

History 591R: Renaissance Humanism (writing seminar)

University of Massachusetts Amherst • Spring Semester 2004

Tues. & Thurs., 1-2:15, Herter 342 (class #58406)

Honors colloquium, History H16: Thurs., 2:30-3:20, Herter 746 (class #58342)

Course website: <<http://people.umass.edu/ogilvie/492H/>>

(the WebCT component is linked from this website; you can also access it directly via <<http://webct.oit.umass.edu/>>)

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Office hours: Wed. 2:30-3:30, Thurs. 9-11, and by appointment. Please note: I will sometimes have to schedule meetings during my office hours. If that is the case, I will try to post a notice on my web page: <<http://people.umass.edu/ogilvie/>>

Note: I will try to respond to e-mail within 24 hours during the week and 48 hours on weekends and holidays. If you need a quicker response, use the telephone! Please identify yourself in your e-mail; I won't respond to "hotguy359@yahoo.com" unless I know who he (or she) is.

Brief course description

The defining intellectual movement of the Renaissance was humanism, the movement to create a secular high culture on the basis of classical Greek and Latin texts, texts that humanists perceived as vitally relevant to the most important questions of their day: how should human beings act, and how should they govern themselves? This course explores Renaissance humanism through some of its key texts, focusing on the question of human nature and its relation to the divine. A central concern of humanist thought was the tension between Christian theology, with its doctrine of original sin and its concern with the world to come, and the secular ethic of the ancient pagans. This seminar will focus on how humanists dealt with that tension. We will also discuss their works as stylistic models.

As a writing seminar, this course will emphasize writing as a means to historical understanding and clear expression as a means to clear thinking. Writing assignments will include short essays, quickwrites, and a longer paper. In addition to classroom discussions and exercises, the course will have a significant online component through WebCT.

Honors Colloquium description

Students in the honors colloquium will meet for an additional hour every week to discuss important secondary literature in the history of humanism. The focus in the regular seminar will be on primary sources; colloquium students will gain a deeper appreciation of how scholarship on the texts has shaped their interpretation and explored their historical context. The honors colloquium is recommended for students who are considering graduate study in history as well as any honors student who would like to grapple with basic questions such as the place of the Renaissance in history.

This course fulfills the University Junior Year Writing requirement, the History Department Proseminar requirement, and the History Department pre-1500 requirement.

Course goals

At the end of the semester, you should be able to:

- Define the humanist movement in Renaissance Europe
- Analyze and explain the literary choices made by humanists in different literary genres
- Describe and explain humanists' changing attitudes toward the active and contemplative life
- Discuss humanists' views of politics and ethics
- Situate humanist writings in their broader intellectual, cultural, social, and political context
- Use library and online research tools to find scholarly writings on humanism
- Summarize succinctly and accurately the main point of a historical source.
- Analyze the arguments made by a historical source in terms of the claim, evidence, warrant, and qualifications of each argument.
- Use primary sources as evidence for your own historical arguments.
- Write a clear, persuasive historical essay.
- Format an essay according to the standards of the historical profession.
- Criticize other writers' essays and provide concrete suggestions for improving them.

Your goals for the course

You have just read my goals for the course. You should now take the time to reflect on those goals and think about any others you might have. In the space below, you can write the reasons *you* are in this course and any goals on which you wish to concentrate during it.

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What I ask of you

—Regular attendance and class participation

This seminar will only work if you are there. We will be discussing difficult, complex texts by some of the most intelligent and articulate writers of the Renaissance. You will get a lot more out of them by participating in discussion. We will also be discussing and working on writing. Writing, like most skills, is 1% theory and 99% practice. In class you will get both.

—Participation in online discussion and peer editing

I also ask that you participate in online discussions in WebCT and that you comment on your peers' drafts online. You should plan to make two contributions each week to an online discussion topic. If you are shy about participating in class, you can balance that out by additional online participation. As for drafts, commenting on them online is simply a lot faster than arranging to share them in person, thereby giving you more time to work on your own drafts and to comment on others. I realize that the online component takes time; that is why you are writing only three short papers.

—Three short papers (4-5 pages)

You will write three papers, one each on the first three humanists we examine. For each paper you will write two drafts. One draft will receive comments from me and two of your peers. The second draft will receive a grade and brief comments. You may write a third draft if you are dissatisfied with the grade. Due dates for the drafts are indicated on the course calendar, below, and on WebCT.

