HONORS 2103–004
Honors Core in Intellectual Tradition III:
The Rise of Modernity

Classroom and Class Time: MHC 1205; TH 2:00-3:20
Instructor: Dr. Michael White
Email: m.white@leap.utah.edu
Phone: 801-585-9867
Office: 142 Sill Center (due east of the Union, across from the visitor parking lot)
Office Hours: T 12:30-1:30; and by appointment (I am always happy to consult with students, and as often as possible at the student’s convenience; just please let me know IN ADVANCE when you’d like to meet.)

Course Overview:

In this course students will examine deep and important questions about human experience through the reading of foundational primary texts (literary, philosophical, political, and scientific) from the Modern period. Students are encouraged to explore both how these texts express the ideas and values of a particular culture at a particular time and also how they continue to inform the development of thought more broadly. The course emphasizes critical thinking, independent reasoning, interpretative skills, writing skills, and creativity – and thus is intended to provide a strong foundation for study in a variety of disciplines.

Note: This course fulfills the Humanities Exploration requirement.

Required Texts:

The five main texts listed below are available at the University Bookstore.

William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Signet Classics, 9780451527127)
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (Penguin Classics, 9780141439471)
Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen* (New Directions, 9780811200073)
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness and Selections from the Congo Diary* (Modern Library, 9780375753770)
Richard Wright, *Black Boy* (Harper Collins, 9780061130243)

Remaining readings will be made available to students via the instructor. Please print and assemble these readings into a course booklet.
Course Requirements:

30 points - two brief in-class tests (15 points each)
20 points - a short(ish) mid-term paper
30 points - a longer final paper
20 points - attendance and participation (including in-class group participation assignments)

________________________
100 points total

Grading:

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<th>Score Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>94 and above</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-93</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>87-89</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>84-86</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>80-83</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<td>77-79</td>
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<td>74-76</td>
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<td>70-73</td>
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<td>67-69</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<td>64-66</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-63</td>
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<td>below 60</td>
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Classroom Policies:

Success in this class requires regular attendance and engaged participation. This includes being consistently punctual and contributing toward a classroom environment that fosters courtesy and respect.

The use of non class-related portable electronic devices is disallowed for the duration of each 80 minute class period. And for this, I very much appreciate your cooperation.

In order to be prepared for each session, you must complete all of the assigned readings. Also, you are responsible for bringing all relevant readings to class on the day(s) they are slated to be discussed (see Class Schedule).

Please ensure that your university email account (Umail) is operational. It is also imperative that you check this account on a regular basis as I will periodically use email to send out class announcements and to contact students individually.
Class Schedule:

Please note that the readings listed for any particular day should be completed BEFORE you come to class on that day. Dates of readings and assignments may change; be aware of announcements made in class.

**Week 1:**

January 9:
Introduction to the course

January 11:
William Shakespeare, *The Tempest*

**Week 2:**

January 16:
*The Tempest*

January 18:
*The Tempest*

**Week 3:**

January 23:
*The Tempest*

January 25:
Isaac Newton, “General Scholium” (booklet) AND “Preface” to *The Clockwork Universe* (booklet)

**Week 4:**

January 30:
Bashō, selected haiku (class handout)

February 1:
Jean-Jacques Rousseau, “Discourse on the Sciences and the Arts” (booklet)

**Week 5:**

February 6:
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein*
February 8:
*Frankenstein*

**Week 6:**

February 13:
*Frankenstein*

February 15:
*Frankenstein*

**Week 7:**

February 20:
Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, “Bourgeois and Proletarians” (booklet)

**Short Paper due in class on this day**

February 22:
Charles Darwin, selections from *The Origin of Species* and *The Descent of Man* (booklet)

**Test #1 (covering material from Shakespeare to Marx/Engels)**

**Week 8:**

February 27:
Charles Baudelaire, *Paris Spleen* (specific selections to be announced)

March 1:
*Paris Spleen* (specific selections to be announced)

**Week 9:**

March 6:
Joseph Conrad, *Heart of Darkness*

*Note: We will also be discussing Chinua Achebe’s influential critique of *Heart of Darkness*, an essay that is reprinted in the introductory section of the novel.*

March 8:
*Heart of Darkness*
**Week 10:**

March 13:  
*Heart of Darkness*

March 15:  
TBA  
Grade/Progress update sent (check your Umail)

**Week 11:**

Spring Break: NO CLASSES

**Week 12:**

March 27:  
Sigmund Freud, from *Civilization and Its Discontents* (booklet)

March 29:  
Richard Wright, *Black Boy*

**Week 13:**

April 3:  
*Black Boy*

April 5:  
*Black Boy*

**Week 14:**

April 10:  
*Black Boy*

Film Screening: *Do the Right Thing* (dir. Spike Lee)  
*Note that this film contains graphic language, violence, and partial nudity (Rated R).*

April 12:  
Film Screening: *Do the Right Thing* (dir. Spike Lee)  
*Note that this film contains graphic language, violence, and partial nudity (Rated R).*

**Week 15:**

April 17:  
*Do the Right Thing*  
Jamaica Kincaid, “Girl” (class handout)
April 19:
Aldo Leopold, “Thinking like a Mountain” (booklet)
David Abram, “The Ecology of Magic” (booklet)

**Week 16:**

April 24:
**Test #2 (covering material from Darwin to Abram)**
End-of-semester celebration! (meaning snacks, and a super fun test)

**Final paper due Friday, April 27th by 5PM at my office in the Sill Center OR sent by email (m.white@leap.utah.edu).**

**General University Policies:**

Please read the following university-wide policies, and feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns:

1) **The Americans with Disabilities Act.** The University of Utah seeks to provide equal access to its programs, services, and activities for people with disabilities. If you will need accommodations in this class, reasonable prior notice needs to be given to the Center for Disability Services, 162 Olpin Union Building, (801) 581-5020. CDS will work with you and the instructor to make arrangements for accommodations. All written information in this course can be made available in an alternative format with prior notification to the Center for Disability Services.

2) **Addressing Sexual Misconduct.** Title IX makes it clear that violence and harassment based on sex and gender (which includes sexual orientation and gender identity/expression) is a civil rights offense subject to the same kinds of accountability and the same kinds of support applied to offenses against other protected categories such as race, national origin, color, religion, age, status as a person with a disability, veteran’s status or genetic information. If you or someone you know has been harassed or assaulted, you are encouraged to report it to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity and Affirmative Action, 135 Park Building, 801-581-8365, or the Office of the Dean of Students, 270 Union Building, 801-581-7066. For support and confidential consultation, contact the Center for Student Wellness, 426 SSB, 801-581-7776. To report to the police, contact the Department of Public Safety, 801-585-2677(COPS).