

Syllabus

This **Theory Intensive** course explores the Platonic insight that on the highest level literature and philosophy converge. We begin with a few of Plato's dialogues which develop this idea. Then we examine several "literary" works in English which embody it. In addition to a mastery of Platonic "theory" we will examine Aristotelian, formalist, and feminist perspectives. Our approach is analytical, inductive, and historical.

Our Texts will include:

Plato: *Ion*, *Phaedrus*, *Symposium*, *Republic* (excerpts), and *Timaeus* (excerpts).

Aristotle: *Poetics*.

William Shakespeare: Sonnets 18, 29, & 98 and *A Midsummer Night's Dream*.

Mary Shelley: *Frankenstein*.

Charlotte Bronte: *Jane Eyre*.

Friedrich Nietzsche: *Twilight of the Idols* and *The Birth of Tragedy* (excerpts).

Sigmund Freud: "Creative Writers and Daydreaming".

James Joyce: "The Sisters", "The Boarding House", "A Painful Case", and excerpts from *Stephen Hero* and *A Portrait of the Artist As a Young Man*.

William Butler Yeats: "Sailing to Byzantium" and "Byzantium".

T.S. Eliot: "Tradition and the Individual Talent" and "Ash Wednesday".

Virginia Woolf: *Jacob's Room*, *A Room of One's Own*, and *To the Lighthouse*.

Adrienne Rich: "When We Deaf Awaken: Writing as Re-Vision".

Woody Allen: *Interiors*, *Stardust Memories*, *The Purple Rose of Cairo*, and *Another Woman*.

Grades will be calculated roughly as follows:

3/5 based on three formal essays.

1/5 based on a formal class presentation on one of the writers.

1/5 based on class participation, including attendance, discussion, and quizzes.

The readings are challenging; this is a course for serious students of literature and philosophy. Concepts, history, and critical orientations will be developed in class as needed. I expect intense and enthusiastic engagement with the material and with the classroom. I expect to see your very best writing early and better later. Formal writing for undergraduate literature courses in the English department should follow Modern Language Association guidelines, as found for example in the current edition of Joseph Gibaldi's *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers*, available in the campus bookstore. Class presentations will be sorted out during the first week of classes.

NB: You cannot pass this course if you omit any major assignment, if you miss more than 300 minutes of class, or if you submit the writing or ideas of others as your own. Further, if you miss a pop-quiz, you flunk it, excepting only the case where you notify me ahead of time of a valid excuse for missing class. Also, out of class themes must be typed and I do not accept late papers.