

**CMLT 2210**  
Western World Literature I  
Spring 2008  
Nathan Vacher, Instructor

Meeting: 2:30-3:20 pm M, W, F: Joe Brown 242  
Office Hours: 12-1 T, 1:15 – 2:14 W  
125 Joe Brown Hall  
Phone: 542-2144  
[ncvacher@hotmail.com](mailto:ncvacher@hotmail.com)

**Required Texts:**

Dante. *Inferno*. Trans. Robert Pinsky. Farrar, Strauss and Giroux  
Milton. *Paradise Lost*. Hackett  
Course packet available at Bel-Jean

**Course Description and Goals**

This course is an introduction to the western (or European) literary tradition from roughly its beginning until the 17<sup>th</sup> century. In the first half of the semester we will examine texts from the ancient and classical periods and Greece, preceded by a brief look at the creation narrative in Genesis. These texts are foundational not only for our literary heritage, but they have had a profound impact on western philosophy, politics, and culture generally. Accordingly, it is these texts that will serve to frame the questions, or themes, that will dominate our class: the most predominate of which will be the opposition between reason and the passions in man's attempts to live as he ought, or perhaps, to live in the way best suited to man's place in the world.

This class is primarily a survey of Western Literature, and it will therefore consist primarily of reading and analyzing these texts, while developing the skills that are necessary to speak and write about literature with clarity and precision. The ability to analyze texts of any sort and to express ones thoughts clearly are necessary prerequisites for a critical engagement with the world in which one lives, as well as for a meaningful engagement with literary texts that only then can one enjoy.

**Assignments and Grading**

Writing: There will be two short writing assignments of 3 pages, worth 20% of your final grade each. Papers will be due at the beginning of class. "*All academic work must meet the standards contained in 'A Culture of Honesty.' Each student is responsible to inform themselves about those standards before performing any work.*"

Tests: Midterm 15%  
Final 25%

Quizzes and homework: Throughout the semester I will give pop quizzes in class and short homework assignments to support your reading of and direct your thinking about

the texts we are reading in class. The average of these assignments will be worth 15% of your final grade.

The rest of your grade (5%) will be determined by your participation in class. This class is primarily a discussion class, rather than a lecture. You must have prepared the required readings and participate in class in order to succeed.

### **Attendance**

Attendance to this class is mandatory. If you miss more than three classes before the withdrawal deadline, you will be dropped from the class automatically. If your fourth absence is after the deadline, you will lose two points from your final grade for each absence beginning with the fourth.

### **Reading Schedule**

Jan. 7 – Introduction

Jan. 9 – *Genesis* 1-4 (Course Packet)

Jan. 11 – Hesiod *Theogony* (Course Packet)

Jan. 14 – Hesiod *Works and Days* (Course packet)

Jan. 16 – Homer *Iliad*, Book 1 (Course Packet)

Jan 18 – *Iliad*, Book 9

Jan. 21 – Martin Luther King Day

Jan. 23 – *Iliad*, Book 20

Jan. 25 – *Iliad*, Book 24

Jan. 28 – Herodotus *History*, pp.154-174 (1-84) (Course Packet)

Jan. 30 – *History*, pp.174-193 (85-169)

Feb. 1 – *History*, pp. 193-203 (170-216)

Feb. 4 – Sophocles *Oedipus the King* (Course Packet)

Feb. 6 – *Oedipus*

Feb. 8 – Aeschylus *Prometheus Bound* (Course Packet): **First Paper Due**

Feb. 11 – *Prometheus Bound*

Feb. 13 – *The Book of Job* (Course Packet)

Feb. 15 – *The Book of Job*

Feb. 18 – Plato *Phaedo* (Course Packet)

Feb 20 – *Phaedo*

Feb. 22 – Midterm Exam

Feb. 25 - Dante *Inferno* 1-3

Feb. 27 – *Inferno* 4-6

Feb. 29 – *Inferno* 7-9

March 3 – *Inferno* 10-12

March 4 – **MIDPOINT WITHDRAWAL DEADLINE**

March 5 – *Inferno* 13-15

March 7 – *Inferno* 16-18

March 10-14 – **Spring Break**

March 17 – *Inferno* 19-21

March 19 – *Inferno* 22-24

March 21 – *Inferno* 25-27

March 24 – *Inferno* 28-30

March 26 – *Inferno* 31-34

March 28 – *Paradise Lost*, Introduction:

March 31 – *Paradise Lost*, Book 1

April 2 – *PL*, Book 2

April 4 – *PL*, Book 3

April 7 – *PL*, Book 4

April 9 – *PL*, Book 5

April 11 – *PL*, Book 6: **Second Paper Due**

April 14 – *PL*, Book 7

April 16 – *PL*, Book 8

April 18 – *PL*, book 9

April 21 – *PL*, Book 10

April 23 – *PL*, Book 11

April 25 – *PL*, Book 12

April 28 – Last Day of Classes, Review

May 2 – Final Exam, 3:30-6:30

*The course syllabus is a general plan for the course; deviations announced to the class by the instructor may be necessary.*