

BLHS 107: The Early Modern World

Shakespeare, Science, and Religion in the Early Modern World (1500-1800)

Professors Arnold Bradford and Gibson Cima
Fall 2017

Course Meetings:

Thursdays, 6:30 pm-9:40 pm, Downtown Campus, August 30, September 7, 14, 21, 28; October 5, 12, 19, 26; November 2, 9, 16, 30; December 7.

And Saturdays September 16 and November 4, 9:30 am-12:30 pm, Online using Canvas

Contact information:

Prof. Arnold Bradford: bradfora@georgetown.edu 703-347-2864 Office hours by appointment.

Prof. Gibson Cima: gac2@georgetown.edu, Office hours by appointment.

Course Description:

In this interdisciplinary course, you will discover that in the early modern period (1500-1800), a variety of factors—the European age of exploration and expansion, scientific investigation, Reformation theology, Renaissance Humanism, and the spread of print culture—caused Europeans to redefine themselves and their society. You will explore this process of “modern” redefinition of human values and study how to discuss and write about the changes in intellectual and cultural life it occasioned. You will encounter the terms “Reformation” and “Catholic Reformation,” and study the scientific revolutions of the seventeenth century. William Shakespeare’s plays will enable you to address compelling questions about the interwoven themes of “The Human & the Divine” and “Identity & Difference.” As you study the scientific, religious, and artistic debates of the Early Modern era, you will practice writing and speaking critically about them, using evidence from the text, research, and sound reasoning.

Learning Goals:

Generally: To practice critical thinking skills in class and in all written work

To define the “Early Modern” era; to critique the act of periodization that identifies the “Early Modern” era

To identify the major factors affecting European culture in the Early Modern Age, and to analyze the limits of current knowledge about these factors

To define and analyze the significant elements of the theological controversies of the Early Modern period

To interpret the influence of new religious views on European society, particularly Tudor England

To distinguish between the Protestant Reformation and Catholic Reformation, and to investigate why the term “Reformation” is used to identify these movements

To understand the development of the major scientific concepts that underlie the Early Modern view of the cosmos

To explain the nature, significance, and impact of that new view on the Early Modern era

To analyze how ideas of “the human” altered during the Early Modern era, using examples from *Hamlet*

To explain the various concepts of “the divine” that surface in Shakespeare’s *Hamlet*

To illuminate the workings of “othering” within Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice*

To explicate how Shakespeare’s *Merchant of Venice* participates in the creation of a gendered, racialized, religiously coherent English nationhood

To identify and narrow and appropriate question to pursue in a short essay

To write a clear thesis statement

To write straightforward topic sentences that develop the claims outlined in the thesis

To present effectively and explain, clearly and straightforwardly, the specific evidence supporting the topic sentences and overall thesis

To revise essays in order to improve writing skills

Course Requirements

Attendance:

Students are expected to attend all class meetings and to participate in all assigned activities. Class participation grades are predicated on attendance at all class meetings. Students not completing Individual Online Work assignments on time, or missing Museum Tours, are graded absent for that instructional session. In keeping with BALS policy, students with two or more absences, excused or unexcused, may receive a failing grade for the course. Late arrivals and/or early departures of more than seven minutes count as $\frac{1}{2}$ of an absence. Excused absences will be given *only* in rare circumstances and *only* if student and instructor discuss and arrange the absence **in advance**.

Participation and Classroom Etiquette:

Students are expected to read the course material carefully, take notes, and participate fully in class discussion. Laptop usage is acceptable as a means of note-taking but not as a means of engaging in any other activity. iPhones and other devices must be turned off and stowed, out of sight and out of hand, during class meetings.

Writing:

A variety of writing exercises anchors each unit of the course. These exercises are designed to help you improve your critical thinking skills as well as your writing skills. Students are encouraged to use the Writing Center for writing support. This will help you learn to think more critically and write more clearly, and may very well improve your grades. Check the SCS website to make an appointment at 640 Mass. Ave.

