Spring 2023 Course Descriptions - Intro Level Elective Courses
(3 credits)

Please refer to the Registrar’s Master Schedule of Classes for the most up-to-date courses being offered in Honors for Spring 2023. Click here to access this list. At the first menu scroll down to ‘Spring 2023’ and the click the ‘Submit’ button. At the next menu scoll down to ‘Honors’ and then click the ‘Class Detail Search’ button at the bottom of the screen. This will display the most up-to-date courses being offered in Honors for Spring 2023. Courses with the HON prefix, H sections (i.e.-H01), courses with Honors attributes, and graduate courses count for Honors credit. Schedulr is not always correct, so you should always consult with the Master Schedule of Classes.

ACS 1001-H01 Moderns

Michael Thompson

The purpose of this seminar is to continue your introduction into the intellectual and spiritual life of meaning and values within the traditions of the western humanities. This seminar will focus on some of the developments in the modern era of that tradition. The central theme posed by this ACS honors seminar is “Who Am I?” We will read, study, and discuss some of the seminal works of literature, philosophy, theology, and the arts which will propose various responses to this central theme. We will be guided by the insights of St Augustine of Hippo in our evaluations, most especially concerning the complexities of correctly choosing the self
which will best result in our happiness. We will also con-template the implications of failure in this crucial decision.

Texts (semester order): St Augustine’s Just War Doctrine; Shakespeare’s Macbeth; T. Hobbes Leviathan (excerpts); S. Freud, Civilization, and its Discontents; Ron Rosenbaum, Explaining Hitler; S. de Beauvoir, Introduction to The Second Sex, M.L. King, I Have a Dream; Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X), On Afro Ameri-can History; Pope Francis, Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, -Our Brothers.

We will begin the semester by evaluating St Augustine’s account of the difficulties to be surmounted in justifying violence. Continuing with the role playing and crucial decisions of characters in Shake-speare’s Macbeth which lead to their self-destruction and catastrophe. We will analyze the ironic con-tractarian claims of Thomas Hobbes in Leviathan claiming that individuals can only realize their free-dom and possibilities when protected by an absolute sovereign. We will then assess Sigmund Freud’s arguments concerning modern individuality in Civilization and its Discontents. We will address the most enigmatic and awful individual in history in Rosenbaum’s Explaining Hitler. We will evaluate the claims of Simone de Beauvoir’s Second Sex, concerning full equality for human being, we will continue the se-semester with an analysis of the debate, concerning the nature of personhood and individual rights and the horrid effects of racism, between Dr. Martin Luther King and Malik Shabazz (Malcolm X) and end the semester with an evaluation of Pope Francis’ latest Encyclical Fratelli Tutti, and satisfying the crite-ria of St Augustine’s expectations for justifying violence.

The students will be required to evaluate textual passages from the readings and a number of as-signed questions, throughout the semester. There will be assigned 3 analytic argument essays, a re-flection essay, a self-description essay, a creative project, and a final examination.

Thank You.

ACS 1001-H02 Moderns

Tim Carr

In his 1933 essay "Modern Man in Search of a Soul," Carl Jung has us picture the 'modern' person standing "upon a peak, or at the very edge of the world, the abyss of the future before him, above him the heavens, and below him the whole of mankind with a history that disappears in primeval mists." How may/can we handle "the most intensive and extensive consciousness, with a minimum of unconsciousness', Jung asks, as we, the "end-product of an age-old development", examine the 'hinterlands' of our intimate psychic life? Continuing our exploration of "Who am I? And what is a life well lived?", we'll examine issues that shape our modern thinking and living: individualism, faith, progress, romance, nature, civilization, envy. We'll invite many voices to our table, as we enter these debates, with selections from: Gertrude Stein, Mark Twain, Bertrand Russell, C.S. Lewis, St. Francis, W.E.B. DuBois, G.K. Chesterton,
Susan Sontag, bell hooks, Henry David Thoreau, Sigmund Freud, Hannah Arendt, Francis Bacon, Franz Kafka, James Joyce, Virginia Woolf, Flannery O'Connor, T.S. Eliot, William Blake, Wallace Stevens, W.H. Auden, Emily Dickinson, William Shakespeare (Othello), and more. We'll share our individual and collective wisdom at the table, as we seek what matters most to us, abiding with those choices. And we'll tackle writing challenges in several forms of creative nonfiction (memoir, art criticism, independent research...), creating the most persuasive and compelling works that we'll aim to publish, so that our thoughts and words are delivered into the world. I hope to work with you.

**ACS 1001-H03 Moderns (GTB Cohort)**

*Dr. Helena Tomko*

The second semester in the Examined Life sequence, this course challenges you to consider what you think is true (and how you know that). Is truth good? Is it useful? Is it knowledge? Can we ever be certain about anything? Is truth just another name for power? Is it for everyone? Is it everything? Can it set us free?

