

Honors Freshman Sequence – Fall 2012

Description of Honors Sequence courses and learning objectives:

The Honors Freshman Sequence is a model of interdisciplinary education that block enrolls students in literature, history, and philosophy courses. Faculty produce a common syllabus, thus affording multiple opportunities for integrated learning, cross-disciplinary exercises, and collaborative teaching. The Honors Freshman Sequence emphasizes developing students' writing, communication, and critical thinking skills through the use of multiple written drafts for papers, in class group work and presentations, and discussion-oriented explorations of the reading materials in the discipline specific context of world literature, history and philosophy.

- **HEG 21 Literature of the Human Imagination (sections 1-6) - Faculty: Andrea Libin, Louis Parascandola, Leah Dilworth.** An introduction to the nature and function of literature. Emphasis is on critical skills needed for the appraisal and interpretation of literature. Texts are selected from all genres and reflect literature of historical and contemporary cultures around the globe. Taken in conjunction with Honors History (HHI 21) and Honors Philosophy (HHP 21). Satisfies the English and WAC requirements for graduation. Student must be part of the Brooklyn Honors Student Group in order to register for the course. Credits: 3 – Offered every Fall
- **HHI 21 Perspectives on Human History (sections 1-6) – Faculty: Nicolas Agrait, Joram Warmund, Stacey Horstmann Gatti.** A study of political, economic and social trends in world history aimed at discovering the nature of historical fact. Taken in conjunction with Honors Literature (HEG 21) and Honors Philosophy (HHP 21). Satisfies the History and WAC requirements for graduation. Student must be part of the Brooklyn Honors Student Group in order to register for the course. Credits: 3 – Offered every Fall
- **HHP 21 Human Values in Perspective (sections 1-6) – Faculty: Amy Robinson, Sophia Wong, James Clarke.** An introduction to classic texts and problems in the history of philosophy as well as an exploration of the leading traditions of ethical and social thought from the early modern world to the present. This course encourages students to reflect on their own values in light of major ethical traditions and in relation to contemporary social issues. Taken in conjunction with Honors Literature (HEG 21) and Honors History (HHI 21). Satisfies the Philosophy and WAC requirements for graduation. Student must be part of the Brooklyn Honors Student Group in order to register for the course. Credits: 3 – Offered every Fall
- **HSM 25 University Honors Seminar.** Taken in conjunction with Honors Literature (HEG 21), History (HHI 21), and Philosophy (HHP 21). Hours are arranged each semester as part of the requirement for this course cluster. Pass/Fail only. Student must be part of the Brooklyn Honors Student Group in order to register for the course. Credits: 0 – Offered every Fall

Emerging Identities

LIU Brooklyn – Honors Freshman Sequence – Fall 2012

Each year the faculty of the various disciplinary components of the Honors Freshman Sequence—Literature, History, and Philosophy—develop a common theme which is emphasized in the choices of texts you will read and the topics you will explore throughout the year. This year our theme is ***Emerging Identities***. The following statements define the theme from the perspective of each discipline.

Literature: This semester we will explore literary texts that investigate questions about the formation of identity. What role does society, gender, and religion play in shaping a character's sense of self? Beginning with the ancient worlds from Mesopotamia to Greece, we will consider the ways in which so-called heroes or villains conform to or break free from expectations and constraints placed on them within a political, familial, or social system. Through close reading of texts we will trace the transformation of literary characters such as Gilgamesh, Antigone, and Sundiata, and explore how they change when confronted with loss, love, or war to ultimately discover their true identity. From ancient dramas and stories to oral tales of Africa, to Buddhist poetry of Asia to European Medieval tales, we will examine how these texts deepen or complicate our understanding of the construction of identity. In turn, the readings will serve as a framework for us to question our own sense of self, community, and the world at large. The semester will close with Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, whose search for his place in the world is filled with conflict, humor, and tragedy, and who asks us to consider what it means to be human.

History: As complex civilizations developed across the world, perhaps even before, humans turned their attention to the questions of who they were, where they belonged, and what was their place in relation to the world around them. In short, humans started to create various identities to differentiate themselves from others both as individuals and groups. The search for identities brought with it the possibilities of closer communities and more complex cooperation, yet it also engendered conflict as groups and individuals sought to define themselves vis-à-vis other groups and within their own communities. Some of the ways that humans used to define themselves include diverse communal and governmental structures, organized religions, and social hierarchies based on status, class and/or gender. It is also crucial to explore how these different practices and institutions affected and influenced each other. Furthermore, the constant challenge to already established identities both external and internal also form a fundamental component of the history of humanity.

