

**Augustine and Culture Seminar**  
1000 (Ancients) and 1001 (Moderns)

**Foundation Question**  
Who am I?

**Augustine and Culture Seminar** is one of a group of five courses that we call the foundation courses. The courses make a Villanova education distinctive and work together to answer a series of related questions:

**WHO AM I?**

Augustine and Culture Seminar 1000 (Ancients) and 1001 (Moderns)

**WHAT CAN I KNOW?**

Philosophy 1000:  
Knowledge, Reality, Self

**WHAT DO I BELIEVE?**

Theology and Religious Studies 1000:  
Faith, Reason, and Culture

**HOW SHOULD I LIVE?**

Ethics 2050:  
The Good Life—  
Ethics and Contemporary Moral Problems

By seeking answers to these questions, you will conduct an interdisciplinary inquiry that is informed by Augustinian and Catholic intellectual traditions, develop your skills in critical thinking and communication, deepen your understanding of yourself and the world, and engage with issues of personal responsibility and social justice.

**ACS 1001: Moderns (Sections FR1 & FR2)**  
**Faith and Reason Learning Communities**

*A loss of harmony with the surrounding space, the inability to feel at home in the world, so oppressive to an expatriate, a refugee, an immigrant, paradoxically integrates him in contemporary society and makes him, if he is an artist, understood by all. Even more, to express the existential situation of modern man, one must live in exile of some sort.*

Czesław Miłosz, "On Exile"

**Times and Locations:** FR1 Tue/Thu 10:00 - 11:15pm SAC 103  
FR2 Tue/Thu 11:30 - 12:45pm SAC 103

**Contact Info:** Dr. Paul Camacho, [paul.camacho@villanova.edu](mailto:paul.camacho@villanova.edu)

**Office Hours:** SAC 077 by appointment (or drop by Wed. 2-4, Fri. 10-12)

**What is ACS 1001 (Moderns)?**

Welcome to the second semester of the *Augustine and Culture Seminar*.

This spring, you will continue to engage the great texts, ideas, and debates that have shaped Western thought through the centuries. This seminar is designed around three broad goals: (1) to elevate your reading, writing, and seminar-style discussion; (2) to re-approach the most fundamental question we can ask, i.e., "Who am I?"; and (3) to introduce you to some of the most influential answers to this question provided by modern culture—the culture in which we all were raised, but which, for that very reason, we tend to take for granted.

Everything you read this semester will in some way show us a reflection of our modern selves, but it will be up to you to examine this reflection critically, and to ask whether the image presented is of our true humanity. By tracing the paths marked out for us by figures such as Kant, Hobbes, Locke, Nietzsche, Pascal, Kierkegaard, Shakespeare, Shelley, O'Connor, Martin Luther King Jr., and Malcom X, we will encounter the basic perplexities—and also some answers—surrounding our question, "Who am I?".

A central theme that will emerge is that of *autonomy* or "self-determination": a particularly *modern* way of understanding freedom—as a lack of external constraints, and an ability to choose and do as we wish, even to the point of claiming our own purpose and meaning in life. We will consider both the promise and the pitfalls of this modern notion, and how it differs from the ancient vision of the self. At the same time, we will examine the unraveling of the world that seems to go hand-in-hand with our efforts to unmoor ourselves from extrinsic influences. A central question we will take up:

*Why is it that in modern culture, we are more “free” than ever before, and yet we are more distracted, confused, alienated, and unhappy than ever before?*

We will also take up Miłosz’s provocative suggestion that to be modern is to live in exile of some sort. Drawing on the Catholic Intellectual Tradition that we studied in ACS-1000: Ancients, as well as on Catholic Social Teaching, we will ask how we can respond to modernity’s many forms of alienations: in human work, in racial injustice, in our relationship to the environment. We will ask:

*In what does human dignity consist? What is the relationship between happiness and the common good? What can I do to work for justice in an increasingly polarized political landscape and in an overwhelmingly globalized economy?*

Your task this semester will be to answer these and related questions. You will do this in class discussion, where you will contribute your own thoughts, and where you will also be challenged by your classmates to think differently. And you will also do this through your own written work, which will give you an opportunity to reflect upon our readings and our shared discussion, and will require you to articulate for yourself what it means to be a human person.\*

