

COURSE SYLLABUS FORM

American University of Beirut
Faculty of Arts and Sciences
Department: Civilization Sequence Program

Course Number and Title: CVSP 202, Medieval, Islamic and Renaissance Civilizations

1. Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student can expect to have acquired:

a. KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION:

- the ability to recognize, appreciate, and describe the fundamental elements in late Classical, Medieval, Islamic and Renaissance worldviews that continue to influence us today; this would include their visions of the basic aspects of our human existence: human nature, socio-political theories, understanding of the physical universe, theories of the divine, and generally the overall meaning of life and the values that these civilizations considered to be crucial in seeking to live life to the fullest.
- more specifically, the student will be better able to understand and describe such varied approaches to the human interest in religion as vibrant faith, mysticism, rationalist philosophy, and unconsidered opinion; as well as the beginning of trends that ushered in the modern world, like those initiated by Machiavelli and Luther.

b. SKILLS, COMPETENCIES AND ATTITUDES:

an improved ability:

- to **think critically** about the topics and ideas under study;
- to **analyze** complex original texts in English;
- to **construct** and **discern** valid and invalid arguments;
- to **apply** ideas and methodologies to our contemporary world situation;
- to **evaluate** both by comparison with different views from within the course, as well as with respect to the student's own ideas and perspective;
- to **discuss and debate** divergent views with their fellow students and the instructor, in an atmosphere of **mutual respect** and the **freedom** to pursue and express one's personal point of view;
- to **ground** one's views in the texts by developing scholarly methodology and responsibility;
- in writing skills in English.

2. Resources Available to Students

The emphasis in all CVSP core courses (201 – 208) is on developing the student's ability to deal with **primary texts** (written by the authors themselves: see schedule below). Thus no particular resources other than the works under study are a set part of the courses. Individual instructors will help guide the student in the judicious use of secondary sources.

3. Grading Criteria

- a. Written work: **normally**, two ‘midterms’ and a Final Exam are graded on a basis of 20% for each of the midterms and 40% for the Final Exam.
- b. Oral presentations, drop quizzes, class attendance and participation **normally** are the basis for the remaining 20% of the Final Grade.
- c. Teacher discretion: individual instructors may choose to vary the above criteria. In every case, they must announce any diversion from the above clearly and in writing to the students at the outset of the semester.

4. Schedule (as attachment)

Note: the CVSP reserves the right to alter specific readings for any given semester. This is part of the dynamism of ongoing evaluation and improvement of course offerings.

Such changes will always be in line with the general stated course objectives as described in # 1 above.

5. Course Policy

Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student’s education. Ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student’s professional career. Academic honesty is essential to a community of scholars searching for and learning to seek the truth. Anything less than total commitment to honesty undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for ensuring the academic integrity of the University. (*AUB Student Handbook*, p. 33)

For definitions of cheating and plagiarism as well as the consequences for such, see the AUB “Student Code of Conduct” as found in the *Student Handbook* (esp. pp. 85-86 and 88) and on the AUB website.

<http://pnp.aub.edu.lb/general/conductcode/158010081.html>

At minimum, anyone caught in violation of academic integrity will receive, as per the “Student Code of Conduct,” a failing grade of forty points for the assignment in question. Should the violation deserve greater punishment, it will be referred to the Dean and the Dean’s Administrative Committee.

CIVILIZATION SEQUENCE PROGRAM		
CVSP 202: READING AND LECTURE SCHEDULE		
WEEK	LECTURE	ASSIGNMENT
1	<i>Augustine</i>	Augustine, <i>Confessions</i> (Penguin), Book I, Chs. 1, 4-5, 7, 20; II, Chs. 1,4-5, 7; III. Chs. 4-5; IV, Ch. 1; V, Chs. 13-14; VI, Chs. 5, 15-16; VII, Chs. 1, 3, 5, 9, 16, 21; VIII, Chs. 8-12; X, Chs. 6-8, 11, 16-17, 24-27; XI, Chs. 14, 28; XIII, Chs. 8-9, 11
2		Augustine, <i>City of God</i> (xerox selections)
3 & 4	<i>Al-Ghazali</i>	Al-Ghazali, <i>Deliverance from Error</i> (xerox selections)
5	<i>Ibn Tufayl</i>	Ibn Tufayl, <i>Hayy Ibn Yaqzan</i> (xerox selections)
6	<i>Ibn Rushd</i>	Ibn Rushd, <i>The Decisive Treatise</i> (xerox selections)
7	<i>Aquinas</i>	Thomas Aquinas, <i>Summa Contra Gentiles & Summa Theologiae</i> (xerox selections)
8	<i>Dante</i>	Dante, <i>Divine Comedy: Purgatory</i> , Transl. Mark Musa (Penguin), Cantos 1,2, 6, 16-18
9		Dante, <i>Purgatory</i> , Cantos 25, 28, 30, 31
10 & 11	<i>Ibn Khaldun</i>	Ibn Khaldun, <i>Al-Muqaddimah</i> (Princeton), pp. 11-48, 398-411; 91-142; 238-242 (and xerox selections)
12	<i>Machiavelli</i>	Machiavelli, <i>The Prince</i> (Penguin)
13	<i>Luther</i>	Luther, <i>On Christian Liberty</i> (xerox selections)

Classes meet three times a week: one common lecture and two discussion sessions.