—One longer paper (10-12 pages)

You will write one longer paper based on library research. As with the short papers, you will write two drafts, one of which will receive comments from me and your peers. We will discuss the drafts in class during the penultimate week of classes. Several library research days are built into the course schedule.

—Honesty and courtesy

You should behave honestly in this course. You will fail the course if you are caught cheating; this includes plagiarizing any written work, fabricating information, or helping another student be dishonest. See the *Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities* booklet for a fuller discussion.

You should also be courteous to me and your fellow students; in return, you can expect courtesy from me. Please be punctual and turn off your cell phone when class starts. I will make sure class starts and ends on time.

Grading

The final course grade will be determined as follows:

Three short papers.....	45% (15% each)
Long paper	30%
Participation (in class and online), including exercises.....	25%

Late papers will be penalized. If *either* required draft of a paper is late, you may not rewrite the graded draft for a better grade. If the second draft is more than two working days late (not counting Saturday, Sunday, and holidays), the grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade for each additional day that it is late.

In keeping with University policy, I expect you to attend class. (See the *Undergraduate Rights and Responsibilities* booklet for the policy.) Poor attendance will affect your grade as follows: you may miss up to four classes without penalty. After that, your course grade will be lowered by one-half letter grade for each absence. Library research days do not count (2/24, 3/23, 3/25, and 4/13). Your four unpenalized absences include any absences due to athletics, music, or other university-approved reasons to miss class. Please take that into account when planning your schedule. If you must miss more than four days of class for university-approved reasons, see me ASAP. Note that this reduction is to your course grade as a whole, not to your participation grade. The participation grade will be based on your participation in class when you are present, on exercises, and on your online participation and peer editing.

In cases of true hardship, I will consider exceptions to these policies.

Books for the course (in order they will be used)

The boldfaced names indicate the way the book is referred to in the assignments. If you get your books used, make sure they are the right editions. The books have been ordered through Amherst Books (8 Main Street, Amherst, tel. 256-1547). Please note that the bookstore will have to return unsold books some time in March.

Required books

Petrarca, Francesco. *On religious leisure*. Translated by Susan S. Schearer. New York: Italica Press, 2002. ISBN 0-934977-11-9. \$15.

Booth, Wayne C., Gregory G. Colomb, and Joseph M. Williams. *The craft of research*. 2d ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2003. ISBN 0-226-06568-5.

Williams, Joseph M. *Style: Toward clarity and grace*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1990. ISBN 0-226-89915-2. \$12. Note: there are several editions of this book out there. All the others are published by Longman. Make sure you get this one, from the University of Chicago Press. It's the cheapest! I will supplement it with exercises.

Valla, Lorenzo. "*The profession of the Religious*" and selections from "*The falsely-believed and forged Donation of Constantine*." Edited and translated by Olga Z. Pugliese. 2nd ed. Toronto: Centre for Reformation and Renaissance Studies, 1994. ISBN 0-9697512-3-0.

Erasmus, Desiderius. *The Praise of Folly and other writings*. Edited and translated by Robert M. Adams. New York: W. W. Norton, 1989. ISBN 0-393-95749-7. \$13.

More, Thomas. *Utopia*. 2d ed. Edited and translated by Robert M. Adams. New York: W. W. Norton, 1992. ISBN 0-393-96145-1. \$9.25.

Recommended books

Harvey, Gordon. *Writing with sources: A guide for students* (Indianapolis: Hackett Publishing Co., 1998). ISBN 0-87220-434-0. \$5. This book is also available online from the course home page, but many students find the print version much easier to read and use. You will be required to read it either way.

Turabian, Kate. *A manual for writers of term papers, theses, and dissertations*. 6th ed. Revised by John Grossman and Alice Bennett. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1996. ISBN 0-226-81627-3. \$13.

Queneau, Raymond. *Exercises in style*. Trans. Barbara Wright. 2nd ed. New York: New Directions, 1981. ISBN 0-8112-0789-7. \$11.

I presume you have and will use the writing manual from your First-Year Writing Program course (ENGLWP 112 or 113) or the equivalent course if you are a transfer student. (For many of you, that book will be *The Everyday Writer* by Andrea Lunsford.) You should also have a good dictionary. I recommend the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, 4th ed. (ISBN 0-395-82517-2, about \$60), or the *American Heritage College Dictionary*, 4th ed. (ISBN 0-618-09848-8, about \$26). The readings for this course will occasionally have unfamiliar words, and you need to know what they mean. The course website links to the online version of the *American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language*, which is very useful if you have a fast internet connection. If you need to know the detailed history of a word, the *Oxford English Dictionary* is the place to go. The library has a print copy in the reference department, and the course website links to the online version.