Philosophy: For philosophers, identity poses a kind of logical paradox or puzzle. Irving Copi, a twentieth century American logician, succinctly captured the paradox in two statements: (1) If a changing thing really changes, there can't literally be one and the same thing before and after the change. (2) However, if a changing thing literally remains one and the same thing (i.e., retains its identity) throughout the change, then it cannot really have changed. Each statement, by itself, seems to be true. Yet if both statements are true, a puzzle emerges. What do we mean by the term *identity*? How can we speak coherently about identity and changes to identity over time? How we answer these questions has important consequences for our average everyday ways of speaking about persons, places, and things. When we refer to persons, places, and things how necessary is it that we always *mean* the same thing? For philosophers, identity is connected to large questions: Is the universe a coherent, organized whole? Is it possible to *know* anything, since things are always changing? What can personal identity mean since "I" change physically and mentally over time? The first identity we will encounter is that created by Socrates. Who was Socrates? How did he define himself personally and ethically? What for Socrates is knowledge? After Socrates, we will explore other ancient Greek philosophers' thoughts on identity, including Plato's and Aristotle's. Aristotle's analysis of "friendship" will provide an opportunity to explore the relation between the self and others. Sophocles' *Oedipus the King* rounds out our exploration of classical Western notions of identity, raising deep questions about the limits of self-knowledge and blindness to one's own identity. We will then investigate Buddhist notions of the self (including the concepts of reincarnation and karma) through readings of classical and contemporary texts and a film. A further set of contrasts and radically new ideas of identity will be developed through readings of Stoic and Epicurean philosophy. The last stretch of the semester is devoted to three essential early modern works that mark a "crisis of identity," each profoundly shaping our understanding of the self in the world: Machiavelli's *The Prince*; Montaigne's *Of Cannibals*; and Shakespeare's *Hamlet*.

General Policies

Assignments: Papers assigned in the Sequence are generally scheduled for two drafts. The first draft is read carefully by your instructor and suggestions for revision are provided. You will then revise the draft in consideration of these comments. As turnaround time is quite tight, it is important that drafts of your papers are turned in on time. Two papers will be required in each class during the term, and in all three courses a final will be given. Individual instructors may assign additional work (e.g., keeping of a journal, short written exercises or presentations). For specific reading assignments, see the detailed schedule of assignments below.

Participation/Absences: All Honors courses stress class participation. An aspect of your grade will be based on the nature and degree of your participation. Taking part in a discussion is very different—from the standpoint of learning—from reading, writing papers and hearing lectures. All are important, but all are different. As there is no way to make up missed discussion, be sure you are there. If any material presented in the discussion is unclear, let your voice be heard to clear it up. *Be sure you understand your instructor's policy regarding absences and how participation is factored into your final grade.*

All your instructors maintain office hours during which you can see them in order to clarify aspects of the class discussion, the readings, or comments made on your papers. Take advantage of your instructors' willingness to work with you. When you have questions go see them during their office hours.

Plagiarism is the taking of ideas or words from any source, including all websites, and presenting those ideas or words as your own. As plagiarism is perhaps the highest form of academic dishonesty, students who plagiarize are subject to the most severe disciplinary penalties, including failure, dismissal from Honors, and dismissal from the University.

Required Texts: To ensure use of the correct edition, please check the lists provided below for each discipline of the Sequence.

Literature

Gilgamesh, trans. Stephen Mitchell.
Simon and Schuster.
The Three Theban Plays. Sophocles.
Trans. Robert Fagles.
Penguin Classics.
Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali, D.T. Niane.
Pearson Publishers.
Hamlet, William Shakespeare.
Folger Shakespeare Library.
Literature Anthology
A Writer's Reference, 6th Edition, Diana
Hacker. Bedford/St. Martin's Press

History

Connections: A World History, 2nd Ed.
Combined Volume, Judge and
Langdon. Pearson/Prentice Hall.
Sources of World Civilization, Vol I and II,
3rd Edition. Oliver Johnson
and James Halverson.
Pearson Publishers.
The Bible, King James Version.
History Anthology
A Writer's Reference, 6th Edition, Diana
Hacker. Bedford/St. Martin's Press

Philosophy

Five Dialogues, Plato, 2nd Edition.
Hackett Publishers.
Poetics, Aristotle. Trans. Malcolm Heath.
Penguin Classics.
The Prince, Niccolò Machiavelli.
Penguin Classics.
Philosophy Anthology
A Writer's Reference, 6th Edition, Diana
Hacker. Bedford/St. Martin's Press

