Description

The Search course examines the diverse and complicated dimensions of human existence, investigating the following questions:

- What does it mean to be a human being?
  - How do we know what we know?
  - How do we deal with the natural world?
  - How do we deal with differences (ethnic, cultural, religious, gender)?
- What is the nature of human community?
  - What are the varieties of community life?
  - How do communities deal with differences (ethnic, cultural, religious, gender)?
- How do human beings deal with transition and loss (death, conquest, revolution, social or cultural change)?

More specifically, during this semester the course addresses the above questions in the context of the European Middle Ages and Early Modern Era, approximately 500-1700, and explores the ways in which authors of this period adopted, modified, and/or rejected previous answers to those questions in the course of formulating their own.

To help focus our discussion of the above questions, we will return to one overarching theme over the course of the semester: what is the good life? What is the best way for human beings to live in order to balance their own needs against the needs of the community?

In addition, this course introduces students to the specific ways that historians approach the questions outlined above and to the skills that historians use to read and interpret documents. Search is a Humanities course, not a History course, and this class will not provide a comprehensive survey of early European history, but students will come away from the semester with a greater understanding of what historians do.

Goals

My goals for this course are that by the end of the semester, you should be able to do the following:

- identify major intellectual/cultural works from medieval and early modern Europe and explain their significance
• discuss, interpret, analyze, and compare/contrast the main points in a primary source reading
• evaluate authors’ answers to the course questions listed above, and challenge, defend, or modify those arguments in composing your own answers and developing a clearer understanding of personal values.

I encourage you to develop goals of your own and I would be happy to discuss them with you!

Books

The following books are required and are available for purchase in the Rhodes bookstore (and at most online booksellers):


Course Requirements

*Participation – 25%*

Participation grades derive from three factors, listed in order of increasing importance:

1) *attendance* – it is impossible to participate if you are not in class.
2) *frequency of contributions* – I do not intend to punish those who are uncomfortable speaking in class, but to recognize that most professions require people to present their ideas in front of others and to respond to their comments, and to give you practice in doing so. I also encourage people to participate because each of you has a unique and valuable perspective on the course materials to offer to the rest of the group, and this course is a collective endeavor. At the same time, frequency alone does not guarantee a good participation grade, because of the final factor, namely:
3) *quality of contributions* – good class participation demonstrates that you have read thoroughly and thought carefully about the assigned readings for that class (note that this does not require you to have understood everything about them; honest
questions are an important kind of class participation), you have listened closely to
your peers' comments, and that you seek to further the class discussion. Dominating
class discussion to an extent that other students are unwilling to participate, or other
disruptive behaviors, will lower a student's participation grade.
If you have any concerns about your class participation grade, please feel free to speak with
me! This will help me a great deal in evaluating you fairly. Please also see the section on
“Discussion” below.

**Symposia**
- **Short Papers and Participation – 20%**
- **Longer Papers – 25%**
Four times during the semester we will hold what I have called Symposia, involving role-
playing, debate, and formal papers; see the end of the syllabus for details.

**Modern Connections – 15%**
One of the goals of this course with which students often have the greatest difficulty is
connecting the issue discussed in texts written hundreds of years ago with issues of
importance today. To this end, I am asking you actively to make those connections by
submitting evidence of ways in which these medieval and early modern texts remain
relevant today; see the end of the syllabus for details.

**Quizzes – 15%**
The last requirement for this course is brief (VERY brief! no more than 5 minutes!) daily
quizzes in a variety of formats. These are intended to reward your timely completion of the
assigned readings and therefore to help lay the groundwork for productive class discussion.
They also allow me to gauge student understanding of the material and to plan class
accordingly. I will drop the two lowest quiz scores. No quizzes will be held on any day when
written assignments are due; these dates are marked on the syllabus below. Unless the
syllabus specifically states that there will not be a quiz, assume that there will be one.

**Policies & Expectations**

**General:** Readings on the syllabus are listed on the day for which they are due. Therefore,
on Tuesday August 29 you should come to class having read all of *The Rule of Saint
Benedict*. Please also bring the assigned readings to class with you each day, as we will
often refer specifically to passages in the reading.

