

HUMANITIES IN CULTURAL SETTINGS

Instructor: James P. Gubbins

Course Time: ONLINE

Course Location: ONLINE

Office Hours: 35 Loring Avenue (little house between Horace Mann School and Bowditch Hall):

Mondays 1–2, Tuesdays 1–3, Fridays 1–2, and by appointment

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Fulfills Division I Distribution Elective

Liberal Studies Majors: Requirement for the American Studies Concentration

Requirement for Peace and Intercultural Relations Concentration

Counts toward Value and Inquiry and Applied Ethics Concentrations

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Description of Content

This course studies three different cultures—Roman, Russian, and American—in order to better understand American society. The course focuses on an important city from each culture during a significant time in its history: (1) Rome at its imperial height, (2) St. Petersburg at the height of the Russian empire, and (3) Chicago at the end of World War II. Each culture and its city are examined through two sources: first a novel about the city, written by someone who lived there at the time, and second a collection of academic writings, pictures, and maps about each city and culture. The course pays special attention to how cultures systematically promote forms of morality and domination.

Course Goal

The goal of this course is to help students acquire practice and skill in interdisciplinary analysis and writing on the socio-historical development of three cultures with special attention to American society.

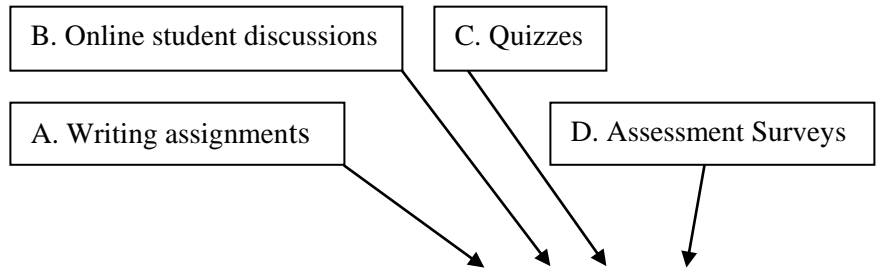
Student Learning Objectives

Upon successful completion of this course, the student will be able to

1. Identify the major historical and fictional events, persons, and places covered in the readings, especially those that pertain to American society.
2. Articulate the primary structures of urban civilization.
3. Employ multiple disciplines in analyzing culture, including history, geography, sociology, philosophy, psychology, and literature.
4. Critically analyze the social circumstances of fictional and historical persons, with special attention to moral systems and forms of domination.
5. Creatively reconstruct and imagine the lives of others.
6. Communicate more clearly and effectively through writing.

7. Construct persuasive arguments and explanations.
8. Complete assignments on time and according to specifications, and participate in group discussions.

Assessments of Learning



Learning Objectives

1. Identify the major historical and fictional events, persons, and places covered in the readings, especially those that pertain to American society.	X	X	X	X
2. Articulate the primary structures of urban civilization.	X	X	X	
3. Employ multiple disciplines in analyzing culture, including history, geography, sociology, philosophy, psychology, and literature.	X	X	X	X
4. Critically analyze the social circumstances of fictional and historical persons, with special attention to moral systems and forms of domination.	X	X	X	X
5. Creatively reconstruct and imagine the lives of others.	X	X	X	
6. Communicate more clearly and effectively through writing.	X	X		
7. Construct persuasive arguments and explanations.	X	X	X	
8. Complete assignments on time and according to specifications, and participate in group discussions.	X	X	X	

Required Texts

1. Jerome Carcopino, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire* (Yale, 1960)
2. Petronius, *The Satyricon* (Oxford, 1999)
3. Fyodor Dostoevsky, *Crime and Punishment*, (Bantam, 1984)
4. Nelson Algren, *The Man with the Golden Arm* (Seven Stories Press, 1976)
5. Studs Terkel, *Division Street: America* (New Press, 1993)

Course Requirements and Grade Weighting

1. Three writing assignments 60%
2. Ten online student discussions 30%
3. Three online, open-book quizzes 10%
4. Three assessment surveys (grade reduced for each survey not completed)

Assessment Procedures Used to Measure Student Learning Outcomes

- Analysis of Course Portfolio
- Systematic Progression of Assignments
- Classroom Opinion Polls

Please note the following, which applies to this course and all other courses here: Salem State College is committed to providing equal access to the educational experience for all students in compliance with Section 504 of The Rehabilitation Act and The Americans with Disabilities Act and to providing all reasonable academic accommodations, aids and adjustments. Any student who has a documented disability requiring an accommodation, aid or adjustment should speak with the instructor immediately. Students with Disabilities who have not previously done so should provide documentation to, and schedule an appointment with, the Office for Students with Disabilities and obtain appropriate services.