Writing Assignment Submissions and Late Policy:

Please turn in all writings electronically at the email addresses given at the top of the syllabus, depending on which professor assigned the essay. Emails to other addresses will not be acknowledged or accepted. Essays must arrive in the incoming email box at or before 6:35 pm on the assigned due date. A late essay arriving after 6:40 pm on the due date is lowered one letter grade. Any essay received more than 48 hours late is lowered two full grades. Essays received one week late automatically receive an F. **Students must, however, complete all assigned work in order to receive a grade for the course as a whole.**

Incomplete Grades:

Extension of time to finish coursework beyond the end of the semester will be granted only in unusual and clear documented situations. Extensions must be mutually agreed upon between student and instructor no later than the last class meeting. Then all such agreements must be approved by the Associate Dean. Work not received by the Incomplete deadline will result in a change of the semester grade to "F."

Evaluation:

Your final grade is based on the average of your grade for the Shakespeare unit (50%; Cima) and your grade for the Science and Religion units (50%; Bradford).

- For the *Shakespeare* unit, your grade is calculated on the following basis: 40 points for the 4pp. *Hamlet* paper, 40 points for the 4pp. *Merchant* paper, 5 points for the introductory writing, and 15 points for overall class participation.
- For the *Science and Religion* unit, your grade is calculated on the follow basis: 25 points for each of the two short essays (50 points total), 25 points for the Virtual Museum report, and 25 points for the Final Canvas Posting.

NOTE: All assignments are to be completed **prior to class** on the date indicated.

All graded assignments and activities are assigned letter grades by the instructors. All grades are entered in Canvas. The semester letter grade will be determined by summing and weighing as done in Canvas, and the assigned letter grade will be that indicated by Canvas.

Academic Integrity:

See the UNIVERSITY POLICIES section below for information about the Georgetown University Honor System. Any incident of plagiarism, however minor or major, results in an “F” for the course. You must cite every source. The Writing Center or a Reference Librarian will happily assist you if you have any questions about how to cite your research sources. We expect students to follow the new, current MLA citation style, which is outlined in detail on the following website: <https://www.library.georgetown.edu/tutorials/research-guides/mla8-guide>. You may also find the Purdue University “OWL” website helpful: <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>. Plagiarism—including *accidental* plagiarism—has *extremely* serious ramifications. Professors are required, by university regulations, to report any suspicion of a violation. The University Honor Council adjudicates all cases, and if the allegation is upheld the Council will add other sanctions to the professor’s stated penalty. Please seek our assistance *in advance* and follow the Honor Code assiduously.

COURSE OUTLINE Arnold Bradford (AB) and Gibson Cima (GC)

Thurs., Aug. 30 **Introduction to the Early Modern World AB & GC**

Introductory writing in-class.

Thurs., Sept. 7 **Reformation, Part I: New Perspectives on Theology, Politics, Economics AB**

Janz, Chapter 2 [Luther], introduction and pages 88-146; pages 56-59, 63-74.

Reformation short essay assigned.

DUE: Introductory writing revised.

Thurs., Sept. 14 **Reformation, Part II: New Perspectives on Theology, Sin, and Community AB**

Janz, Chapter 5 [Calvin], introduction and pages 270-328.

DUE: Reformation short essay Draft in hard copy form, 2 copies. Will be graded; grade will count for 1/3 of entire essay grade.

Sat., Sept. 16 **Reformation, Part III: Reformation in England; Christianity and Judaism AB**

Jantz, Chapter 6 [English Reformation]: pages 329-376; page 436.

Thurs., Sept. 21 **Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, the Human & the Divine GC**

Read Acts I-III of *Hamlet* after studying the Introduction, Background, and William Shakespeare sections of your text. Use the *Hamlet* Reading Guide posted on Blackboard.

DUE: Reformation short essay.

Thurs., Sept. 28 **Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, the Human & the Divine GC**

Finish reading *Hamlet*, Acts IV and V.

