In this course, we will approach literature and art as a form of knowledge about society. In particular, we will ask what the content and specific form of an artwork communicate about conflicts and changes in the society surrounding it, and how these changes affect questions of meaning and purpose. We will draw on a variety of literary and philosophical texts, but also on painting and music. We will investigate the role of religion as a defining force of medieval society; the rise of cities and the increasing division of labor, which led to new, secular forms of knowledge; the role of art in the Italian Renaissance; the spiritual and social implications of the Reformation; and the Enlightenment’s attempts to create a new basis for human community.

Assignments:
You will write a total of four short essays in the course, each one approximately three pages in length (i.e., 900 words or more). Please include a word count with these essays. Your instructor will provide you with a list of possible topics. There will also be a mid-term take home exam, and a number of pop quizzes. The instructor may also assign additional written homework, such as answering study questions, etc.

All students need to participate actively in our discussions and in group work, and need to cooperate with others to maintain a productive classroom environment.

Grading:
Active participation: 30%
Four three-page papers (each 900 words or more): 40%
Mid-term take-home exam: 15%
Pop quizzes and written homework 15%

Attendance policy: More than three unexcused absences will lower your grade by 3% each. Seven unexcused absences will result in an F for the course. If you miss a class session, please inquire with one of the other students about assignments and other arrangements for the next class session.

Books required for purchase (available at the Rhodes Bookstore):
Dante, *The Inferno*
Moliere, *Tartuffe, or The Imposter*
Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*
*The Song of Roland*
Voltaire, *Candide*

Other texts will be made available in electronic format, or online, or, on occasion, as xerox copies.
Schedule (subject to change)

Week 1: August 24
R: Introduction

Week 2: August 28 – September 1
T: *The Dream of the Rood* & the introduction to *The Song of Roland* (1-40)
R: *The Song of Roland*

Week 3: September 4-8
T: *The Song of Roland*
R: Bernard of Clairvaux, *Apologia*
  Two medieval paintings: *Wilton Diptych* and Duccio’s *The Virgin and Child with Saints*
  
  **Due: Paper I**

Week 4: September 11-15
T: Anselm, “On God’s Existence” & Gaunilo
  Thomas Aquinas, *Proofs for the Existence of God*
R: Hildegard von Bingen, Letter to Odo of Soissons
  ----, “The Trinity,” from *Scivias*
  ----, “The Cosmos,” from * Causes and Cures I*

Week 5: September 18 - 22
T: Dante, *The Divine Comedy* (selections from Purgatory and Paradise)
R: Dante, *The Divine Comedy* (selections from Purgatory and Paradise)

Week 6: September 25-29
T: Mirandola, “Oration on the Dignity of Man”
  Slide show of Renaissance paintings
  **Due: Paper II**
R: Bocaccio, *In Praise of Poetry*
  Selection of poems by Petrarch, Shakespeare, and others
  **Pick up mid-term take home exam**

Week 7: October 2-6
T: Luther, *95 Theses*
  Luther, *A Treatise on Christian Liberty* (excerpts)
  Luther, “The Faith of a Christian” (RS 721-726)
  **Due: Hand in completed mid-term take home exam**
R: Calvin, „Free Will and Predestination“
  ----, „On Civil Government“
  ----, „Summary of Christian Self-Denial“
Week 8: October 9-13
T: Fall Recess (no class)
R: Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*
   Council of Trent
   Slide Show: Baroque Art

Week 9: October 18-20
T: The Monteverdi-Artusi debate and the birth of opera; with sound examples from
   Mondeverdi madrigals
R: Machiavelli, “The Circle of Governments”
   Machiavelli, *The Prince* (excerpts)

Week 10: October 23-27
   Locke, *Second Treatise on Government* (excerpts)
R: Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
   Due: Paper III

Week 11: October 30 – November 3
T: Shakespeare, *A Midsummer Night’s Dream*
R: Moliere, *Tartuffe, or The Impostor*

Week 12: November 6–10
T: Descartes, *Discourse on Method* (excerpts)
R: Leibniz, *Monadology* (excerpts)
   Voltaire, *Candide*

Week 13: November 13-17
T: Voltaire, *Candide*
R: Thanksgiving Break (no class)

Week 14: November 20-24
T: Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origin of Inequality* (excerpts)
   Rousseau, *The Social Contract* (excerpts)
R: Lessing, *Nathan the Wise* (excerpt)
   ----, *Education of the Human Race*

Week 15: November 27 – December 1
T: Kant, *Foundations of a Metaphysic of Morals*
R: Marquis de Sade, “Dialogue between a Priest and a Dying Man”

Week 16: December 5-7: T: Wrap up & Due: Paper IV