Critical Emergency Contingency Plan: In the event of a college declared critical emergence, Salem State College reserves the right to alter this course plan. Students should refer to www.salemstate.edu for further information and updates. The course attendance policy stays in effect until there is a college declared critical emergency. In the event of an emergency, please check you Google Doc for new assignments and information. If still in need of help, contact me at jgubbins@salemstate.edu. As a fully online course, accommodation will be needed not for attendance in this particular course but for due dates on papers, surveys, discussions, and quizzes.

COURSE CALENDAR

UNIT 1 ANCIENT ROME WEEKS 1–5, JANUARY 18–FEBRUARY 18

This unit introduces the recurring themes that form the foundation of the course, and then turns to ancient Rome at its imperial height. We familiarize ourselves with the city and culture of ancient Rome by (1) reading portions of Carcopino's *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*, (2) studying the maps and websites found in the Blackboard Unit 1 folder, and (3) reading the lectures on Rome. We also get an in-depth look at Rome by reading Petronius's novel, *The Satyricon*. Petronius was Emperor Nero's advisor on luxury and elegance. *The Satyricon* is a parody of life in ancient Rome and the imperial palace. It provides incredible detail about ancient Roman culture and society. We get the chance to see how our cultural forebears are like and unlike contemporary Americans. Each week there is a student discussion board, and we finish Unit 1 with a paper.

WEEK 1. JANUARY 18–21

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Introductory Lecture 1: Imagining by Means of Historical and Literary Narratives

Read Introductory Lecture 2: Seven Elements of Urban Culture

Introductory Discussion Board Due 5:00 p.m. January 21

WEEK 2. JANUARY 24–28

Read and Review in Blackboard

Review Rome Lecture 1: Overview of City and Culture (1.1)

Review Map 1: Seven Hills of Ancient Rome

Review Map 2: Ancient City of Rome

Review Map 3: Roman Empire

Read in Jerome Carcopino's, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*

Preface

Ch. 2, "Houses and Streets"

Ch. 3, "Society and Social Classes"

Ch. 4, "Marriage, Woman, and the Family" (Only sections 1 & 3)

First Discussion Board on Rome Due 5:00 p.m. January 28

WEEK 3. JANUARY 31–FEBRUARY 4

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Rome Lecture 2: Progress and Decline (1.2)

Read Rome Lecture 3: Literary Precursors to the Satyricon (1.3)
Review Aeneid by Virgil (Example of Reactionary Thinking) Sections 1–5 only
Review Deeds of the Divine Emperor Augustus (Example of Reactionary Thinking)
Review Text of Deeds of the Divine Augustus (Example of Reactionary Thinking)

Read in Jerome Carcopino's, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*

Ch. 5, "Education and Religion" (Only sections 1 and 5–7),
Ch. 6, "The Morning" (Only section 2)
Ch. 7, "Occupations" (Only sections 2 & 3)
Ch. 8, "Shows and Spectacles" (Only sections 1, 2 & 5)

Second Discussion Board on Rome Due 5:00 p.m. February 4
Online, Open-Book Quiz Due 5:00 p.m. February 4

WEEK 4. FEBRUARY 7–11

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Rome Lecture 4: Dominant Social Types (1.4)

Read in Jerome Carcopino's, *Daily Life in Ancient Rome: The People and the City at the Height of the Empire*

Ch. 9, "Afternoon and Evening"

Read in Petronius's, *Satyricon*

Introduction (pages xii–xliv in my version)
Sections 2–5 only

Third Discussion Board on Rome Due 5:00 p.m. February 11
Discussion Board on Writing Rubric Due 5:00 p.m. February 11

WEEK 5. FEBRUARY 14–18

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Rome Lecture 5: Responses to Social and Moral Dislocation (1.5)
Review The Stoic Legacy (Example of Pragmatic Moralism); CLICK on Seneca's *Moral Epistles* and look at several of the epistles

Read in Petronius's, *Satyricon*

Sections 6–9 only

Paper on Rome and Petronius Due 5:00 p.m. February 18

UNIT 2 ST. PETERSBURG IN THE LATE 1800s

WEEKS 6–11, FEBRUARY 22–APRIL 1

This unit focuses on St. Petersburg, the capital of the Russian empire during its height in the late 1800s. We learn about St. Petersburg and Russian culture by studying the lectures, maps, and websites found in the Blackboard Unit 2 folder. We then read Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*, which gives us both a gripping tale and a vivid portrait of life in St. Petersburg at that time. This novel is considered one of the greatest of all time. Sandwiched between Eastern and Western culture, Russia at the beginning of the modern era is struggling with the challenge of cultural change, and we can see how contemporary America is in many ways similarly positioned. Each week there is a student discussion board, and we finish Unit 2 with a paper.