DUE: a one-page analysis of a brief passage from the play that frames the tension between the “human” and the “divine.” See Canvas for the complete version of this two-part *Hamlet* Paper Assignment.

Thurs., Oct. 5 **Shakespeare: *Hamlet*, the Human & the Divine GC**

Watch a version of *Hamlet* on YouTube or other media.

DUE: 4 pp. *Hamlet* paper. See Canvas for the complete version of this two-part *Hamlet* Paper Assignment.

Thurs., Oct. 12 **Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice*; Identity & Difference within Religion GC**

Read the selections from James Shapiro, *Shakespeare and the Jews* (posted on Canvas). Watch a version of *The Merchant of Venice* on YouTube or other media.

Thurs., Oct. 19 Virtual Museum Visit: Individual Online Work, no Classroom Meeting AB

Virtual museum visit includes Science, Reformation, Shakespearean interests.
Specific assignment posted on Canvas.

Thurs., Oct. 26 The Rise of Science, Part I: Macrocosm: Copernicus and Galileo AB

Cohen, pp. 3-80. Study questions posted on Canvas.

Science short essay assigned.

Thurs., Nov. 2 The Rise of Science, Part II: Macrocosm: Galileo and Kepler AB

Cohen 81- 147. Study questions posted on Canvas.

DUE: Draft of science short essay due in hard copy form, 2 copies. Will be graded; grade will count for 1/3 of entire essay grade.

Sat. Nov. 4 The Rise of Science, Part III: Microcosm: Newton and The Invisible Universe AB

Cohen, pp. 148-184; Hooke. Study questions posted on Canvas.

DUE: Science short essay.

Thurs., Nov. 9 Religion, Science, and the Arts in the Early Modern World AB

Study assignment posted on Canvas.

DUE : Virtual Museum Visit report.

Thurs., Nov. 16 Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice*; Identity & Difference within Religion GC

Read *The Merchant of Venice*, Acts I-III, using the Reading Guide. Begin working on your 4-pp. *Merchant* paper. See Canvas for this *Merchant* Paper Assignment.

Thurs., Nov. 30 Shakespeare: *The Merchant of Venice*; Identity & Difference within Religion GC

Read *The Merchant of Venice*, Acts IV-V, using the Reading Guide.

Thurs., Dec. 7 Oral Presentations on Shakespeare and Science/Religion AB & GC

Individual or Group reports on the most significant shift in perspective in the Early Modern World.
See Canvas for details.

DUE: 4 pp. *Merchant of Venice* essay.

Thurs., December 14 7:00 pm Final Posting (Canvas)

Assignment TBA on Canvas.

Required Texts:

Cohen, I. Bernard. *The Birth of a New Physics*. Rev. ed. Norton, 1991. ISBN: 978-0393300451. Paper.

Hooke, Robert. *Micrographia*. BiblioBazaar, 2008. ISBN: 978-1426486760. Paper.

Janz, Denis, and Jordon, Shirley, eds. *A Reformation Reader*. Fortress Press, 2008. ISBN: 978-0800663100.

Shakespeare, William. *Hamlet*. Revised Edition. Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare Series. USA: Oxford University Press, 2002. ISBN-10-0198320493

Shakespeare, William. *The Merchant of Venice*. Ed. Roma Gill. Oxford School Shakespeare Series. USA: Oxford University Press, 2006. ISBN-10-019832152X

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Disabilities

If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations or if you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or arc@georgetown.edu. Please do so at the beginning of the semester; accommodations are not retroactive.

Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity

During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Canvas will not be changed due to campus closings.

The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

Georgetown Honor System

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume students have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: *Honor Council Pamphlet "What is Plagiarism," Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process*. Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course assumes that a student has agreed to abide by the Georgetown honor pledge:

In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.

Plagiarism

In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail. If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student will receive a grade of F for the course.

Turnitin.com

Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances

The following is university policy:

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.