

IDS 104: The Great Conversation—Culture  
Spring Semester 2002

Course Description:

The Great Conversation—Culture is an interdisciplinary course intended to introduce students to a selection of great works in the fields of literature, art, music, philosophy, theology, and history from Greek and Roman times to the present.

The works will be presented chronologically so that we might see how various thoughts and ideas have been expressed throughout time. The purpose of the course, as is reflected in its title, is to promote our participation in the great conversation about our world, our society, and our humanity that has been going on for three thousand years and more. We will read the words (and view and hear the works) of those who have preceded us and then add our own thoughts and ideas to the conversation. The classes will be discussion-oriented, with all of us taking turns in facilitating discussion from day to day. Guest facilitators (faculty members from the Oxford campus, the Emory campus, and other institutions in the area) will join us upon many occasions, too, both during the regular class sessions on Tuesdays and Thursdays at 11:30 and during the supplemental sessions on Wednesday afternoons.

Chief Facilitator: Dr. Gretchen Schulz (Office: 103 Humanities, 4-8372; Home: 770-784-8269)  
Frequent Guest: Dr. Jim Kiersky (Office: 205A Language, 4-8361; Home: 770-939-3308)

Times/Places: Tuesday/Thursday, 11:30-12:45, TBA  
Wednesday, 2:00-4:00, Humanities Conference Room

Texts/Works: see syllabus below

Course Requirements:

Students are expected to read the assigned text (or, in the case of art or music or other non-literary work, study the assigned work) prior to class and to come to class well prepared to make frequent intelligent contribution to the discussion of the thoughts and ideas raised by the text (or work). At regular intervals, each of us will serve as facilitator-of-the-day, initiating class discussion with an opening question and moderating discussion as it proceeds.

All who are participating in the ongoing great conversation of the course will keep journals of comments and questions stimulated by the texts read (or works studied) and by the class discussions of the texts (or works). At a minimum, each of us should prepare a journal entry prior to each class meeting, dealing somehow with issues relevant to the text assigned for that meeting. These journal entries should be brought to each class meeting for we may make use of them to promote discussion at any time. These journals will be collected at intervals by the chief facilitator (Dr. Schulz). They may be read by Dr. Kiersky, as well. They will not be graded in the usual fashion,

but their content will serve as an indication of the degree and quality of student engagement with the course material, and that information will factor into the overall grade assigned at the end of the term for the degree and quality of class participation (see the statement on Grading below).

Students will write three short papers (of about 3 to 4 pages in length or 750 to 1000 words) due throughout the semester and one longer paper (of 8 to 10 pages or 2000 to 2500 words) due at the end of the semester. The format and content of these papers will be discussed in class. Students will be encouraged to bring a draft of each paper to a conference with the chief

facilitator for the course, Dr. Schulz, and/or a conference with Dr. Kiersky so discussion may yield suggestions for revision which will strengthen the work.

Grading:	class participation (including regular participation for 60 points and facilitation for 40 points)	100 points
	3 short papers (for 30 points each) and journals (for another 30 points)	120 points
	longer final paper	<u>80 points</u>
	total for the course	300 points

Please note that Dr. Schulz will be grading your work using the plus/minus grading system. She will consult with Dr. Kiersky about each grade.

Policy on absences: Since class participation is such an important component of this course, attendance is important, too, and excessive absence will result in points deducted from your final grade. Only true emergency, significant illness, and required religious observance can excuse an absence. Please inform Dr. Schulz of the latter ahead of time.

Policy on late or missing work: A paper submitted late without an adequate excuse (true emergency or significant illness) will lose a letter grade for each calendar day it is late. A paper that is more than four calendar days late (without an adequate excuse) will not be accepted at all and will be given a zero. Missing journal submissions will affect the final grade for class participation. Failure to take an assigned turn as a facilitator-for-the-day (without an adequate excuse) will also affect the final grade for class participation.

#### Course Schedule:

week one	Jan	16 introduction to course; <u>Old Testament</u> : Genesis 17 Genesis and Exodus
week two		22 Homer: <u>The Odyssey</u> 23 Greek art and architecture 24 Homer: <u>The Odyssey</u>
week three		29 Aeschylus: <u>The Oresteia</u> 30 film of <u>Agamemnon</u> 31 <u>The Oresteia</u> ; Aristotle: <u>Poetics</u>
week four	Feb	05 Plato (selections) 06 Plato (selections) 07 Aristotle (selections)
week five		12 <u>New Testament</u> : Gospel TBA 13 Roman art and architecture 14 Plutarch (selections)
week six		19 Augustine: <u>Confessions</u> 20 <u>Beowulf</u> 21 Arthurian story material: <u>Sir Gawain and the Green Knight</u>
week seven		26 Dante: <u>Inferno</u> 27 medieval art/ Orff's <u>Carmina Burana</u>

28 Chaucer: "The General Prologue" to The Canterbury Tales

week eight	Mar	05 Aquinas (selections) 06 Galileo (selections) 07 Marlowe: <u>Doctor Faustus</u>
week nine		19 Machiavelli: <u>The Prince</u> 20 Renaissance art and music 21 Shakespeare: <u>Othello</u>
week ten		26 Hobbes (selections) 27 Rousseau (selections) 28 Voltaire: <u>Candide</u>
week eleven	Apr	02 Fielding: <u>Tom Jones</u> 03 Mozart: the opera 04 Austen: <u>Pride and Prejudice</u>
week twelve		09 romantic poetry 10 Beethoven: the symphony 11 Twain: <u>The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn</u>
week thirteen		16 Darwin/Marx/Freud (selections) 17 twentieth century art 18 Harlem Renaissance (poetry, music, dance)
week fourteen		23 Kerouac: <u>On the Road</u> 24 film of <u>Thelma and Louise</u> 25 feminist poetry (selections)
week fifteen		30 last day of class; the conclusion of our great conversation