Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey
Department of Italian
Program in Comparative Literature
JOURNEY TO HELL AND BEYOND: DANTE AND MEDIEVAL CULTURE
Italian 01:560:315
Comparative Literature 01:195:315

Instructor: Tim Curcio
tcurcio@italian.rutgers.edu
Spring 2023
TTh5 3:50-5:10
FH-A6
Office Hours: T 11-12 and by appointment on Zoom
https://rutgers.zoom.us/my/tcurcio?pwd=Q3JKVVF0V0kzODFURVhBU2wxYUw4UT09

Dante Alighieri, by Giotto di Bordone, c. 1335

Course description:
Dante's *Divine Comedy* incorporates philosophy, theology, history, art, mythology, spirituality, mysticism, and theatrics—while giving the account of a journey through the afterworld. Despite being the foundational masterpiece of the Italian language, the poem reaches out to numerous other cultures in the Mediterranean area and beyond, to create a diverse, rich plot, something we might call an "international" epic. Judaism, Islam, Provençal poetry, scholastic philosophy from Paris, and constant references to Roman and Greek culture are some of the topics it presents. As narration of an afterlife experience, the poem closely scrutinizes moral issues and their consequences, which are applicable to any era and any place. Students will be required to "translate" such concepts into contemporary issues.

Learning Goals:
At the end of the course students will be able to account for the development of ideas from the Middle Ages to early modernity and understand the intricate dynamics of humanistic and scientific disciplines. As part of the investigation of the moral issues connected to the material, they will learn to locate human actions in a historical and philosophical context. They will, moreover, become familiar with the theoretical infrastructure originating cultural production and human experience. This will allow them to view literature in the context of medieval culture(s) and values, as well as understand the complex interactions of critical interpretation and creative process. As a result of the materials covered and class discussion, students will be able to express complex ideas in standard written English and to communicate effectively in modes that are appropriate to the discipline. The course will also teach them to evaluate primary texts, to use the conventions of attribution and citation correctly, and to process information from multiple sources to generate new insights.

Requirements:
Students in this course will be required to do the assigned readings ahead of class and complete assigned activities. There will be one 5-10 minute presentation on one canto of the *Divine Comedy*. The main project will be a six-page research paper using MLA style. There will also be a Midterm and a Final Exam.

Required Texts:
The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Inferno. A Verse Translation by Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Books ISBN 055321344X

The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Purgatorio. A Verse Translation by Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Books
The Divine Comedy of Dante Alighieri. Paradiso. A Verse Translation by Allen Mandelbaum. New York: Bantam Books
The entire text of the Mandelbaum translation is available on the Digital Dante website
https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/
Here are two other websites with resources related to the text:
https://dante.dartmouth.edu/
http://www.worldofdante.org/about.html

Departmental Goal II and III: Cultural Proficiency and Professional Preparation
This course satisfies the Core Curriculum Learning Goal: AH (o and p).

Area of Inquiry C: Arts and Humanities

Goals o and p:

o. Examine critically theoretical issues concerning the nature of reality, human experience, knowledge, value, and the cultural production related to the topics addressed.

p. Analyze arts and literatures in themselves and in relation to specific histories, values, languages, cultures, and technologies.

Grading:

Grades will be based on:

Final Paper	20%
Presentation	20%
Midterm	20%
Final	20%
Attendance & Participation	20%

Final Paper:
This paper requires textual analysis of the primary text (the *Divine Comedy*) as well consulting secondary sources (at least three articles or book chapters on the specific topic you have selected). A list of topics will be distributed and students select one topic and write their paper of 6 full pages. See the following for MLA style guide:
https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/mla_style/index.html

Plagiarism:
Written paper must result from your own creativity. When inspired by critical or theoretical material, you must acknowledge your indebtedness and credit the source in quotation marks and with references in parentheses. You must also give acknowledgement to your sources when paraphrasing a text. Your sources may be in print, electronic or any other media. When in doubt, please refer to the university policy on plagiarism and academic integrity:
http://academicintegrity.rutgers.edu/integrity.shtml

Attendance:
All students must attend regularly. No more than **three absences** are allowed; use them wisely, for health and other serious issues. Having more than three absences, arriving to class late, and engaging in behavior that is distracting to the rest of the class are grounds for a significantly lower mark in class participation.