***Note:** Anthologies for each discipline are available in Honors

Date	Philosophy	History	Literature
5-Sep Wednesday	Introductions	Introduction - Historical Identities	Introductions
7-Sep Friday	Plato, <i>Five Dialogues</i> <i>Euthyphro</i>	Emergence of Civilizations Text: Chapter 1 Sources: Introduction	<i>Gilgamesh</i>
10-Sep Monday	<i>Euthyphro</i>	Mesopotamia: Early Identities Text: Chapter 2 (21-31); Sources: Code of Hammurabi; Epic of Gilgamesh	<i>Gilgamesh</i>
12-Sep Wednesday	<i>Euthyphro</i>	Egypt: A Different Identity Text: Chapter 2 (32-39); Sources: Lansing Papyrus	<i>Gilgamesh</i>
14-Sep Friday	Plato, <i>Five Dialogues</i> <i>Apology, Crito</i>	Mesopotamia and Egypt: Comparing Identities Sources: Epic of Gilgamesh; Hymn to the Nile Anthology: Book of the Dead	<i>Genesis</i>
17-Sep Monday	<i>Apology, Crito</i>	The Ancient Hebrews: Introduction Text: Chapter 2 (40-46) Genesis 1-4; 6-8; 11-22	<i>Genesis</i>
19-Sep Wednesday	<i>Crito</i>	The Ancient Hebrews: Emerging Spiritual Identity Genesis 37; 39-47; 50	Writing Day
21-Sep Friday	<i>Crito</i>	The Ancient Hebrews: Emerging Civilization/ Expanding Identity Exodus 20-22; Isaiah 44 and 45; Psalm 23, 137	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i>

Date	Philosophy	History	Literature
24-Sep Monday	First Draft of Paper 1 Logic	Imperial Identities: The Emergence of the Persian Empire Text: Chapter 6 (119-130)	<i>Antigone</i>
26-Sep Wednesday	Logic	Greek Identities: Introduction Text: Chapter 7 (140-146) Sources: Homer	<i>Antigone</i>
28-Sep Friday	Logic	Paper Writing Instructions: Documenting Sources	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus Rex</i>
1-Oct	Plato, "Allegory of the Cave"	Paper 1 Identities in Conflict (I): The Persian Wars Text: Ch. 6 (130-133); Ch. 7 (147-148) Anthology: Herodotus	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>
3-Oct Wednesday	Plato, "Allegory of the Cave"	Identities in Conflict (II): Peloponnesian War Text: Chapter 7 (149) Anthology: Thucydides	<i>Oedipus Rex</i>
5-Oct Friday	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> , "On Friendship"	Reflections on Athenian Identities Text: Chapter 7 (150-154) Sources: Plato Anthology: Crito and Phaedo	Poems by Sappho
8-Oct Monday	"On Friendship"	The Emergence of Hellenistic Identities Text: Ch. 6 (133-139); Ch. 7 (155-163)	First Draft of Paper 1 Poems by Sappho
10-Oct Wednesday	Aristotle, <i>Poetics</i>	Republican Identities: Early Rome Text: Chapter 8 (164-179) Sources: Polybius	Chinese poetry

Date	Philosophy	History	Literature
12-Oct Friday	<i>Poetics</i> Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i>	Roman Identities in Conflict Text: Chapter 8 (171-176) Sources: Seutonius	Chinese poetry
15-Oct Monday	Final Draft of Paper 1 <i>Oedipus the King</i>	Emergence of a New Spiritual Identity: Judaism and Early Christianity Text: Chapter 8 (177-179) <i>Matthew</i> 1-7; 25: 31-46; 26-28	Chinese poetry
17-Oct Wednesday	Joint Session One Gods and Mortals: Emerging Identities		
19-Oct Friday	Joint Session One Gods and Mortals: Emerging Identities		
22-Oct Monday	Film: <i>Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring Again</i> Selected Buddhist Texts	Expanding Christianity in the Roman Empire Text: Chapter 8 (179-181) <i>Acts</i> 9; <i>Romans</i> 1-5; <i>I Corinthians</i> 12	Chinese poetry
24-Oct Wednesday	Film: <i>Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring Again</i> Selected Buddhist Texts	Transformation of Christianity: In the Late Roman Empire Text: Ch. 8 (181-186); Ch. 9 (187-200) Sources: Augustine; Benedict	Japanese poetry
26-Oct Friday	Film: <i>Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring Again</i> Selected Buddhist Texts	Modifying Western Identities: Germanic and Byzantine Influences Text: Ch. 9 (201-211); Ch. 10 (all) Sources: Einhard	Japanese poetry

