

Course Outline: The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri

DEPARTMENT OF LANGUAGES, LITERATURES & LINGUISTICS

Note for students: This short course outline is provided for planning purposes only. Course information is tentative and subject to change; the final course syllabus will be available by the first day of classes.

Course Code

AP/IT 4330 3.0 The Divina Commedia of Dante Alighieri

Course Description

Selected cantos from Dante's *Divine Comedy*, the supreme poetic expression of the Middle Ages and of Italian literature; its ethical and political vision, and its meaning in the context of the medieval and classical theological/philosophical traditions.

The *Divine Comedy* is -at the same time- a perfect “summa” of the Medieval World and a universal work of art, where poetry, philosophy, theology, religion find a perfectly harmonious relation with each other. Dante creates a narrative on human condition that is still fascinating and enlightening today. The course, as it unfolds over only 12 classes, rather than proceeding along the Cantos of the three Canticas, will focus on the main themes found throughout the poem: the nature of SIN, the POLITICS of Dante’s times and the MEDIEVAL WORD as described by Dante. The presence of Dante and his poem in the popular culture (film, television, comics, videogames) will also be part of the course.

Students enrolled in a Major or Minor in Italian Studies may be required to complete coursework in Italian language.

Prerequisite: AP/IT 2200 3.00 or AP/IT 2200 6.00 or permission of the department. Previously offered as: AP/IT 4330 6.00.

Course Delivery

Delivery Mode: Seminar

Seminar mode requires an intense exchange between the instructor and the students, with frequent interruptions and discussions.

Course Materials

All the course material will be posted on E Class, and will include articles, book chapters, excerpts from larger texts, and videos. The main source will be the “Digital Dante” webpage, created by Columbia University, available online. The “Digital Dante” project includes the original text, its English translation, and a critical commentary for each Canto of the poem. The criterion for the selection of the additional reading material will be the exposure of students to the issues and the themes explored during the class discussion. Other valuable sources include the “Dartmouth Dante Project” and the “Oxford Companion to Italian Literature”, both available online.

Tentative Grade Breakdown and Deadlines

Assessment	Weight	Mode	Tentative Deadline
Midterm	20 %	In person	Week 7
Essay	20 %	At home	Week 10
Oral presentation	20 %	In person	Students will book the date and the topic of their presentation
Final test	20 %	In person	Week 12
Participation	20 %	N/A	
	100 %		

Active participation will be a crucial portion of the final grade; regular but passive attendance will not be sufficient for a high mark in this section.