### **What will you get out of taking this course?**

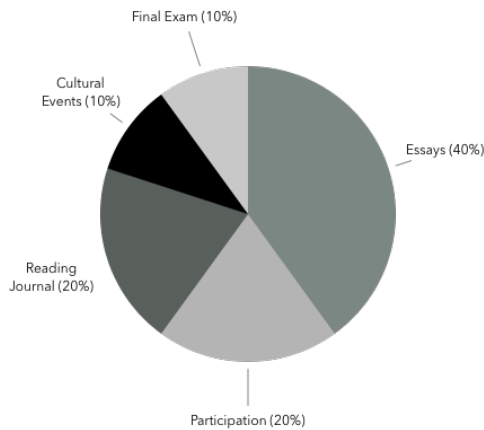
Upon completion of this course, you will be able to:

- Articulate the interconnections between the various disciplines of the humanities through the common study of primary texts and the pursuit of fundamental human questions
- Identify the contributions of Christian and Augustinian traditions to the central questions of the course; understand how these traditions contribute to mission of the university
- Analyze and interpret difficult and important texts
- Write clearly and persuasively, supporting positions with argumentation and evidence
- Communicate effectively, based on reading and in response to others
- Apply new perspectives and make connections between your own ideas and values and the texts, as well as between the texts themselves.

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\* Thanks to Dr. Peter Busch, Dr. Kaley Carpenter and Dr. Gregory Hoskins for framing this description. They also contributed content—not to mention valuable inspiration—to the “Course Details” section below.

## How will you be evaluated for your work in this course?



### Essays (40%)

You will write two formal essays this semester, each 4-6 pages in length. Your grade will include multiple drafts, tutorial sessions, and your work on peer revisions.

### Seminar Participation (20%)

This includes attendance, preparation of questions beforehand, active contribution to discussion, attention and respect for classmates, and presentations throughout the semester. Thoughtful contributions are weighed more than chatter; plan to contribute at least a couple of times per class.

### Daily Reading Journal (20%)

For each class session, you will write an entry in your reading journal, which will be housed on the course page in Blackboard. At a minimum, your journal entry for the day will include:

1. **Two questions** generated from the text and prepared beforehand. During seminar, you may be asked to lead class discussion based on one or both of these questions.
2. **One paragraph of written reflection** on the assigned reading. This writing will not be graded formally, but will be evaluated based on your thoughtful reflection upon the text.

Examples of Reading Journal reflections:

- o Reflecting upon relevance to contemporary culture;
- o Personal investigations of a meaningful line or passage;
- o Raising and attempting to answer a question or perplexity;
- o Creative writing (narrative, poetry, short story) in response to the reading

### Cultural Events (10%)

One way we build the "culture" into the Augustine and *Culture* Seminar is through your participation in out-of-seminar Cultural Events (CEs). You are required to attend at least three (3) cultural events. These events may include plays, off campus trips, or lectures by visiting scholars. **You'll write a short (1 page) response paper for each of the three CE events you attend.** A listing of all CEs can be found online: [villanova.edu/villanova/artsci/acsp/culturalevents.html](http://villanova.edu/villanova/artsci/acsp/culturalevents.html)

**Please note: we will be watching the film *Wise Blood* on Tuesday, March 27 at 7pm.** This film will count as one of your three cultural events.

**Please note: we will be attending the play *Much Ado About Nothing* on Tuesday, April 17 at 8pm in Vasey Theater.** This play will count as one of your three cultural events.

## Writing Portfolio (10%)

*The greatest thoughts and events—but the greatest events are the greatest thoughts—are comprehended last.*

Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* #285

This semester, you will complete your electronic writing portfolio by adding two items:

1. **Your best analytical essay** of the spring semester (choose the one you think is most interesting and worth remembering, even if it didn't receive the highest grade from me)
2. **A 4-page "Retractions" essay** that reconsiders the views you presented in your diagnostic essay, in light of your readings, conversations, and cultural events in ACS this year. (Filed under "Reflective Response"). Your portfolio grade will be based on this essay. Though short, it must be carefully written and demonstrate how perceptive and thoughtful you can be as a reader of your own work.

## What is expected of you in this course?

### Attendance

1. **Course Material:** You should bring your text, handouts, written assignment, etc., that we will be discussing for the day. Be prepared to show your text at the beginning of class. If you do not have the day's readings, you will be asked to go get them.
2. **Phones:** If your phone rings during seminar, you will lose your participation points for that day. If this happens a second time in the semester, you will again lose your participation points, and you will be penalized an unexcused absence. The same holds if you are texting or otherwise engaged in using the Internet in class.
3. **Laptops/tablets:** Laptops and tablets are not allowed, unless previously approved. If for some reason you need to use technology, or need to keep your phone for an emergency, please speak with me before class.
4. **Food:** You are welcome to bring food/beverages to class (please be clean and discreet).
5. **Absence Policy:** You are expected to be on time and present for all classes. "Present" means: in your seat, with the text for the course ready to go, phones and laptops turned off, bathroom runs having been made already.

