COL 246
Senior Colloquium

Enlightenment’s Shadow

Course Description
In this final colloquium we will explore the 19th century in an effort to link the prior three colloquia to the modern era (where we began and, by force of circumstance, end). We will begin by exploring the goals and logic of the “Enlightenment Project” and then examine the ways that the enlightenment’s shadow follows this project in both expected and surprising ways. We will follow two parallel trajectories of thought through the 19th century: the rise of science, technology and bureaucracy as exemplified in the “rational” project of the positivists; and the metaphysical investigation into the nature of the soul and the quest for transcendent meaning as in the “irrational” works of the Romantics, Kierkegaard, and Nietzsche. Our goal will be to examine the ways that these trends intersect, overlap and diverge in an effort to explore the ramifications of these ideas over time and space (for example, the repercussions of the Enlightenment project on European colonization and the treatment of colonized peoples or the effects of doctrines of progress on the industrialization of Europe).

Required Reading:
Joseph Conrad, Heart of Darkness
Dostoevsky, “The Dream of the Ridiculous Man” in Notes from Underground
Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Faust pt. I and II
Nikolai Gogol, Dead Souls
Joris-Karl Huysmans, Against Nature
Soren Kierkegaard, Fear and Trembling
Karl Marx, The Communist Manifesto
Friedrich Nietzsche, Thus Spoke Zarathustra
Mary Shelley, Frankenstein
Émile Zola, Thérèse Raquin

Recommended Reading
John Merriman, Modern Europe
Course Outline

WEEK ONE
Wed., January 21 – Thesis Presentations

WEEK TWO
Mon., January 26 – **Hand Outs:** Diderot, *Encyclopedia* (1713-1784); Sade, *Philosophy in the Bedroom* (1795); Coleridge, “Aeolian Harp” (1795), “Ancient Mariner” (1797-98), “Kubla Khan” (1798); Wordsworth, “The Thorn” (1798)


WEEK THREE
Mon., February 2 – **Hand Out:** G.W. F. Hegel, *Phenomenology of Spirit* (1807)

Wed., February 4 – Thesis Presentations

WEEK FOUR
Mon., February 9 – Goethe, *Faust* pt. I and II (1808, 1832)

Wed., February 11 – Thesis Presentations

WEEK FIVE
Mon., February 16 – Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818)

Wed., February 18 – Thesis Presentations

WEEK SIX
Mon., February 23 – Gogol, *Dead Souls* (1836)


WEEK SEVEN
Mon., March 1 – Kierkegaard, *Fear and Trembling* (1843)

Wed., March 3 – Thesis Presentations

**SPRING BREAK**

WEEK EIGHT
Mon., March 22 – Marx, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848); Melville, “Bartleby the Scrivener” (1853)
Wed., March 24 – Thesis Presentations

WEEK NINE
Mon., March 29 – Darwin, from *Origin of Species* (1859, 1872); Gobineau, *Essai sur L’inegalite des races humaines* (1853 - 55); Dostoevsky, “Dream of the Ridiculous Man” (1877)


WEEK TEN
Mon., April 5 – Huysmans, *Against Nature* (1884)
*Reading:*

Wed., April 7 – **NO CLASS**
*Reading:*

WEEK ELEVEN
Mon., April 12 – **NO CLASS**
*Reading:*

SENIOR THESES DUE APRIL 13

Wed., April 14 – **NO CLASS**

WEEK TWELVE
Mon., April 19 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885)
*Reading:*

Wed., April 21 – Nietzsche, *Thus Spoke Zarathustra* (1883-1885)

WEEK THIRTEEN
Mon., April 26 – Ibsen, “Enemy of the People” (1882) or “Hedda Gabler” (1890)

*Reading:*

WEEK FOURTEEN
Mon., May 3 – open date