The Georgetown University Learning Community

Schedule of Courses    Spring, 2016

Edith Wharton and Earnest Hemingway: The First World War and the Notion of Style

Paul R. Lilly, Professor of English, Emeritus, SUNY Oneonta

10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Tuesdays, March 1, 8, 15; McShain Lounge, McCarthy Hall.
Monday, March 21; The Murray Room, Lauinger Library.

Both Wharton and Hemingway were deeply affected by WWI, lived in France, achieved early public recognition, and each presents an interesting contrast in style. We will read Wharton’s *The Age of Innocence* (1920), Hemingway’s *The Sun Also Rises* (1926), and selected short stories from Wharton’s *Roman Fever and Other Stories*, and Hemingway’s *The Nick Adams Stories*. Suggestion: Read online Jonathan Franzen’s essay on Edith Wharton, “A Rooting Interest,” in *The New Yorker*, Feb. 13, 2012. For the first class, we will discuss Book One of *The Age of Innocence*, and the stories, “Roman Fever” and “The Other Two.”

Exploring Topics In Marine Ecology

Philip Sze, Associate Professor of Biology, Emeritus.

10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Tuesdays, April 5, 12, 26. McShain Lounge, McCarthy Hall.

We will discuss three contrasting marine systems. First we will consider the simple ecological system in the intertidal region of New England’s rocky shores. Second we will discuss coral reefs as complex ecosystems, and threats from pollution (nutrient enrichment) and climate change. Finally, we will discuss plankton in open water where algal blooms (large growths of microscopic algae) may be either beneficial or harmful and conclude with consideration of conditions in 2015, including El Niño.

Studia Humanitatis: The Rebirth of the Liberal Arts in the Italian Renaissance

Deborah Ross Warin, Director, the Renaissance Company

10:30 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Wednesdays, April 6 & 13; Friday, April 15, The Murray Room.

The historic period and cultural movement we call the Italian Renaissance was so named by the reawakening or “rebirth” of interest in the classical, secular, intellectual Greco-Roman tradition and culture. In fact our modern understanding of a liberal arts education is rooted in the period when 15th C Renaissance humanists, in the compelling but elusive quest to understand the nature and meaning of being human, turned from *studia divinitatis* (sacred studies) to *studia humanitatis* (humane studies). From this there grew a widely held conviction in the transformative power of the study of liberal arts in both the moral and intellectual development of individuals and society. Networks of male and female humanists quickly grew throughout the peninsula and in little time “the golden age of liberal arts – grammar, poetry, rhetoric, painting, sculpture, architecture and music” flourished. Both having and continuing to pursue a rigorous
classical education became a requisite for credibility politically, socially and culturally. Expanding educational opportunities became a civic duty, as did partaking of them. In this course, we will look at the developments of Liberal Humanism during the Italian Renaissance, and read and discuss some of the key figures who shaped the period. In so doing, we will examine how this pivotal period shaped (and may depart from) our own understanding of the value and expectations of a liberal arts education.

The Experience of Alzheimer’s Disease: A Bio-Psycho-Social Perspective

Steven R. Sabat, Professor of Psychology, Emeritus.
10:30 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. Fridays, March 11 & 18. Murray Room, Lauinger Library.

Alzheimer’s disease has been presented in the mass media primarily as a disease a person has, with emphasis on the defects that the disease purportedly produces. This course will be an introduction to understanding “the person the disease has”. We will explore how what a person diagnosed says and does can be a function of (a) brain damage, (b) the person’s reaction to the effects of brain damage, and (c) the way the person is viewed and treated by others.

Business Ethics

George Brenkert, Professor Emeritus, McDonough School of Business
2:00 p.m.- 4:00 p.m. Tuesdays, March 15, 22, 29. Room 360, Hariri Hall.

This class provides an ever-so-brief overview of some of the issues that arise within business ethics. Why believe that business ethics is anything other than an oxymoron? What does ethics have to say about business and its search for profits? What about various management or marketing issues? And how might business ethics speak to questions of international business ethics? The issues are endless, the topics complex, and their importance terribly significant for all of us. I look forward to a class in which I will present various materials, but in which there will be a good amount of interaction and exchange of ideas for which I hope to be the catalyst.

Marilynynne Robinson’s Gilead

William C. McFadden, S.J., Professor of Theology, Emeritus
1:30 p.m.-3:00 p.m. Friday, April 8; Wednesday, April 13. Large McShain Lounge.

This novel, honored in 2005 by the Pulitzer Prize and National Book Critics, takes the form of a long letter from a 76-year-old Congregationalist minister, John Ames, to his 7-year-old son. Ames has learned that he has a heart condition that will end his life in the near future but he has so much to tell the boy about the mysteries of life that he resolves to set it down in a letter the boy can read when he grows up.

James Wood calls Gilead "a beautiful work — demanding, grave and lucid."