Please note: additional required readings will be announced in class and on WebCT. Most will be available online but a few will be handouts.

Course schedule

This schedule indicates important dates and deadlines for the course, along with times we will be meeting in a different location than usual. Additional reading assignments will be announced in class and posted to the WebCT course calendar.

Unless otherwise noted, class meets Tuesday and Thursday at 1 p.m. in Herter 324.

Please bring all assigned readings to class.

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| Thurs. 1/29. Introduction to the course; pre-test
Before the next class meeting:
1) <i>Skim</i> through Williams, <i>Style</i> , and Booth et al., <i>The Craft of Research</i> . Note down any sections that seem particularly interesting to you or that you think would be especially helpful for your own writing. You should plan to spend 1-2 hours per book on your skimming.
2) Print and read the essay for next Tuesday (see below)
3) Take the writing skills “quiz” (ungraded!) on WebCT. | <i>believed and forged Donation of Constantine,”</i>
by class today |
| Tues. 2/3. Introducing Renaissance humanism; discussion of pre-test results
Read Hanna Gray, “Renaissance humanism” (online from WebCT and course web page—please print and bring a copy to class). | Thurs. 3/4. Paper 2, draft 1 due by 5 p.m. today
Sun. 3/7. Comments on two peers’ papers due by midnight
Thurs. 3/11. Paper 2, draft 2 due by 5 p.m. today
Spring break, 3/13-21
Tues. 3/23, Thurs. 3/25. Prof. Ogilvie out of town – work in the library
Tues. 3/30. Finish reading Erasmus, <i>The Praise of Folly and other writings</i> , by class today |
| Thurs. 2/5. WebCT and library database session—meet in DuBois Library, location to be announced. | Thurs. 4/1. Paper 3, draft 1 due by 5 p.m. today
Sun. 4/4. Comments on two peers’ papers due by midnight
Thurs. 4/8. Paper 3, draft 2 due by 5 p.m. today
Tues. 4/13. Library research day |
| Tues. 2/10. Finish reading Petrarca, <i>On Religious Leisure</i> , by class today | Tues. 4/20. Finish reading More, <i>Utopia</i> , by class today. |
| Thurs. 2/12. Paper 1, draft 1 due by 5 p.m. today | Thurs. 4/22: NO CLASS (Monday schedule in effect) |
| Sun. 2/15. Comments on two peers’ papers due by midnight | Tues. 4/27. Draft of final paper due by 5 p.m. today |
| Thurs. 2/19. Paper 1, draft 2 due by 5 p.m. today | Tues. 5/4, Thurs. 5/6. Discussion of drafts
Tues., 5/11. Final paper due by 5 p.m. |
| Tues. 2/24. Library research day – meet in DuBois Library | Thurs. 5/13. Wrap-up and course evaluations
Fri., 5/14. Final papers graded (rewrites due Thurs., 5/20) |
| Tues. 3/2. Finish reading Valla, <i>“The profession of the Religious”</i> and selections from <i>“The falsely-</i> | |

Research bibliography

These titles are starting points for your own research. I have placed a few general works on reserve (indicated by an asterisk * in front of the title).

Reference (DuBois Library, main floor)

Encyclopedia of the Renaissance. Edited by Paul F. Grendler. 6 vols. New York: Scribner's, in association with the Renaissance Society of America, 1999. UM/Ref.: CB361.E52 1999 + v.1-6.

Comprehensive encyclopedia, written for the intelligent general reader. If an alphabetical search doesn't turn up what you are looking for, try the list of articles in vol. 1.

Kohl, Benjamin G. *Renaissance humanism, 1300-1550: A bibliography of materials in English*. New York: Garland, 1985. UM/Ref.: Z7128.H9K64 1985. A very useful bibliography, especially of primary sources and classic studies.

Humanism in general; multiple authors

Bentley, Jerry H. *Humanists and holy writ: New Testament scholarship in the Renaissance*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1983.

*Bietenholz, Peter G., and Thomas B. Deutscher, eds. *Contemporaries of Erasmus: A biographical register of the Renaissance and Reformation*. 3 vols. Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1985-87.

Burke, Peter. *The European Renaissance: Centres and peripheries*. Oxford and Malden, MA: Blackwell Publishers, 1998.