**Discussion:** One of the goals of the Search curriculum is that students take an active role
in their own education and become responsible for their own learning. In addition, research
has demonstrated that students learn more effectively and retain more of what they learn
by discussing course materials, rather than sitting passively absorbing information that the
professor presents to them; therefore, discussion is a crucial part of the learning process
and the percentage of the final grade based on participation reflects its importance. Search
is a seminar, not a lecture course. While I am happy to answer questions (and will doubtless
fall into lecture mode from time to time), the goal here is not for you to listen to me talk,
but for you to talk to me and each other so that we may have an open exchange of ideas
and pursue the issues of the course in depth. Therefore, most of the responsibility for what
goes on in the classroom lies in your hands and requires your preparation and participation.
I view the classroom as an intellectual community, and see us all as scholars with the
responsibility to contribute their perspectives to that community. I encourage you to
disagree with each other and with me, but expect you to do so in a way that shows respect
for others.
**Attendance:** As the heart of this course is discussion, not attending class means that you will forfeit the benefits of taking it. I do not grade on attendance *per se*, but I do take attendance and more than three absences from class will lower your grade at my discretion. In the event of an unavoidable absence, you remain responsible for all material covered in class; please contact me ahead of time to let me know you will not be in class and to find out how you can make up the work that you missed.

**Late Assignments and Incompletes:** All formal written assignments must be turned in to me in class on the due date as marked on the schedule below (short symposium papers and Modern Connections), or submitted via WebCT by the due date and time (longer symposium papers). Late assignments will not be accepted, because the assignments for this course are time-sensitive – that is, they are related to the material we will be discussing at the time that you complete them, and turning them in late robs them of most of their purpose. I do not accept papers via e-mail as I have a bad habit of forgetting that they are there and not grading them in a timely fashion or even losing them, neither of which are in your best interests! Incompletes will not be granted in this course unless there are extreme extenuating circumstances, and they must be arranged with me before finals week.

**Honor Code:** Each of you is bound by the Honor Code as elaborated in the Student Handbook, and no violation will be tolerated. *Note that carelessness or error is not an acceptable excuse for academic dishonesty, and that I am bound to bring any academic dishonesty to the Honor Council, regardless of the reason for it.* Please review the Student Handbook if you are unclear about the details of the Honor Code, particularly the definitions in Article I, Section 3, which includes the definition of “plagiarism.” On every assignment, you should reaffirm the Honor Code by writing the entire honor pledge and signing your name. No work will be accepted without an Honor Code pledge. Studying together and reading one another’s papers is always a good idea, but make sure that your work is your own. Collaboration on an assignment that results in remarkably similar results, whether intentional or accidental, is a violation of the honor code. If you have any questions about what constitutes acceptable collaboration or appropriate citations, etc., please ask!

**Other:** It is Rhodes policy to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities. All course materials are available in alternative formats to persons with documented disabilities upon request. Please contact the instructor or the Student Disability Services office, 843-3994, Modular Unit behind McCoy Theatre, to discuss accommodation needs.

**Grading Guide**

“A” work shows that you have done all the assigned readings, attended class, and participated in discussion. You know and understand the material covered by the course and can use it appropriately to support your own original, clearly written argument or interpretation. You are also able to follow instructions and do the assignment asked of you, not another one with which you are more comfortable.

“B” work differs from “A” work in that it might not always use the material to support an independent argument or interpretation; or may not present its argument as clearly in writing; or may not exactly address the assignment.

“C” work shows that you know the material covered in the course, but does not use the material to sustain a clear argument or interpretation, either through lack of evidence,
factual inaccuracies or misunderstandings, problems in writing clearly, or not answering the assignment.

“\textbf{D}” work shows only that you have a minimal knowledge of the course material.

“\textbf{F}” demonstrates no knowledge of the course material at all. \textit{If you receive an F on an assignment, please come see me so we can talk about how to improve on future work.}
Schedule of Readings and Assignments

Th 08/24
Introduction: What is Search? What is History?

Tu 08/29
Monasticism
Reading: The Rule of St. Benedict, entire

Th 08/31
Mendicants
Reading: The Life of St. Francis, Part I: Prologue, Book I – Chs. I-XIII (pp. 2-32); Part II, Book One (pp. 137-58)

Tu 09/05
Mendicants
Reading: The Life of St. Francis, Part I: Books Two-Three (pp. 79-131)

Th 09/07
Mysticism
Reading: The Life of Christina of Markyate, Introduction, 1st half (pp. 1-75, end of 1st paragraph)*

Tu 09/12
Mysticism
Reading: The Life of Christina of Markyate, 2nd half (pp. 75-193)

Th 09/14
Symposium #1: The Religious Life
Short Symposium Paper Due – No Quiz

Tu 09/19
Philosophy
Reading: Aquinas, Law, Morality, and Politics, Ch. 2, Questions 90-91, 96-97 (pp. 10-26, 59-75)
Symposium #1 Longer Paper Due by 5:00 p.m. via WebCT – No Quiz
Please note date and time!

