



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

ITAL 399.2
Topics in Italian Masterpieces: Film and Literature (Dante's *Divine Comedy*)
Winter 2021
MWF 14:00 - 14:50 (Web Based)

COURSE OUTLINE

INSTRUCTOR'S NAME: Dr. Eleonora Buonocore

OFFICE HOURS: M 11 am – 11:50 am [<https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/99617491348>]

W 12pm – 12.50 pm [<https://ucalgary.zoom.us/j/99617491348>] or by appointment (please use email)

E-MAIL: Eleonora.buonocore@ucalgary.ca

I will try my best to give a timely response, but as a policy, I will respond to e-mails within 48 hours during weekdays and within 72 hours during weekends

TELEPHONE NUMBER: 403 -993 -7877 (only for emergencies)

DESCRIPTION

This course focuses on Dante's *Divine Comedy*, a masterpiece of Italian literature and a crucial text that lays at the foundation of European culture. The course will begin exploring Dante's poetic education as the springboard for his poetic journey through the afterlife. We will read selections from the three canticles that form the *Comedy*: *Inferno*, *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, with the goal of understanding Dante's intellectual trajectory and his goals in writing his journey through the underworld and into heaven. We will examine the *Comedy's* roots in Classical culture, the role of Virgil as Dante's first guide, as well as the influence of Biblical exegesis. In this context we will pay close attention to Dante's philosophical and theological sources, such as Thomas Aquinas, as well as to the influence that Augustine, Franciscan thought, and Bernard of Clairvaux, the last of Dante's guides exerted on the Florentine poet. We will descend to the frozen hell, and ascend to the last sphere of *Paradiso*, accompanying Dante until his main achievement, his final vision and his ineffable encounter with "that love which moves the heaven and the other stars" in *Paradiso* XXXIII.

OBJECTIVES

This course aims to introduce the students to Dante's *Divine Comedy* and to place it in the contest of Medieval Italian History and Literature. The objectives of this course are manifold:

- to explain the context surrounding Dante's *Divine Comedy*, and familiarize the students with Medieval Italian History of XIII and XIV c.
- to explore Dante's sources in the Classical tradition, including Virgil and Ovid
- to provide the students with the tools to recognize Dante's poetic style in Italian, starting from the poetic device of "terza rima."
- to recognize Dante's cosmology, and be able to articulate its relationship to a Ptolemaic world-view and medieval epistemology.
- to understand the crucial theological and philosophical issues at play in the *Comedy*, including Dante's harmonization of a Christian and Aristotelian Ethics in *Inferno*, the ethics of time at play in *Purgatorio*, and his views on salvation in *Paradiso*.



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

OUTCOMES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- Create a short analytic piece demonstrating their understanding of the principal issues at play in a specific canto of the *Divine Comedy*.
- Identify key characters in the *Comedy*, and point out their significance in the context of the poem.
- Be able to follow the development of Dante's intellectual trajectory throughout the text.
- Acknowledge Dante's sources in the Classical and biblical tradition.
- Be familiar with the philosophical and theological basis of the *Comedy* and how they inform Dante's structuring of his work.
- Be able to present a canto of the *Divine Comedy* or one of the main characters of the text to an audience.
- Produce a 3/5 pages interpretative essay focusing on a specific issue in the *Comedy*.

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIALS

- 1) Dante. *The Divine Comedy*, trans. John D. Sinclair (New York: Oxford University Press, 1968 [Reissued October 2010] (Available at the University of Calgary bookstore)
- 2) Additional material provided in PDF format on D2L.
- Online material on Dante such as: <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/>

In addition, as per University requirements for web- based sections, students need to have reliable access to technology, as follows:

- A computer with a supported operating system, as well as the latest security, and malware updates;
- A current and updated web browser;
- Webcam/Camera (built-in or external);
- Microphone and speaker (built-in or external), or headset with microphone; In order to be able to listen to media and to record themselves.
- Current antivirus and/or firewall software enabled;
- Stable internet connection

Moreover, students will need to access Zoom and they will need an app to scan their course materials (homework) such as TurboScan (or similar).

RECOMMENDED COURSE MATERIALS

Virgil, *Aeneid*, any edition
Augustine, *The city of God*, any edition



Faculty of Arts
School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

COURSE NOTES

The coursework will consist of reading assignments as well as preparing for class interactions seminar discussions with the instructor and among students will be in English.