For this course, more than two (2) unexcused absences will result in failure for your overall participation grade; per university policy for first year students, more than five (5) unexcused absences may result in failure of the course.

Please note that **I do not** excuse absences; absences can *only* be approved by your Dean, by the Health Center, by the athletic department, or by your ROTC commander. If you have an excused absence, it is your responsibility to provide evidence to me and to get any missed information and material from your classmates.

### *Participation*

Unlike many of the classes that you will take at Villanova, ACS is built *entirely* around conversation: everything we do is meant to draw you into great conversations, conversations that demand of you to be an attentive reader and listener, as well as an active participant.

Regardless of your efforts outside of class or the quality of your written work, if you do not find yourself contributing something meaningful to the discussion in nearly every session, it will be impossible to get a high grade in this course. (Of course, prepping well before class, and working hard on your written assignments, will give you plenty of good things to contribute in class).

What counts as good participation? If you have a question about the text that is bugging you, if there is something you don't understand, or if disagree with the author: share it! If you have an insight about something we've read for class, read us the passage and then make your point. If you disagree a classmate, or with your professor, speak up: politely but forcefully argue your point.

We want to hear what *you* think. I am here to help get conversations started and to keep discussion civil and on track. I might ask you to clarify your position, back up an assertion with evidence, or reflect more critically about something you've shared. But this is *your* class; expect to take the lead.

### *Evaluation of Writing*

ACS is a writing intensive course. You will write 30+ pages this semester in this course! Since so much of this course is based on writing, we have formalized many of the ACS writing components:

1. **Writing = revising:** Your essays will be the result of numerous iterations: development of a thesis, creating an outline, writing a first draft, revising with a group, writing a second draft. Please keep *all* of this written work—your midterm and final paper grades will reflect not only the final product, but also your evidence of your efforts at improvement.
2. **Writing Tutorial Sessions:** Over the course of the semester, you will meet with me (and with two other students) to present and develop your formal essays in a small group session. During the session, you will read your essay aloud and then receive feedback and suggestions from your listeners. These sessions will give you the experience of presenting your work to a real audience who is prepared to make comments.
3. **The Writing Portfolio:** The formal writing that you complete in ACS over the course of both semesters will go into an online portfolio (linked through Blackboard) that you will create and maintain. For ACS-1000, you will be asked to upload your Foundation Essay paper, and either your Midterm or Final paper (whichever you consider your best work).
4. **The Writing Center (TWC):** Located on the 2nd floor of Falvey Library, open Sun 3:30-7:30, Mon - Thurs 11:30-7:30, and Fri 11:30-3:30, TWC offers free help to understand your assignment, generate ideas, support your argument, organize your essay, and improve your grammar. Call (610 519 4604) or visit well in advance to make an appointment
5. **Evaluation of Writing:** It is your responsibility to familiarize yourself with the syllabus, individual assignment instructions, and the paper evaluation rubric (in the course pack). You are also responsible for properly formatting and submitting your written assignments *on time*. Late work will be penalized one letter grade for every day that it is missing.

### *On Grades*

I have very high standards for your reading, writing, and discussion in this class. I consider "A" work to be truly excellent; "B" work to be very good; and "C" work to be acceptable.

In more accessible terms, an "A" reflects graduate level writing; a "B" is solid undergraduate level work; a "C" is high school level work; etc.

#### Percentage Based Grading Scale:

100-94 = A	93-90 = A-	89-87 = B+	86-83 = B	82-80 = B-
79-77 = C+	76-73 = C	72-70 = C-	69-67 = D+	66-63 = D

#### 4.0 Based Grading Scale:

- 4.0 = Masterful preparation, enthusiastic engagement, and excellent presentation
- 3.0 = Strong preparation, thoughtful engagement, and good presentation
- 2.0 = Competent preparation, engagement, and/or presentation
- 1.0 = Minimal preparation, engagement, and/or presentation
- 0 = Work not submitted or work incomplete

### *Statement of Academic Integrity & of Reasonable Accommodation*

I will hold students in this class to the strictest standards of academic integrity.

You must clearly cite any and all sources you use in *all* your written papers. Representing another person's work as your own, *whether intentionally or unintentionally*, violates the principles of integrity upon which this course is founded. A basic guideline: If your work does somehow use a source, *any* source, for whatever reason, whether it is quoted directly or paraphrased, you *must* provide a reference in your paper, where the source is used. Failure to do so is plagiarism.

Plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment. Serious violations may result in failure for the course. Either way, a letter is filed with the student's dean and with the Vice President for Academic affairs. For more information, see: <http://library.villanova.edu/help/academicintegrity>

It is the policy of Villanova to make reasonable academic accommodations for all learning styles and abilities. If you wish to request accommodations to complete the course requirements, please make an appointment. You must also contact the Learning Support Services: 610 519 5176.

### *Final Thoughts: Office Hours, Respect, Email*

1. **Office Hours:** It is best to talk with me in person, whether about course content, concerning assignments, or if you have questions about evaluations of your work. I will be available in SAC 077 Wed. 2-4pm, Fri. 10-noon, and other times by appointment.
2. **Respect:** It is assumed that you will interact respectfully with others during class, in your tutorials, and in email. If you are intentionally rude or disrespectful during class discussions, you will be asked to leave, and you will be marked absent for the day.
3. **Email:** Please observe considerate email etiquette. When sending an email, put content in the subject line or it will not be read; it is best to address me in writing as "Dear Prof. Camacho"; compose your email using proper grammar and full sentences; etc.

Note also that I check my email twice daily: at 9am, and at 9pm. I promise to respond to you within 24 hours, but I prefer to talk either before or after class, or during office hours.

### **Course texts: What do you need for this course?**

Be sure to match ISBN numbers so you get the correct edition of the book

1. ACS-1001-FR1-FR2 Camacho *Course Pack*. (Available only in the Villanova Bookstore.)
2. Mary Shelley. *Frankenstein or the Modern Prometheus: The 1818 Text*. Oxford: Oxford World's Classics, 2009. ISBN: 978-0199537150
3. C.S. Lewis. *The Abolition of Man*. San Francisco: HarperOne, 2015. ISBN: 978-0060652944
4. Flannery O'Connor. *Wise Blood*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2007. ISBN: 978-0374530631
5. Shakespeare. *Much Ado About Nothing*. Folger Shakespeare Library Edition. New York: Washington Square Press: 2004. ISBN: 978-0743482752
6. Malcolm X. *The Autobiography of Malcom X: As Told to Alex Haley*. New York: Ballantine Books, 1992. ISBN: 978-0345350688

## Course Schedule

T	January 16	Intro; Syllabus; Kant, "An Answer to the Question: "What is Enlightenment?" (Course Pack)
Th	January 18	Hobbes, <i>Leviathan</i> (Course Pack)
T	January 23	<i>Leviathan</i>
Th	January 25	<i>Leviathan</i>
T	January 30	Locke, <i>First Treatise on Government</i> (Course Pack)
Th	February 1	Locke, <i>First Treatise on Government</i>
T	February 6	<i>Rerum Novarum</i> and <i>Economic Justice for All</i> (excerpts, Course Pack)
Th	February 8	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
T	February 13	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
Th	February 15	Mary Shelley, <i>Frankenstein</i>
T	February 20	<i>Laudato si'</i> (Course Pack)
Th	February 22	<i>Laudato si'</i>
T	February 27	Pascal, <i>Pensées</i> (Course Pack)
Th	March 1	Pascal, <i>Pensées</i>
F	March 2	<b>Midterm Paper Due; CE 1 Write-up Due</b>
Spring Break		
T	March 13	Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i> (Course Pack)
Th	March 15	Marx, <i>Communist Manifesto</i>
T	March 20	<i>Populorum Progressio</i> (excerpts, Course Pack)
Th	March 22	<i>Laborem Exercens</i> (excerpts, Course Pack); Presentation on Catholic Relief Services
T	March 27	<b>Required Cultural Event - <i>Wise Blood</i> Film, 7pm</b>
Easter Break		
T	April 3	Flannery O'Connor, Short Stories (Course Pack)
Th	April 5	Flannery O'Connor, Short Stories (Course Pack)
T	April 10	Shakespeare, <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
Th	April 12	Shakespeare, <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i>
T	April 17	Shakespeare, <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> ; <b>Required CE - <i>Much Ado About Nothing</i> play, 8pm</b>
Th	April 19	<i>The Autobiography of Malcolm X</i>
T	April 24	<i>Malcolm X</i>
Th	April 26	<i>Malcolm X</i>
T	May 1	<b>No class (Friday schedule)</b>
Th	May 3	<i>Malcolm X</i> ; <b>Final Paper Due</b>
T	May 8	<b>Writing Portfolio "Retractationes" Reflection Essay Due</b>