Texts are drawn from history, literature, philosophy, and theology, with a focus on how what we think is true impacts every aspect of our lives. You will read texts by William Shakespeare, W.E.B. Dubois, Mary Shelley, Plato, and more, and you will complete your year-long journey through St. Augustine’s Confessions.

**ACS 1001-H04 Moderns (GTB Cohort)**

*Dr. Paul Camacho*

The second semester in the Examined Life sequence, this course challenges you to consider what you think is true (and how you know that). Is truth good? Is it useful? Is it knowledge? Can we ever be certain about anything? Is truth just another name for power? Is it for everyone? Is it everything? Can it set us free?

Texts are drawn from history, literature, philosophy, and theology, with a focus on how what we think is true impacts every aspect of our lives. You will read texts by William Shakespeare, W.E.B. Dubois, Mary Shelley, Plato, and more, and you will complete your year-long journey through St. Augustine’s Confessions.
ACS 1001-H05 Moderns (GTB Cohort)

Fr. Francis Caponi

The second semester in the Examined Life sequence, this course challenges you to consider what you think is true (and how you know that). Is truth good? Is it useful? Is it knowledge? Can we ever be certain about anything? Is truth just another name for power? Is it for everyone? Is it everything? Can it set us free? Texts are drawn from history, literature, philosophy, and theology, with a focus on how what we think is true impacts every aspect of our lives. You will read texts by William Shakespeare, W.E.B. DuBois, Mary Shelley, Plato, and more, and you will complete your year-long journey through St. Augustine’s Confessions.

ACS 1001-H06 Moderns (PPE Cohort)

Margaret Matthews

Course description forthcoming.

ACS 1001-H07 Moderns (PPE Cohort)

Terence Sweeney

Course description forthcoming.

ACS 1001-H08 Moderns (BST)

Brian Satterfield

Welcome to Moderns, the second half of the two-semester Augustine and Culture Seminar (ACS). ACS is one of Villanova’s four foundational courses, which are the pillars of the Augustinian liberal education that Villanova aims to provide for all her students. Each of the foundational courses centers around a particular question, and the question for our course is a very fundamental one indeed: Who am I? We’ll be studying some of the greatest books from the modern world with the goal of furthering our self-awareness and self-knowledge. We turn to these books not only to acquire cultural literacy or learn about the history of human thought,
but because we think they can help reveal you to yourself and open your mind and heart to new and profound possibilities. Perhaps they can even show you something important about your soul: its current state, and how to enlarge and shape it towards its full potential.

**ECO 1002-H01 Intro to Macro**

*Dr. Sarah Burke*

This course introduces basic models of economics and an overview of macroeconomic issues such as the determination of output, employment, and inflation. The economic functions of government, monetary and fiscal policy, and international trade as well as the study of the U.S. free enterprise system and its place in the global economy are considered. The honors section is a rigorous and reading intensive study.

**ETH 2050-H01 Eth Trad & Contemp Life**

*Sarah-Vaughan Brakman*

Course description forthcoming.

**ETH 2050-H02 Eth Trad & Contemp Life**

*Dr. Wonchul Shin*

ETH 2050 involves students in the ongoing conversation about what constitutes the good life. That conversation involves ancient and modern thinkers, both philosophers and theologians, as well as people alive today, struggling with questions that each generation seeks to answer: What is the good life? What does justice demand of me? Of us? Does it matter what I believe about human nature, or about God, or about society when it comes to how I live my life? Is being happy the same thing as being a good person? One goal of the course is to provide students with “toe holds” into this longstanding conversation. Another goal is to enable students to engage these resources as they might bear upon some contemporary moral
challenge and/or reality. These goals will be accomplished through a combination of the following: reading challenging texts, examining some contemporary moral challenges, and writing essays designed to synthesize the insights of the first two activities.

**HIS 1165-H01 Capitalism & Global Commo**

*Prof. Andrew Liu*

This course asks: what is a commodity, and how can commodities help us understand the social system we call “capitalism”? In doing so, the course will try to weave together complex narratives of human interaction by emphasizing the simple idea that things have been made, sold, and consumed by humans across wide spans of geography and time.

At the start of the semester, we will review several case studies of particular commodities. Specifically, we will look at the classic studies of coffee, sugar, and tea and opium -- all quintessentially early modern commodities which belong to the era of expanding global trade. After spring break, we will discuss the birth of the modern industrial world by looking at cotton: the most important commodity of the nineteenth century. And then we will look at the new shape that commodities have taken on in the twentieth and twenty-first century eras of finance.

At the end of the course, we will also have student presentations, during which each student will talk about an individual commodity, the history of which they have personally researched and will narrate for the class.

This course fulfills the “core history” requirement.