Fubini, Riccardo. *Humanism and secularization: From Petrarch to Valla*. Translated by Martha King. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003.

Garin, Eugenio. *Italian humanism: Philosophy and civic life in the Renaissance*. New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

*Kraye, Jill, ed. *The Cambridge companion to Renaissance humanism*. Cambridge and New York: Cambridge University Press, 1996.

Kristeller, Paul Oskar. *Renaissance thought and its sources*. Edited by Michael Mooney. New York: Columbia University Press, 1979.

———. *Medieval aspects of Renaissance learning*. Edited by Edward P. Mahoney. New York: Columbia University Press, 1992.

*Nauert, Charles G., Jr. *Humanism and the culture of Renaissance Europe*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1995.

Panizza, Letizia. "Valla's *De voluptate ac de vero bono* and Erasmus' *Stultitiae laus*: Renewing Christian ethics." *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook*, 15 (1995): 1-25.

*Rabil, Albert, Jr., ed. *Renaissance humanism: Foundations, forms, and legacy*. 3 vols. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988.

Schmitt, Charles B., Quentin Skinner, Eckhard Kessler, and Jill Kraye, eds. *The Cambridge history of Renaissance philosophy*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1988.

Schoeck, Richard J. "Erasmus and Valla: the dynamics of a relationship." *Erasmus of Rotterdam Society Yearbook* 12 (1992): 45-63.

Seigel, Jerrold E. *Rhetoric and philosophy in Renaissance humanism: The union of eloquence and wisdom, Petrarch to Valla*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1968.

Trinkaus, Charles. *In our image and likeness: Humanity and divinity in Italian humanist thought*. 2 vols. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1970.

Witt, Ronald G. "In the footsteps of the ancients": *The origins of humanism from Lovato to Bruni*. Leiden: Brill, 2000.

Petrarch

- Kallendorf, Craig. "The historical Petrarch." *American Historical Review* 101 (1996): 130-41.
- Nolhac, Pierre de. *Pétrarque et l'humanisme*. Nouvelle ed. 2 vols. Paris: Librairie Honoré Champion, 1965. A nineteenth-century classic.
- Quillen, Carol Everhart. *Rereading the Renaissance: Petrarch, Augustine, and the language of humanism*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1998.
- Trinkaus, Charles Edward. *The poet as philosopher: Petrarch and the formation of Renaissance consciousness*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1979.
- Wilkins, Ernest Hatch. *Studies in the life and works of Petrarch*. Cambridge, MA: Mediaeval Academy of America, 1955.

Valla

- Bentley, Jerry. *Politics and culture in Renaissance Naples*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1987.
- Celenza, Christopher S. "Renaissance humanism and the New Testament: Lorenzo Valla's annotations to the Vulgate." *Journal of Medieval and Renaissance Studies* 24 (1994): 33-52.
- Percival, W. Keith. "Lorenzo Valla and the criterion of exemplary usage." *Res publica litterarum* 19 (1996): 133-152.

Erasmus

- Halkin, Léon-E. *Erasmus: A critical biography*. Translated by John Tonkin. Oxford and Cambridge, MA: Blackwell, 1993.
- Jardine, Lisa. *Erasmus, man of letters: The construction of charisma in print*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1993.
- McConica, James. *Erasmus*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1991.
- Rummel, Erika. *The humanist-scholastic debate in the Renaissance and Reformation*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1995.
- Tracy, James D. "Against the 'barbarians': the young Erasmus and his humanist contemporaries." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 11 (1980): 3-22.
- . *Erasmus of the Low Countries*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996.

More

- Ackroyd, Peter. *The life of Thomas More*. New York : Nan A. Talese, 1998.
- Bruce, Susan. "Reason, belief and mortality in Thomas More's *Utopia*." *Philological Quarterly* 75 (1996): 267-286.
- Greenblatt, Stephen. *Renaissance self-fashioning: From More to Shakespeare*. Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1980.
- Marius, Richard. *Thomas More: A biography*. New York: Knopf, 1984.
- Shephard, Robert. "Utopia, Utopia's neighbors, *Utopia*, and Europe." *Sixteenth Century Journal* 26 (1995): 843-856.
- Sacks, David Harris. "The greed of Judas: avarice, monopoly, and the moral economy in England, ca. 1350-ca. 1600." *Journal of Medieval and Early Modern Studies* 28 (1998): 263-307.