

HUMANITIES 112

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Course Description

This course focuses on the development of the concept of modernity in Western civilization from the late 15th century through the early 20th century, as exemplified by certain key works of both nonfiction and fiction. The course is a continuation of Humanities 111, which focused on antiquity, insofar as it, too, examines the philosophical and artistic underpinnings of civilization. However, it differs from the previous course in that it focuses specifically on questions relating to the issue of modernity: first and foremost, what is modernity? how did this concept emerge and develop? how did it shape the development of Western (and, later, non-Western) thought and practice? The overriding question behind the course, then, is this: how did we get to wherever it is that we are now? While there is a virtually endless amount of secondary literature relating to modernity, this course focuses on close and careful reading of original primary texts, in order to better understand, *on their own terms*, how the authors who contributed to the development of the concept of modernity at various points in time viewed the world in which they were active.

Course Expectations

As this is a reading and discussion course, first and foremost you are of course expected to actually read the texts assigned. On average, there will be somewhere around 50 pages of reading per week, sometimes less and sometimes more, depending on the texts involved; a detailed reading schedule can be found below, and you are expected to be aware of this schedule ahead of time (any changes will be announced either in class or via email). More than simply reading, however, you should try to read the texts as carefully and critically as possible, with an eye toward addressing the issues that we will discuss in class. You are also expected to participate in class to the full extent of your abilities, which includes paying attention and taking notes in class as well as taking part in in-class discussions.

Required Texts

Please note that, if possible, you should have these exact editions so that you can follow the page numbers and, in the case of translations, analyze the same versions as everyone else in this course. If the texts are unavailable from Bilkent's bookstore, you can either obtain photocopies through the library, or I will provide you with alternative versions. All additional readings apart from these will be provided for you via the course Moodle page.

- 1) Niccolò Machiavelli. *The Prince*. Translated and edited by Robert M. Adams. New York and London: W.W. Norton & Company, 1992.
- 2) William Shakespeare. *The Oxford Shakespeare: Hamlet*. Edited by G.R. Hibbard. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2008.

- 3) René Descartes. *Discourse on Method and Meditations on First Philosophy*. Translated by Donald A. Cress. Indianapolis and Cambridge: Hackett Publishing Company, 1998.
- 4) Mary Shelley. *Frankenstein; or, The Modern Prometheus*. Edited by Maurice Hindle. London: Penguin Books, 2003.
- 5) Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels. *The Communist Manifesto: A Modern Edition*. London and Brooklyn: Verso, 2012.
- 6) Franz Kafka. *Metamorphosis and Other Stories*. Translated by Michael Hofmann. London: Penguin Books, 2007.

Course Assignments

Attendance and Active Participation – 10%

Attendance policy is discussed below. As for participation, in every class you will be expected to come to class prepared (*i.e.*, having, at a minimum, read the assigned text), to respond thoughtfully to any questions, and to engage both with the words and ideas of the texts studied and with the ideas put forth by your classmates in the course of discussion.

Quizzes (3) – 15% (5% each)

There will be a total of three quizzes throughout the semester, which may be either announced beforehand or pop quizzes. The quizzes may either test objective knowledge of a text or texts, or they may require you to write a short analytical response, or some combination of the two.

Short Assignments (3) – 15% (5% each)

There will be three short writing assignments during the semester. Each assignment will require you to choose from a number of topics related to the class reading and discussions. The assignments will be posted to Moodle at least one week before their due date. Typically, they will be somewhere between a minimum of 500 words and a maximum of 850 words, though this may change on individual assignments.

More detail about the short assignments will be provided in due course during the semester.

Midterm Project – 30%

While there will be no midterm exam for this class, there will be a major, formal, individual midterm writing project assigned and due around the midway point of the semester. You will have at least two weeks to complete this project, from assignment to due date.

More detail about the midterm project will be provided in due course during the first half of the semester.

Final Exam – 30%

The final exam will be a two-hour, sit-down examination to assess your mastery of the material from the beginning to the end of the semester. It will likely involve short answers and/or a written essay; more information will be provided toward the end of the semester.

Note that, in order to be eligible to take the final exam, you should have a total of at least 35% on all graded material (excluding the final) and you should not have missed more than 20% of class time.

Attendance Policy

According to Bilkent University policy, missing more than 20% of in-class time results in a failing grade (FZ) for the course. Please note that medical reports do not excuse absences. Attendance is part of participation, and each and every absence will negatively impact the Attendance and Participation component of your course grade. The same is true of habitual tardiness, so please make sure to arrive to class on time.

Please note that it is your responsibility to keep track of your attendance, which I will post on the STARS system no later than one day after each class; do not expect a warning if your attendance is getting low.

Also please note that, if you miss class, it is your responsibility to find out what you missed and what is required for the following class period.

Cellphone Policy

The use of cellphones (or any other electronic devices, including tablets and laptops) in class is strictly prohibited. If you bring your cellphone to class, keep it stored away and muted at all times. If you use a cellphone in class, you will be given one initial warning, after which your attendance/participation grade will be reduced by 1% for each violation.

Due Date Policy

Any written assignment submitted after a deadline has passed will be considered late. Late assignments will incur a one letter-grade drop every 24 hours after the deadline, and assignments submitted more than a week late will receive zero points. Only deadlines missed due to a documented illness may constitute an exception to the late policy.