- Regular attendance to all synchronous class meetings is strongly recommended. Active participation is warmly encouraged. Active participation is defined as connecting to the zoom link with your camera and your audio ON. Please dress as if you were in an in-person class. It is essential that you do your homework and read the materials before class. Students will read the text of the *Comedy* in translation and peruse the footnotes and the end-of-canto summaries to clarify hard points. Participation includes being prepared and ready to give active and positive contributions to class interactions, including the breakout sessions. Lack of attendance or of participation will adversely affect your overall performance and will have a negative impact on your final grade. The instructor should be informed of any reasons for prolonged absence.
- Class meetings will be recorded and posted on D2L in order to facilitate personal study and review of material. Please come on time to our Zoom meetings and behave as if we were in an in-person class. No outside use of technology will be allowed other than what you need to access zoom with Video and Audio ON. It is considered good class etiquette to respond to the questions the instructor poses in the breakout session and to contribute actively to the class discussion. If you have a question on the material, please write it in the class chat or raise your hand. Questions are always welcome!
- Attendance to at least two co-curricular events is mandatory, attendance all co-curricular events is warmly encouraged in order to have more occasions to encounter Italian culture and can help make up absences for your participation grade as well as be counted as extra-credit (when you submit a write-up describing the event you participated to).

Important dates:

- Web-based class meetings will start on Monday January 11th.
- There will be no class for Good Friday or on Easter Monday, April 2nd and April 5th.
- Term break will be the week of February 14th – 20th.
- The two in-class exams (D2L quiz) will take place on February 10th, April 9th.
- The writing assignment is due February 12th
- Video Presentation will be uploaded to a dedicated D2L folder by April 7th.
- The Final Written Paper will be uploaded to a dedicated D2L folder by April 15th.
- Web-based class meetings will end on Thursday, April 15th.

- Attendance at all tests and examinations is mandatory. Exams will be administered online through D2L quizzes. The Quiz will last a class period (50 mins, but the students will be allowed 100 minutes to complete it in order to account for technological issues). Students will be allowed a period of 48 hours to access the Quiz. Missed tests, assignments and examinations will be given a grade of F. A student who is absent /unable to take the test in the 48h period for legitimate reasons must inform the instructor immediately and an alternative course of action may be considered.

- Written exams: they will evaluate students' knowledge of the key characters and themes as well as of the structure of the *Divine Comedy*. Students will be asked to write a composition and analyze selected passages chosen among those Canti of the *Comedy* read in class.

- Writing Assignment: throughout the term students will write 1 short essay of 500/600 words on a topic of their choice among those covered in class (i.e. the principal issues at play in a specific canto of the *Divine Comedy* or comparing two canti, or on a character of the *Comedy*, etc.)



UNIVERSITY OF
CALGARY

Faculty of Arts

School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

- Video Presentation: Students will prepare and deliver one 5-minutes Video presentations about the class material, one canto of the Comedy or an important character or issue in the text.
- Final Written Paper: the paper will deal extensively with a theme discussed in class (i.e. focusing on one canto of the *Comedy* or on a specific issue in the *Comedy* as it relates to medieval culture). The topic will be agreed with the instructor. The paper will have a length of 3/5 pages, The Final Written Paper will be uploaded to a dedicated D2L folder by April 15th.
- There will not be a final examination.
- The Procedure for Course evaluation will be online via a dedicated D2L Link.

ASSESSMENT

Active class participation 15%

1 Video Presentation 15% [Due April 7th on the D2L Folder]

1 Written Assignment 15% [Due February 12th on the D2L Folder]

2 Written exams (2 at 15% each) = 30% [Delivered as D2L quizzes on February 10th and April 9th]

1 Final written paper 25% [Due April 15th on the D2L Folder]

GRADING SCALE

A+ = 100-96^{SEP} A= 95-91 A- =90-86

B+ = 85-81^{SEP} B =80-76 B- =75-71

C+ = 70-67^{SEP} C= 66-62 C- =61-58

D+ = 57-54^{SEP} D= 53-50 F =49%-0%

The official grading system (A=4, B=3, C=2, D=1) will be applied for the calculation of the final mark

INTEGRITY AND CONDUCT

All members of the University community have a responsibility to familiarize themselves with the Statement on Principles of Conduct, and to comply with the University of Calgary Code of Conduct and Non-Academic Misconduct policy and procedures (available at: <http://www.ucalgary.ca/pubs/calendar/current/k.html>).

Academic misconduct

1. **Plagiarism** is a serious offence, the penalty for which is an F on the assignment and possibly also an F in the course, academic probation, or requirement to withdraw. Plagiarism exists when:

a) the work submitted or presented was done, in whole or in part, by an individual other than the one submitting or presenting the work (this includes having another impersonate the student or otherwise substituting the work of another for one's own in an examination or test);

b) parts of the work are taken from another source without reference to the original author;



Faculty of Arts

School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

- c) the whole work (e.g., an essay) is copied from another source, and/or
- d) a student submits or presents work in one course which has also been submitted in another course (although it may be completely original with that student) without the knowledge of or prior agreement of the instructor involved.

While it is recognized that scholarly work often involves reference to the ideas, data and conclusions of other scholars, intellectual honesty requires that such references be explicitly and clearly noted."