WEEK 6. FEBRUARY 22–25

Read and Review in Blackboard

Review St. Petersburg Lecture 1.1: Overview of City of St. Petersburg (2.1.1) (DO NOT read sections on Siege of Leningrad, After the War, Economy, Transport, Administrative Divisions, and St. Petersburg in the Movies)

Read St. Petersburg Lecture 1.2: Overview of Culture and History of St. Petersburg (2.1.2)

Read in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Introduction and Part 1

Assessment Survey Due 5:00 p.m. February 2

WEEK 7. FEBRUARY 28–MARCH 4

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read St. Petersburg Lecture 2: Progress and Decline (Ambiguous Petersburg at the Crossroads) (2.2)

Review Map 1: Picture Map of St. Petersburg

Review Map 2: Center of St. Petersburg

Review Map 3: 1870 Picture Map

Review Picture of St. Petersburg

Read in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Part 2

First Discussion Board on St. Petersburg Due 5:00 p.m. March 4

WEEK 8. MARCH 7–11

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read St. Petersburg Lecture 3: Literary Precursors to *Crime and Punishment* (2.3)

Read Bronze Horseman by Pushkin (2.3.1)

Read The Overcoat by Gogol (2.3.2)

Read A Hero of Our Time (2.3.3)

Read in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Part 3

Second Discussion Board on St. Petersburg Due 5:00 p.m. March 11

Online, Open-Book Quiz Due 5:00 p.m. March 11

WEEK 9. MARCH 14–18

NOTE: March 14–18, NO CLASSES, Spring Recess

WEEK 10. MARCH 21–25

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read St. Petersburg Lecture 4: Dominant Social Types (2.4)

Read in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Parts 4–5

Third Discussion Board on St. Petersburg Due 5:00 p.m. March 25

WEEK 11. MARCH 28–APRIL 1

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read St. Petersburg Lecture 5: Responses to Social and Moral Dislocation (2.5)

Read in Dostoevsky's *Crime and Punishment*

Part 6 and Epilogue

Paper on St. Petersburg and Dostoevsky Due 5:00 p.m. April 1

UNIT 3 CHICAGO IN THE 1940s

WEEKS 12–16, APRIL 4–MAY 3 AND EXAM PERIOD

This unit covers Chicago at the end of World War II, and more broadly, American culture during this period. We learn about Chicago from one of its most astute observers and writers, Studs Terkel through his book *Division Street: America*, and from the lectures, maps, and websites found in the Blackboard Unit 3 folder. We then read Nelson Algren's *The Man with the Golden Arm* (a winner of the National Book Award), which gives us insights into success and failure, privilege and poverty in America. Each week there is a student discussion board, and we finish Unit 3 with a paper due during the exam period.

WEEK 12. APRIL 4–8

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Chicago Lecture 1: Overview of the City and Culture (3.1)

Review Encyclopedia of Chicago to see its range of sources and content

Review Chicago Portage

Review Illinois Rivers

Review The Expanding City of Chicago

Review Aerial View of Main Branch of Chicago River and Harbor

Review Division Street Page at Studs Terkel Website and listen to interviews (if computer capable)

Read in Studs Terkel, *Division Street: America*

“Florence Scala,” “Lucy Jefferson,” “Elizabeth Chapin,” “John Rath,” “Rita Buscari,” “Kid Pharaoh,”
“Stan Lenard,” “Dennis Hart,” “Eva Barnes,” “Tom Kearney,” “Carlos Alvarez,” “George
Drossos,” “Billy Joe Gatewood”

Assessment Survey Due 5:00 p.m. April 8

WEEK 13. APRIL 11–15

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Chicago Lecture 2: Progress and Decline (3.2)

Read in Nelson Algren, *The Man with the Golden Arm*

pp. 1–122

First Discussion Board on Chicago Due 5:00 p.m. April 15

WEEK 14. APRIL 18–22

NOTE: Monday, April 18, NO CLASSES, Patriot's Day

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Chicago Lecture 3: Literary Precursors and Contemporaries to *Man with the Golden Arm* (3.3)

Read in Nelson Algren, *The Man with the Golden Arm*
pp. 122–169

WEEK 15. APRIL 25–29

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Chicago Lecture 4: Dominant Social Types (3.4)

Read in Nelson Algren, *The Man with the Golden Arm*
pp. 170–282

Second Discussion Board on Chicago Due 5:00 p.m. April 29
Online, Open-Book Quiz Due 5:00 p.m. April 29

WEEK 16. MAY 2–3

Read and Review in Blackboard

Read Chicago Lecture 5: Responses to Social and Moral Dislocation (3.5)

Read in Nelson Algren, *The Man with the Golden Arm*
pp. 282–339

Third Discussion Board on Chicago Due 5:00 p.m. May 3

NOTE: May 3, Last day of classes

EXAM PERIOD. MAY 5–12

Paper on Chicago and Algren Due 5:00 p.m. May 9

Assessment Survey Due 5:30 p.m. May 9

*Note that dates and readings may be changed as contingencies arise, and proper notice will be given.