Academic Honesty Policy

Bilkent University defines plagiarism, other academic offenses, and their consequences in the following way: “The use of somebody else’s ideas, viewpoints, findings or works in a paper, project report, or a similar document which is presented as part of a course requirement, without proper acknowledgement of the source, can result in suspension from the university for one week to one month. To cheat during an exam and to submit any homework, project, report, term paper or thesis which has been prepared by someone else as one’s own work, to prepare the same for other persons, to submit someone else’s work with or without amendments, and to present in a thesis someone else’s ideas or findings without due acknowledgment of the source can result in suspension from the university for one to two semesters.”

Academic dishonesty is a serious offense penalized in all HUM sections of the Program in Cultures, Civilizations, and Ideas. All of the following are considered academic dishonesty: plagiarism, cheating, collusion, use of annotated texts or teacher’s editions, turning in previously submitted work, and/or falsifying academic records. Any act of plagiarism, no matter how minimal, will result in a zero for the respective assignment submitted for assessment. The penalty may be much more severe, including a failing grade for the course, a report to your academic dean, and a recommendation for disciplinary action as well as your removal from the university.

If you are unsure as to whether something constitutes plagiarism, please ask me.

Grading Scale

A	93–100	B+	87–89	C+	77–79	D+	67–69	F	below 60
A-	90–92	B	83–86	C	73–76	D	60–66		
		B-	80–82	C-	70–72				

Please note that the lowest passing grade is a D.

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Detailed Schedule (subject to change)

Week	First class	Second class
1 (2/4–8)	<i>Introduction to the course and to the concept of modernity</i>	<i>What is modernity?</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “Modernity on Endless Trial” Selection from “What Is the Problem about Modernity?”
2 (2/11–15)	<i>Introduction to Renaissance humanism</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “On the Dignity of Man,” Pico della Mirandola (pp. 3–9) 	<i>Niccolò Machiavelli</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Prince</i>, Machiavelli; Dedication and Chapters XV–XXIII (pp. 3, 42–65)
3 (2/18–22)	<i>Niccolò Machiavelli</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The Prince</i>; Chapters XXIV–XXVI (pp. 66–72) <i>Discourses on Titus Livius</i>; Book 1, Chapters 29 and 58 (pp. 102–104, 107–111) 	<i>Niccolò Machiavelli</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> “The Economy of Violence”
4 (2/25–3/1)	<i>Introduction to English Renaissance theater</i>	<i>William Shakespeare</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The History of the Danes</i>, Saxo Grammaticus (pp. 183–209) <i>Hamlet</i>, William Shakespeare; Acts 1 and 2 (pp. 141–236)
5 (3/4–8)	<i>William Shakespeare</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Hamlet</i>, William Shakespeare; Acts 3 and 4 (pp. 236–320) 	<i>William Shakespeare</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Hamlet</i>, William Shakespeare; Act 5 (pp. 320–354)
6 (3/11–15)	<i>Introduction to the scientific revolution, empiricism, and rationalism</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The New Organon</i>, Francis Bacon; Aphorisms 1–77 (pp. 4–23) 	<i>René Descartes</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Discourse on Method</i>, René Descartes; Parts 1–4 (pp. 1–22)
7 (3/18–22)	<i>René Descartes</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>, René Descartes; Meditations 1 and 2 (pp. 59–69) 	<i>René Descartes</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Meditations on First Philosophy</i>, René Descartes; Meditation 6 (pp. 92–103)

8 (3/25–29)	<i>Introduction to the Enlightenment</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What Is Enlightenment?”, Immanuel Kant 	<i>The Enlightenment</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selection from <i>Sketch for a Historical Picture of the Progress of the Human Mind</i>, Nicolas de Condorcet
9 (4/1–5)	<i>Introduction to the Romantic reaction</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frankenstein</i>, Mary Shelley; Author’s Introduction and Vol. 1, Letters I–IV (pp. 5–10, 15–32) 	<i>Mary Shelley</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frankenstein</i>, Mary Shelley; Vol. 1, Chapters I–VIII (pp. 33–90)
10 (4/8–12)	<i>Mary Shelley</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frankenstein</i>, Mary Shelley; Vol. 2, Chapters I–IX (pp. 93–151) 	<i>Mary Shelley</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Frankenstein</i>, Mary Shelley; Vol. 3, Chapters I–VII (pp. 155–225)
11 (4/15–19)	<i>Introduction to the Industrial Revolution, Marxism, and historical materialism</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selections from <i>The German Ideology</i>, Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels and “A Contribution to the Critique of Political Economy,” Karl Marx 	<i>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Communist Manifesto,” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; Preface and Chapter I (pp. 33–50)
12 (4/22–26)	<i>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “The Communist Manifesto,” Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels; Chapters II and IV (pp. 50–62, 75–77) 	<i>Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels</i>
13 (4/29–5/3)	<i>Introduction to modernism</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Poseidon” and “A Message from the Emperor,” Franz Kafka 	<i>Franz Kafka</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Metamorphosis</i>, Franz Kafka; Chapter 1 (pp. 75–91)
14 (5/6–10)	<i>Franz Kafka</i> <u>Reading</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Metamorphosis</i>, Franz Kafka; Chapters 2–3 (pp. 91–126) 	<i>Franz Kafka</i>
15 (5/13–17)	<i>Conclusion, wrap-up, and review for the final exam</i>	<i>Conclusion, wrap-up, and review for the final exam</i>