Plagiarism occurs not only when direct quotations are taken from a source without specific acknowledgement but also when original ideas or data from the source are not acknowledged. A bibliography is insufficient to establish which portions of the student's work are taken from external sources; footnotes or other recognized forms of citation must be used for this purpose.

2. **Cheating** at tests or examinations includes but is not limited to dishonest or attempted dishonest conduct such as speaking to other candidates or communicating with them under any circumstances whatsoever; bringing into the examination room any textbook, notebook, memorandum, other written material or mechanical or electronic device not authorized by the examiner; writing an examination or part of it, or consulting any person or materials outside the confines of the examination room without permission to do so, or leaving answer papers exposed to view, or persistent attempts to read other students' examination papers.

3. **Other academic misconduct** includes, but is not limited to, tampering or attempts to tamper with examination scripts, class work, grades and/or class records; failure to abide by directions by an instructor regarding the individuality of work handed in; the acquisition, attempted acquisition, possession, and/or distribution of examination materials or information not authorized by the instructor; the impersonation of another student in an examination or other class assignment; the falsification or fabrication of clinical or laboratory reports; the non-authorized tape recording of lectures.

4. Any student who voluntarily and consciously aids another student in the commission of one of these offences is also guilty of academic misconduct.

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY AND COPYRIGHT LEGISLATION

Course materials created by instructors (including presentations and posted notes, labs, case studies, assignments and exams) remain the intellectual property of the instructor. These materials may not be reproduced, redistributed or copied without the explicit consent of the instructor. All students are required to read the University of Calgary policy on Acceptable Use of Material Protected by Copyright (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/acceptable-use-of-material-protected-by-copyright.pdf>) and requirements of the Copyright Act (<https://laws-lois.justice.gc.ca/eng/acts/C-42/index.html>) to ensure they are aware of the consequences of unauthorised sharing of course materials (including instructor notes, electronic versions of textbooks etc.). Students who use material protected by copyright in violation of this policy may be disciplined under the Non-Academic Misconduct Policy.

FREEDOM OF INFORMATION AND PRIVACY (FOIP) ACT

Graded assignments will be retained by the Department for three months and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Final examinations will be kept for one calendar year and subsequently sent for confidential shredding. Said material is exclusively available to the student and to the department staff requiring to examine it. Please see <https://www.ucalgary.ca/legalservices/foip> for complete information on the disclosure of personal records.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATIONS

It is the student's responsibility to request academic accommodations according to the University policies and procedures listed below. The student accommodation policy can be found at: <https://ucalgary.ca/student-services/access/prospective-students/academic-accommodations>.

Students needing an Accommodation because of a Disability or medical condition should communicate this need to Student Accessibility Services in accordance with the Procedure for Accommodations for Students with Disabilities (<https://www.ucalgary.ca/policies/files/policies/procedure-for-accommodations-for-students-with-disabilities.pdf>.)



Faculty of Arts

School of Languages, Linguistics, Literatures and Cultures

Students needing an Accommodation in relation to their coursework or to fulfil requirements for a graduate degree, based on a Protected Ground other than Disability, should communicate this need, preferably in writing, to their Instructor or the Department Head/Dean or to the designated contact person in their Faculty.

FACULTY OF ARTS PROGRAM ADVISING AND STUDENT INFORMATION RESOURCES

Have a question, but not sure where to start?

The Arts Students' Centre is the overall headquarters for undergraduate programs in the Faculty of Arts. The key objective of this office is to connect students with whatever academic assistance they may require.

In addition to housing the Associate Dean (Undergraduate Programs and Student Affairs) and the Associate Dean (Teaching, Learning & Student Engagement), the Arts Students' Centre is the specific home to:

- Program advising
- Co-op Education Program
- Arts and Science Honours Academy
- Student Help Desk

Location: Social Sciences Room 102

Phone: 403-220-3580

Email: ascarts@ucalgary.ca

Website: arts.ucalgary.ca/undergraduate.

For registration (add/drop/swap), paying fees and assistance with your Student Centre, contact Enrolment Services at 403-210-ROCK [7625] or visit them at the MacKimmie Block.

Contacts for the Students' Union Representative for the Faculty of Arts: arts1@su.ucalgary.ca, arts2@su.ucalgary.ca, arts3@su.ucalgary.ca, arts4@su.ucalgary.ca.

INTERNET AND ELECTRONIC COMMUNICATION DEVICES

Devices such as laptops, palmtops and smartbooks are allowed provided that they are used exclusively for instructional purposes and do not cause disruption to the instructor and to fellow students. Cellular telephones, blackberries and other mobile communication tools are not permitted and must be switched off.

SUPPORT AND RESOURCES

Links to information that is not course-specific related to student wellness and safety resources can be found on the Office of the Registrar's website: <https://www.ucalgary.ca/registrar/registration/course-outlines>.