

COLI 110-02

World Literature I-- The Idea of Good in Plato, Aristotle and Dante

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

In this course we will be doing close reading of Plato's *The Republic*, Aristotle's *Nichomachean Ethics*, excerpts from Aristotle's *Politics*, Dante's *Inferno* and the plays *Oedipus* and *Antigone* by Sophocles and *Medea* by Euripides. What we will be searching for are ideas of good and true which today may seem as not requiring investigation, as obsolete ideas, or simply non-definable. We will try to challenge our common sense for which the good has become utility and suitability and hence contingent and non-conceptual (in the strictly Aristotelian sense). It will be important to ask the question why political excellence, that is, supreme virtue, was something still positively defined in Plato and Aristotle, something that these philosophers said we should be able to come across in a state, while in Christianity the final settling of the goodness, justice and virtue has been transferred beyond the living sphere. We will also be able to observe that regardless of the sphere in which the virtue is exercised, the claim for ethical excellence is equally high in these three authors and nowhere short of seriousness and sternness of a life-long effort which ultimately ends in complete abandonment to the noblest of all sciences-the one that keeps knowledge itself close at heart, that is, philosophy. The question we can immediately ask ourselves at this point is whether this means that only philosophical life is able to reach the entirety of virtue. The question whether philosophy means only to think or likewise to rule will be inevitable. This also means that we will be dealing with the question if philosophy ever wants to consider itself an option or if it always aspires to be a regulatory principle, and to rule accordingly.

ESSAY WRITING

You are responsible of submitting 2 essays each 7 pages long during the semester.

An essay must have a title that you have invented yourself and that, ideally, issues from your main argument.

The most important feature of an essay is its ARGUMENT that will be clearly stated on the first page of your essay. The essays that merely retell the plot or engage in exhausting descriptions that lead to no conclusive argument will be considered as failed.

Essay writing will constitute 60 percent of your overall grade, each of the two essays bringing 30 percent to it.

Essays are submitted in the Turnitin on Blackboard.

PRESENTATION

Each student will give one presentation during the semester. Presentation topics, with the instructions on how to prepare them will be posted on the 'Course Documents' link on Blackboard. Your presentation will bear 10 percent of your grade.

IV: CLASS PARTICIPATION

Class participation refers to the extent to which you contribute to class discussions. Your overall class participation will bear 15 percent of your grade.

ATTENDANCE AND LATENESS

Each student is allowed 3 unexcused absences. Each absence beyond the 3rd will result in deducting half grade from your overall performance. Lateness is not tolerated unless you have a substantial reason to be late for 5 minutes, such as having a class before this one, but I must be informed about that timely.

CELL PHONES AND LAP-TOPS

...are forbidden.

REQUIRED READINGS:

The Republic by Plato
Nichomachean Ethics by Aristotle
Politics by Aristotle
Inferno by Dante
Oedipus by Sophocles
Antigone by Sophocles
Medea by Euripides

CLASS SCHEDULE

September

1st-- Introduction
3rd--*Republic*, books 1 & 2
8th--*Republic*, book 3 &4
10th--*Republic*, book 5
15th--*Republic*, book 6
17th--*Republic*, book 7
22nd--*Republic*, book 8
24th--*Republic*, book 9
29th--*Republic*, book 10

October

1st--*Politics*, book 3

6th--*Oedipus*

8th--*Oedipus*

13th--*NE*, books 1 & 2

15th--*NE*, books 3 & 4

20th--*NE*, books 5 & 6

22nd--*NE*, books 7 & 8

27th--*NE*, books 9 & 10

November

3rd--*Antigone*

5th--*Antigone*

10th--*Medea*

12th--*Medea*

17th--*Inferno*, canto 1 -6

19th--*Inferno*, canto 7-12

24th--*Inferno*, canto 13-18

December

1st--*Inferno*, canto 19-24

3rd--*Inferno*, canto 25-32

8th--*Inferno*, canto 33 & 34

10th-- Conclusion class

***NOTE:** class schedule is subject to change at any time.

NOTE AGAINST PLAGIARISM:

All students must be aware that plagiarism is a serious violation of the University's policies. Plagiarism involves putting somebody else's intellectual property into your written work without clearly indicating the source and stressing that in order to pursue your own argument you are using somebody else's ideas as a contribution. That includes paraphrasing without references, quoting without using citation marks and without indicating the source etc.