**Course Objectives**

Students in this class will:

- strengthen their ability as readers and writers of academic historical writing
- refine their analytical historical skills by focusing on questions of novelty (what was new in the past?); periodization (how can we characterize periods in terms of before and afterwards?); and causality (what was responsible for these changes?).
- be introduced to the foundations of modern and contemporary capitalism
- expand their understanding of history as a global and transnational process
PHI 1000-H01 Knowledge, Reality & Self

Dr. Martina Ferrari

This course is about us. It is a course about what we know, how we know it, what we are, who we are, and why it all matters. Following a brief introduction about the value of philosophy vis-à-vis these existential questions, the course is divided in 2 parts. In the first part, we consider the classical philosophical questions of knowledge, What is knowledge? How do we know? Does who we are affect what we know? In the second part, we inquire into matters of selfhood and identity by asking, What and who are we? Through these investigations, we will engage both classical and contemporary thinkers, coming to learn that questions of knowledge and selfhood are not separate from the situation within which they are asked. The surrounding reality and its power dynamics affect not only the answers one may give to these questions, but also who and how one can ask these questions to begin with.

PHI 1000-H02 Knowledge, Reality & Self

Dr Surti Singh

In this introductory course to philosophy we will consider some central problems, questions and issues that have historically defined the subject. Focus will be given to enduring questions such as what is knowledge? What is the nature of reality? What is the relationship between the mind and body? What constitutes the self? How do we act ethically? What is freedom? In addition to understanding the problems central to philosophy, students will encounter philosophy as an activity of thinking critically about human experience and the world. To this end, we will examine texts drawn from ancient, Christian, early modern, modern and contemporary sources, as well as canonical and non-canonical texts in order to approach the diversity and plurality of thinking that constitutes the discipline of philosophy.

PHI 1000-H03 Knowledge, Reality & Self

Prof. James Wetzel

"It is necessary to have had a revelation of reality through joy in order to find reality through suffering. Otherwise life is only a dream—more or less bad."

(Simone Weil)

In our section of PHI 1000, we will want to reflect carefully on the difference between knowledge and wisdom. The acquisition of knowledge requires the skillful exercise of a method of knowing, and the result of this exercise, new information, speaks to what is true or real independently of what the knower is like. I can be knowledgeable and still be a pretty dreadful
human being. Wisdom, by contrast, is always received as a virtue, and although wisdom may have something essentially to do with knowledge, the two are not the same. It is notoriously true of human beings that we often fail to do what we judge to be best. That is unwise. Perhaps we don’t know what we think we know; perhaps wisdom will turn out to be a form of knowledge after all, only deeper and more comprehensive than the counterfeit notion we normally presume. Or perhaps wisdom transcends knowledge altogether and so is never simply the object of training and self-cultivation.

We will test the possibilities, all the while keeping in mind that as part of a wisdom tradition, philosophy is as much a way of life as a discipline of inquiry.

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**PSC 1200-H01 International Relations**

*Lance Kenney*

This course is an introduction to the study of international relations (IR), a distinct academic discipline that involves elements of political science, history, economics, sociology, and philosophy. The aim is to present the key concepts, theories, and paradigms that shape and influence world politics. Simply reporting on contemporary international events is NOT the goal: evaluating and critically assessing those events IS the goal.

**THL 1000-H01 Faith, Reason & Culture**

*Fr. Francis Caponi*

As an integral part of the Arts and Sciences Core Curriculum, this foundational course introduces students to the rich living tradition of Christianity: the sources, traditions, practices, and major thinkers that have shaped Christianity’s responses to the fundamental human questions that shape the human search for meaning. With a particular focus on Roman Catholicism, students engage Christianity as a living tradition of beliefs and practices that have developed over time in local and global cultural and religious contexts and that, loyal to the living God to which they point, are ready to be transformed again. Students engage Christian truth claims, themes, values, and witness as resources for analyzing and critically evaluating contemporary cultural challenges. In this course, students are equipped to appreciate the ongoing quest of Christian faith seeking understanding as it enters into conversation with all human knowledge and experience, including other faith/religious traditions.
Based upon the Christian notion that God became human in Jesus of Nazareth, who intimately interacted with the people of his own time, addressing their needs, this course begins by diagnosing characteristics of contemporary culture. In short, asking: what are the most urgent needs of our time? We will then explore how an understanding of God as Creator and our relationship to God as creatures in a created world provides an ultimate orientation for how we are to live in the world today. Here we will explore a thoroughly Augustinian understanding of the God/human relationship. Then this will be related to Pope Francis’s encyclical, “Laudato Si’”, which addresses quite concretely how this understanding of the God/human relationship is of the utmost importance for the ecological, economic, and social challenges we currently face as a society. From here we will delve more deeply into an understanding of Jesus: who he was, the central message of his ministry, and the importance of Christians carrying out that ministry today. Having examined more closely both God and Jesus, we will apply this more specifically to the question: how can Christianity improve our ways of thinking of and implementing more just economic systems that encourage sustainable, integral human development?