SYLLABUS

Week 1
- Introduction; *Dante the Florentine* reading

Week 2
- *Inferno* I, II
- *Inferno* III, IV, V

Week 3
- *Inferno* VI, VII, VIII
- *Inferno* IX, X, XI

Week 4
- *Inferno* XII, XIII, XIV
- *Inferno* XV, XVI, XVII

Week 5
- *Inferno* XVIII, XIX, XX
- *Inferno* XXI, XXII, XXIII

Week 6
- *Inferno* XXIV, XXV, XXVI
- *Inferno* XXVII, XXVIII, XXIX

Week 7
- *Inferno* XXX, XXXI, XXXII
- *Inferno* XXXIII, XXXIV

Week 8
- Final Paper topics
- Review for Midterm
- **MIDTERM**

Week 9
- *Purgatorio* VI, VII,
- *Purgatorio* VIII, IX

Week 10
- *Purgatorio* X, XI, XII
- *Purgatorio* XV, XVI, XVII

Week 11
- *Purgatorio* XXI, XXII, XXIII, XXIV
- *Purgatorio* XXVIII, XXIX

Week 12
- *Purgatorio* XXX, XXXI
- *Purgatorio* XXXII, XXXIII

Week 13
- *Paradiso* XI, XII
- *Paradiso* XV, XVI, XVII

Week 14
- *Paradiso* XXV, XXVI
- *Paradiso* XXXI, XXXII, XXXIII

Week 15
- **Final Paper Due**
- Review for Final Exam

FINAL EXAM ACCORDING TO ACADEMIC CALENDAR

IMPORTANT DATES:

Spring Recess Begins	Saturday, March 11
Spring Recess Ends	Sunday, March 19
Regular Classes End	Monday, May 1
Reading Days	Tuesday, May 2 Wednesday, May 3

Student-Wellness Services:

Just In Case Web App
http://codu.co/cee05e
Access helpful mental health information and resources for yourself or a friend in a mental health crisis on your smartphone or tablet and easily contact CAPS or RUPD.

Counseling, ADAP & Psychiatric Services (CAPS)
(848) 932-7884 / 17 Senior Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901/
rhscaps.rutgers.edu/
CAPS is a University mental health support service that includes counseling, alcohol and other drug assistance, and psychiatric services staffed by a team of professional within Rutgers Health services to support students' efforts to succeed at Rutgers University. CAPS offers a variety of services that include: individual therapy, group therapy and workshops, crisis intervention, referral to specialists in the community and consultation and collaboration with campus partners.

Violence Prevention & Victim Assistance (VPVA)
(848) 932-1181 / 3 Bartlett Street, New Brunswick, NJ 08901 /
vpva.rutgers.edu/
The Office for Violence Prevention and Victim Assistance provides confidential crisis intervention, counseling and advocacy for victims of sexual and relationship violence and stalking to students, staff and faculty. To reach staff during office hours when the university is open or to reach an advocate after hours, call 848-932-1181.

Disability Services
(848) 445-6800 / Lucy Stone Hall, Suite A145, Livingston Campus, 54 Joyce Kilmer Avenue, Piscataway, NJ 08854 / https://ods.rutgers.edu/
The Office of Disability Services works with students with a documented disability to determine the eligibility of reasonable accommodations, facilitates and coordinates those accommodations when applicable, and lastly engages with the Rutgers community at large to provide and connect students to appropriate resources.

Scarlet Listeners
(732) 247-5555 / http://www.scarletlisteners.com/
Free and confidential peer counseling and referral hotline, providing a comforting and supportive safe space.