Th 09/21
Philosophy
Reading: Aquinas, Law, Morality, and Politics, Chs. 4-5 (pp. 130-72)

Tu 09/26
Philosophy
Reading: Aquinas, Law, Morality, and Politics, Chs. 6-8 (pp. 173-210)

Th 09/28
Literature
Reading: Dante, The Inferno, Cantos I-VII, XI, XIV (pp. 3-59, 85-91, 111-17)
Modern Connections #1 Due in Class – No Quiz
Tu 10/03
Literature
Reading: Dante, *The Inferno*, Cantos XV-XVI, XVIII-XIX, XXI-XXII (pp. 119-33, 143-57, 167-85)

Th 10/05
Literature
Reading: Dante, *The Inferno*, Cantos XXIV-XXVI, XXVIII, XXXI-XXXIV (pp. 197-225, 237-43, 265-303)

Tu 10/10
**Symposium #2: Law and Morality**
**Short Symposium Paper Due – No Quiz**

Th 10/12
Literature
Reading: Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, Introduction; Part One, Chs. 1-21 (pp. xiii-58)

F 10/13
**Symposium #2 Longer Paper Due by 5:00 p.m. via WebCT**
*Please note day and time!*

Tu 10/17
NO CLASS - Fall Break

Th 10/19
Literature
Reading: Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies*, Part One, Chs. 22-7; Part Two (pp. 58-125)

Tu 10/24
Politics
Reading: Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings: The Prince*, Introduction, Chs. 1-17 (pp. x1-53)
**Modern Connections #2 Due in Class – No Quiz**

Th 10/26
Politics
Reading: Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings: The Prince*, Chs. 18-26; Selections from *The Discourses*, Book One, Preface-Ch. 8 (pp. 54-107)

Tu 10/31
Politics
Reading: Machiavelli, *Selected Political Writings*: Selections from *The Discourses*, Book One, Chs. 8-58 (pp. 107-158)

Th 11/02
Drama
Reading: Shakespeare, *Richard III*, Act 1 (pp. 5-89)
Tu 11/07
Drama

Th 11/09
Drama
Reading: Shakespeare, *Richard III*, Acts 4-5 (pp. 197-303)

Tu 11/14
**Symposium #3: Society and Rule**
**Short Symposium Paper Due – No Quiz**

Th 11/16
Religion and the World
Reading: *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, Introduction – Luther, "On Secular Authority," (pp. vii-43) [much of the front matter can be skimmed]

F 11/17
**Symposium #3 Longer Paper Due by 5:00 p.m. via WebCT**
*Please note date and time!*

Tu 11/21
Religion and the World
Reading: *Luther and Calvin on Secular Authority*, “On Civil Government” (pp. 47-86)

Th 11/23
NO CLASS - Thanksgiving Break

Tu 11/28
Religion and the World
Reading: *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, Introduction: First Part, Letter to Cosimo II de Medici; Introduction: Second Part (pp. 1-26, 59-85; please also skim through *The Starry Messenger*, pp. 27-58, if you have time)
**Modern Connections #3 Due in Class – No Quiz**

Th 11/30
Religion and the World
Reading: *Discoveries and Opinions of Galileo*, Introduction: Third Part – "Letter to Madame Christina of Lorraine, Grand Duchess of Tuscany" (pp. 145-216)

Tu 12/05
Last day of class
**Symposium #4: Challenges to the Church**
**Short Symposium Paper Due – No Quiz**

Finals Week
**Symposium #4 Longer Paper Due**

I reserve the right to make adjustments to this syllabus as the semester progresses, should circumstances merit and with the agreement of the class.
**Symposia**

A symposium (plural: symposia) is a meeting or conference for discussion of a topic, especially one in which the participants form an audience and make presentations. Four times this semester we will hold a symposium to discuss the theme of the current course unit (the Religious Life, Law and Morality, Society and Rule, Challenges to the Church). These symposia have both oral and written requirements.