Date	Philosophy	History	Literature
29-Oct Monday	Film: <i>Spring, Summer, Fall, Winter, and Spring Again</i> Selected Buddhist Texts	Emerging Indian Identities Text: Chapter 3 (47-55; 67-71) Sources: Rig Veda; Hindu Caste System	Final Draft of Paper 1 <i>Sundiata</i>
31-Oct Wednesday	Selections from Hellenistic Philosophy	Emerging Chinese Identities Text: Chapter 4 (72-80) Sources: Mandate of Heaven	<i>Sundiata</i>
2-Nov Friday	Selections from Hellenistic Philosophy	Chinese Ethical and Religious Identities Text: Chapter 4 (80-95) Sources: Confucius Anthology: Taoism; Legalism	<i>Sundiata</i>
5-Nov Monday	First Draft of Paper 2 Arguments for the existence of God	Conflict and Expansion of Indian Spiritual Identity Text: Chapter 3 (55-63) Sources: Hinduism and Buddhism	<i>Sundiata</i>
7-Nov Wednesday	Arguments for the existence of God	A New Monotheistic Identity: Islam Text: Chapter 11 (233-241) Sources: Muhammad: The Koran	Writing Day
9-Nov Friday	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i>	Expansion of Islam Text: Chapter 11 (242-252); Chapter 13 (all)	Chaucer, <i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
12-Nov Monday	<i>The Prince</i> Film: <i>Godfathers of the Renaissance</i>	Paper 2 Emerging European Identities: Medieval Conflicts and Synthesis Text: Chapter 16 (345-356) Sources: Aquinas; Magna Carta Anthology: Boniface VIII, Unam Sanctam	<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
14-Nov Wednesday	<i>The Prince</i> Film: <i>Godfathers of the Renaissance</i>	Conflicting Identities in the Medieval World: The Crusades Text: Chapter 16 (356-359) Sources: Perspectives on the 1st Crusade	<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>

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16-Nov Friday	Montaigne, "Of Cannibals"	Bridging Identities in Eurasia: Mongolian Conquests Text: Chapter 14 (all); Ch. 15 (319-335)	<i>The Canterbury Tales</i>
19-Nov Monday	Montaigne, "Of Cannibals"	Comparing and Connecting Eurasian Identities Text: Chapter 15 (336-344); Chapter 17 (all) Sources: Marco Polo	First Draft of Paper 2 Maria de France, "Lais"
21-Nov (Wednesday follows Friday)	Montaigne, "Of Cannibals" and catch-up	Rediscovering Old Identities: The European Renaissance Text: Chapter 16 (359-369) Anthology: Machiavelli	Maria de France, "Lais"
23-Nov Friday	Thanksgiving Recess		
26-Nov Monday	Final Draft of Paper 2 McGinn, <i>Shakespeare and Philosophy</i>	European Exploration Text: Ch. 18 (393-403); Ch. 19 (417-424) Sources II: Columbus	Shakespeare, <i>Hamlet</i>
28-Nov Wednesday	<i>Shakespeare and Philosophy</i>	Shaping New Identities Across the Continents Text: Ch. 18 (403-416); Ch. 19 (427-440) Sources II: Diaz Del Castillo; The Portuguese in Asia	<i>Hamlet</i>
30-Nov Friday	<i>Shakespeare and Philosophy</i>	Conflicts in Christian Identity: The Protestant Reformation Text: Chapter 20 (441-447) Sources II: Luther	<i>Hamlet</i>

Date	Philosophy	History	Literature
3-Dec Monday	<i>Shakespeare and Philosophy</i> <i>Hamlet</i>	Paper 3 Development of a Protestant Identity and Catholic Reaction Text: Chapter 20 (488-551) Sources II: Calvin; Counter-Reformation	<i>Hamlet</i>
5-Dec Wednesday	Joint Session Two Shakespeare - Hamlet		
7-Dec Friday	Joint Session Two Shakespeare - Hamlet		
10-Dec Monday	Preparation for final exam	Establishing a New European Identity Text: Chapter 20 (452-462)	Final Draft of Paper 2 <i>Hamlet</i>
12-Dec Wednesday	Closing remarks	Closing remarks	Closing remarks