

Syllabus

God and Man in the “Great Conversation”

The Honors College – Florida International University

IDH 3035

Spring 2018

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Course Description

From the dawn of history down to our own time the record of humanity’s struggle to give answer to the great questions of life has taken the form of a “great conversation,” whereby writers, while listening to the answers provided by their predecessors, have tried to offer their own solutions, – or to record their perplexity in the face of the difficulties encountered. This great conversation is ongoing, and it is there for us to draw near and listen to.

Perhaps no question has dominated this conversation more than that which reflects on the relationship between God and Man, faith and reason, the problem of evil or suffering, fate and free will. In this course we will read and discuss some of the great works of the past which address themselves to this great question. “Not,” as C.S. Lewis once wrote about the reading of old books, “that there is any magic about the past. People were no cleverer than they are now; they made as many mistakes as we. But not the same mistakes.” We will ourselves become participants in this great conversation, reflecting and commenting on their mistakes and ours, and – why not? – offering our own solutions.

Course Requirements

1. Regular attendance and informed participation in the seminar.
2. **Three** published blog posts based on the readings. The format will be discussed in class.
3. **Two** 2-3 page book reviews of a work dealing with the topics discussed in the course, to be determined in consultation with the professor.
4. **One** final reflection paper on a topic to be determined in consultation with the professor.

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Points for Each	Total Points Available	Weight
Attendance and participation	1	20	20	20%
Published blog posts	3	10	30	30%
Book reviews	2	10	20	20%
Reflection paper	1	30	30	30%
Total	7		100	100%

Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)	Letter	Range (%)
A	95 or above	B	83 – 86	C	70 – 76
A-	90 – 94	B-	80 – 82	D	60 – 69
B+	87 – 89	C+	77 – 79	F	59 or less

Course Calendar

Week 1 – THE DEATH OF GOD

Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Gay Science* (excerpts) and *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (excerpts)

Week 2 – BEYOND THE DEATH OF GOD

Jean-Paul Sartre, “Existentialism is a Humanism”

Week 3 – BEYOND THE DEATH OF GOD

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals: First Essay*

Week 4 – BEYOND THE DEATH OF GOD

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals: Second Essay*

Week 5 – BEYOND THE DEATH OF GOD

Friedrich Nietzsche, *On the Genealogy of Morals: Third Essay*

DUE: First book review (THU, Feb 9 @ 11:59 PM)

Week 6 – CONSOLATION

J.R.R. Tolkien, *On Faerie Stories* | Watch: *Of Beauty and Consolation*

DUE: First published blog (THU, Feb 16 @ 11:59 PM)

Week 7 – MYTH AND TRUTH

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Part I

Week 8 – MYTH AND TRUTH

Joseph Campbell, *The Hero with a Thousand Faces*, Part II

Week 9 – THE WAY TO UNION

The Bhagavad Gita, chapters 1-6

Week 10 – SPRING BREAK

Week 11 – THE WAY TO UNION

The Bhagavad Gita, chapters 7-12

DUE: Second book review (THU, Mar 23 @ 11:59 PM)

Week 12 – THE WAY TO UNION

The Bhagavad Gita, chapters 13-18

Week 13 – THE JOURNEY’S END

Miguel de Molinos, *The Spiritual Guide*, Proem and First Book

DUE: Second published blog (THU, Apr 6 @ 11:59 PM)

Week 14 – THE JOURNEY’S END

Miguel de Molinos, *The Spiritual Guide*, Second Book

Week 15 – THE JOURNEY’S END

Miguel de Molinos, *The Spiritual Guide*, Third Book

DUE: Final reflection paper (THU, Apr 20 @ 11:59 PM)

Week 16 – EXAM WEEK

DUE: Third published blog (THU, Apr 28 @ 11:59 PM)

* Please acquaint yourself with The Honors College’s academic and citizenship policies, including the portfolio graduation requirement.

SEARCH

Search ...

**SOMEONE HAS SAID: "THE DEAD WRITERS ARE REMOTE FROM US
BECAUSE WE KNOW SO MUCH MORE THAN THEY DID." PRECISELY, AND
THEY ARE THAT WHICH WE KNOW.**

(T.S. Eliot, "Tradition and the Individual Talent")



BLOG AT WORDPRESS.COM.