**Purpose:** One way to evaluate authors’ responses to the central questions of this course is to engage in an act of historical empathy – to put yourself in the shoes of someone from the past. Symposia provide a formal opportunity for this process.

**Assignment:** At the beginning of each unit, you will be assigned an identity, either one of the authors whom we have read (e.g. St. Benedict of Nursia) or a fictional character relevant to the current discussion (e.g. a novice in a Benedictine monastery, a lay Christian). There will be more than one person assigned to the same identity.

For the day of the symposium, each of you will prepare a brief written response (1-2 pages, typed, double-spaced) to assigned questions from the point of view of your assigned identity, and come to class prepared to present your point of view. No outside research is required; your response should derive from your close attention to course readings and discussions.

On the day of the symposium, I will choose one student for each possible role to present their responses that day. We will have four symposia over the course of the semester; each of you will present in one symposium.

The symposium will begin by each character in turn presenting their brief response (max. 5 minutes) to the questions posed for that day. Once each character has presented their ideas, the audience is required to pose questions to the panel on their answers. These questions may take a variety of forms, including but not limited to the following:

- you might question someone with the same character as you about what you feel are misrepresentations or omissions in their argument, both in support of or as a challenge to their presentation
- you might question someone with a different character about elements your character would disagree with
- you might question the presenters on the facts of their answers: whether they have misrepresented their character's answers or omitted crucial points
- you might question the presenters on the logic or morality of their answers

**Evaluation:** Performance in the symposium will be evaluated on how well you know and understand the course materials, and how convincingly you use those materials to present the viewpoint of your character. Oral performance in the symposium will count towards your participation grade.

**Symposium Checklist:**

At the beginning of each unit:

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___ receive assigned identity

For the day of the symposium (short paper):

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___ write 1-2 pp. response to questions from the point of view of your identity
come to class prepared to present that response and question others on their responses

After the symposium (longer paper):
___ write 4-6 pp. paper explaining your own response to the questions (this is the point at which you can disagree with your character – or, indeed, all the viewpoints represented in class!)
___ submit your longer paper via the course WebCT page by the time and date specified on the course schedule (note that these papers are not due in class)

The identities and questions to be addressed in each symposium will be distributed at the beginning of the relevant unit.
Modern Connections

Purpose: To provide an opportunity for students to look for connections between the medieval and early modern materials we read this semester and issues of importance today.

Assignment: Three times during the semester, you will submit two items:

1) a piece of material evidence of the connection between one of the sources we have read this semester, and the modern day. This evidence may take a wide variety of forms:
   - an article from a newspaper or magazine that directly discusses one of the texts or authors we have read this semester (e.g. an article about modern changes to St. Benedict’s Rule)
   - an article from a newspaper or magazine that discusses issues also addressed by one of the texts/authors we have read this semester (e.g., an article about a modern monk/monastery/religious movement/cultural movement, whether Benedictine or Christian or other, that does not reference Benedict’s Rule directly, but addresses similar issues about how to live a religious life, whether or not the piece agrees with Benedict)
   - another example of modern culture – an advertisement (does anyone remember Altoids’ “Get Medieval on your mouth” ad?), song, book review, piece of artwork (reproduction is fine!), etc. – that discusses issues also addressed by one of the texts/authors we have read this semester (e.g., an article about a business leader that addresses issues similar to Machiavelli’s The Prince, whether or not the article agrees with Machiavelli)
   - any other example of modern politics, society, culture, or religion that demonstrates a connection to one of the texts from this course

As I hope this list makes clear, you have a great deal of freedom in choosing materials. If you have questions or concerns about how to find material, please talk to me! The only limitation is that, contrary to common college practice, your evidence should come from a popular source – something in relatively wide circulation, rather than something written by/for academic audiences. Any national/regional newspaper or magazine fits this criterion.

2) a brief essay (max. 250 words) explaining how the evidence connects to the course reading(s) and how the modern and medieval/early modern illuminate each other.

Assessment: This assignment will be graded on how persuasively and thoughtfully you argue for the connection between the modern piece and our texts this semester.

Please bring your evidence and essay to class on the day that these essays are due, as we will discuss them collectively.

Questions? X3882 or dronzeka@rhodes.edu