets, Madmen, and Lovers
Shakespeare, A Midsummer Night's Dream

* * * * * PAPER 2 DUE ON FRIDAY, 10-17 * * * * *

10-21 T The Introspective Hero: Hamlet
Shakespeare, Hamlet
PRR: pp. 387-92

10-23 Th "A Special Providence"
Shakespeare, Hamlet

10-28 T The Mirror of All Christian Kings: Henry V
Shakespeare, Henry V

10-30 Th The Metaphysical Perspective on the World: Donne & Herbert
Packet # 5
ERP: pp. 337-45, 351-60, 363-70, 373-77, 382, 398-401

11-4 T How Far is Down?: Satan and His Temptations
Packet #6
Milton, PL, Bks. I-IV

11-6 Th Adam and Eve in the Garden
Milton, PL, Bks. V-IX

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11-11 T Forgiveness and the Felix Culpa
Milton, PL, Bks. X-XII

PART III: THE ENLIGHTENMENT

11-13 Th The Importance of Science: Descartes
Descartes, DM, pp. 1-44
PRR: pp. 608-15

11-18 T The Enlightenment and its Critics
Packet #7
Descartes, DM

11-20 Th Locke and Enlightenment Toleration

Locke, LT, pp. 23-58

11-25 T Love and Reason

Montesquieu, PerL, pp. 39-124 (Preface, Letters 1-59)

***** PAPER 4 DUE ON WEDNESDAY, 11-26 *****

11-27 Th Thanksgiving

12-2 T Liberty and Despotism

Montesquieu, PerL, pp. 125-202 (Letters 60-111)

12-4 Th Equality and Nature

Montesquieu, PerL, pp. 202-281 (Letters 112-161)

FINAL EXAMINATION:

Wednesday, December 10, 5:30 to 7:30