

LART602: The Rational Eye

Section 001 (CRN23479; 3 credit hours)

Tuesdays, 6:30-9:15pm, KINA105

Winthrop University

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Program Goals

The goals of Winthrop University's Master of Liberal Arts program include the following:

- **Multidisciplinarity:** students will examine the world via the methods and knowledge of multiple disciplines
- **Critical Thinking:** student examination of the world will be mature and sophisticated
- **Written and Oral Communication:** students will communicate effectively in an area of advanced study
- **Intellectual Engagement and Curiosity:** the student seeks and explores new opportunities for finding truth and meaning.

In addition to these general intellectual skills, the Winthrop MLA program introduces the student to the human "search for order." A principal feature of human knowledge is the creation or discovery of order where otherwise there is perhaps only chaos. Such order is revealed by academic disciplines and also, more broadly, by means of several basic methodologies or epistemological "eyes". These basic ways of knowing constitute the program's Core Colloquia: LART601, The Empirical Eye, investigates order revealed by perceptual experience; LART602, The Rational Eye, investigates order as revealed by the faculty of reason; LART603, The Intuitive Eye, addresses the role of intuition in our understanding of order. Together, these three courses prepare the student for his or her capstone experience in LART604. Here, the student applies one or more epistemological eye to a multidisciplinary exploration of his or her chosen topic, a summative exploration of order, or its lack, in human affairs.

Course Description

This course "[i]nvestigates how we search for order through reason, logic, and other mental processes exemplified in such disciplines as philosophy and mathematics."¹ Our primary goal is an understanding of reason and of issues surrounding the human search for rational order in the world. Reason itself appears to be a faculty for the recognition and manipulation of certain sorts of order, including logical and quantitative order. Whether there is such order beyond that constructed in our minds will be a central question of the course: do we *discover* rational order in the world, or is it our own *creation*? Are reason and rationality, as our ancient forebears believed, the gift of the gods, elevating us above the rest of nature, or do they more closely resemble glandular secretions such as those produced by organs that we share with gastropods, for instance? Our course will survey these views and others in order to enable the student to judge for him/herself the role of reason in the human world and beyond.

¹ Master of Liberal Arts. <http://www2.winthrop.edu/mla/programrequirements.htm>

Learning Outcomes

The successful student in this course will at its end be able:

- To define rationality and rational knowing;
- To demonstrate how rational structures depict an orderly world;
- To identify limits to rational knowing;
- To summarize and critique course readings;
- To conduct graduate-level research;
- To present graduate-level research orally and in writing.

Texts – all required

In WU Bookstore:

- Hesiod. *Works and Days and Theogony*. S. Lombardo, trans. Hackett, 1993
Cornford, F. *Plato's Cosmology*, Hackett, 1997
Kant, I. *Critique of Pure Reason – abridged*. E. Watkins, ed., W. Pluhar, trans. Hackett, 1999
Lewis, C. *The Discarded Image*. Cambridge University Press, 1994
McKirahan, R. *Philosophy before Socrates*. 2e. Hackett, 2011
Nietzsche, F. *The Gay Science*, Kaufmann, Vintage Books, 1974

Available on e-Reserve:

- Allison, D. *Reading the New Nietzsche*. Rowman and Littlefield, 2001 (71-109)
Burkert, W. "Philosophical Religion," *Greek Religion*. Blackwell, 1985 (305-311)
Burkert, W. "Zeus", *Greek Religion*. Blackwell, 1985 (125-131)
Cottingham, John. "Method", *The Rationalists*. Oxford University Press, 1988 (31-74)
Gardner, S. *Routledge Philosophy Guidebook to Kant and the Critique of Pure Reason*. Routledge, 1999 (166-167)
Höffe, O. *Immanuel Kant*. M. Farrier, trans. SUNY, 1994 (31-38, 65-73, 114-118)
Jaspers, K. "Anaximander", "Heraclitus and Parmenides." *The Great Philosophers*. Harcourt, Brace & World, 1966 (9-37)
Oakes, M. "Chaos, Cosmos, Logos"
Wood, A. *Kant*. Blackwell, 2005 (76-83)

Available as Dacus e-Book:

- Bloch, W. *The Unimaginable Mathematics of Borges' Library of Babel*. Oxford University Press, 2008
Borges, J. "The Library of Babel" in Bloch (3-10)
Kosman, A. *Activity of Being*. Harvard University Press, 2013
Höffe, O. *Immanuel Kant*. M. Farrier, trans. SUNY, 1994
Hume, D. *Enquiry Concerning Human Understanding*. D. Millican, ed. Oxford University Press, 2007
Hume, D. *A Treatise of Human Nature*. The Floating Press, 2009
Leibniz, G. *Monadology*. R. Latta, trans. University of Adelaide Library, 2008
Rorem, P. *Pseudo-Dionysius: A Commentary on the Texts and an Introduction to Their Influence*. Oxford University Press, 1993

Available online:

- Aristotle. *Metaphysics*. W.D. Ross, trans. The Internet Classics Archive, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/metaphysics.12.xii.html>
Aristotle. *Physics*. R.P. Hardie and R.K. Gaye, trans. The Internet Classics Archive, <http://classics.mit.edu/Aristotle/physics.html>
Leibniz, G. *Monadology*. J. Bennett, trans. – in up-dated English. <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/assets/pdfs/leibniz1714b.pdf>. See use information here: <http://www.earlymoderntexts.com/faqs/rights>

Morris, W. and C. Brown. "David Hume," *Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy*.
<http://plato.stanford.edu/entries/hume/>

Course Requirements

Preparation for class: Students should prepare for class by reading carefully and thoughtfully the assigned readings. Students should take notes on all readings. Students will prepare for class a short, written response to the readings for writing and reading practice and to promote discussion. Your class participation grade will be determined by your preparation for and contribution to class discussion.

Short Essays: Three essays on course readings, concepts, and/or student research, as assigned.

Presentations: Each student will present to the class a summary of his/her research project during the final weeks of the semester. Additional, shorter presentations will be assigned periodically as the student prepares the project.

Final Essay: This essay will be a more substantial discussion of a course concept or figure, etc., as assigned.

Grading (no plus/minus)

Class participation	30%
Short essays @ 10% each	30%
Presentation	10%
Final Essay	30%

Scale: 90-100 = A; 80-89 = B; 70-79 = C; below 70 = F

Classroom Conduct and Policies

Breaks: We'll ordinarily take a break about midway through our session. Please avoid eating dinner during class.

Cell phones: Please avoid using cell phones in class.

Lap-tops and tablets: Please avoid surfing the net, checking email, etc., in class.

E-mail dissemination of course information: I will generally distribute information to the class either orally in class or by email. Please ensure that I have a reliable email address for you.

Check your email!

Students with Disabilities: Winthrop University is committed to providing access to education.

If you have a condition which may adversely impact your ability to access academics and/or campus life, and you require specific accommodations to complete this course, contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 803-323-3290 or, <http://accessibility@winthrop.edu>. Once you have your official notice of accommodations from the Office of Disability Services, please inform me as early as possible in the semester.

Conduct: I will assume your familiarity and compliance with the student conduct code located in the Graduate Catalogs: <http://www.winthrop.edu/GradCatalog/> (e.g., pp. 36-37 in the 2015-16 catalog).

Attendance: Attendance is expected. We meet only once per week, so missing class will significantly impact your understanding of our materials. If you must miss class, please let me know in advance. Except in cases of documented emergency, etc., you cannot make up work missed if you miss class. After your first unexcused absence, you will lose 5% of your overall grade per class missed.

Schedule (subject to change)²

Throughout:

1. To what extent, if any, is the universe governed by rational principles, for author X, and to what extent are humans capable of knowledge of the universe by means of reason? What are these principles (*archia*), for author X, if any? How is human rational knowledge possible, on X's view, if at all?
2. What is the value of human reason, for X, if any? To what limitations is reason subject, if any, for X?
3. What is the relation of reason to the divine, on X's view, if any? What role has the divine with respect to any rational universal order, on this view, if any?

Authors' names are underlined; see above for reading details

e-r signifies a reading on Dacus Library E-Reserve

e-b signifies an electronic book available online through Dacus Library

Course Materials		Exercises
Jan. 12	Rational Order – Introduction Introductions Program Goals and Theme The Rational Eye <i>Reading:</i> “Chaos, Cosmos, and <i>Logos</i> ” (<u>Oakes</u>)	
Jan. 19	Ancient Thought: Pre-History Anthropomorphism and Supernaturalism Logic and the arbitrary Zeus's creative fire <i>Readings:</i> <u>Hesiod</u> (pp. 1-8, 12-16, 19-20, 61-90, see also helpful notes and glossary; <u>Burkert</u> on Zeus; <u>McKirahan</u> (1-17))	Reading Response (9am)
Jan. 26	Ancient Thought: Early Philosophy Philosophy begins The search for <i>logos</i> <i>Readings:</i> <u>McKirahan</u> , 18-47, 112-144, 174-192; <u>Jaspers</u> (e-r); <u>Burkert</u> (e-r) on philosophy (305-311)	Reading Response (9am)
Feb. 2	Ancient Thought: Plato Ideal, eternal being Time and becoming <i>Reading:</i> Cornford on Plato (21-45, 54-59, 97-105, 191-210)	Reading Response (9am)
Feb. 7	9am, via Blackboard	Essay 1 due
Feb. 9	Ancient Thought: Aristotle Principles as objects of knowledge The unmoved mover <i>Readings:</i> <u>Aristotle</u> , <i>Physics</i> I.1, 5; <i>Metaphysics</i> IV.1-3, XII.6-9; <u>Kosman</u> (e-b), 183-186, 187-190, 207-217	Reading Response (9am)
Feb. 16	Medieval Thought: Divine mystery	Reading Response

² Syllabus Change Policy: Minor changes to this syllabus will be announced in class and are the student's responsibility. More significant changes will be announced in class and furnished in writing.

	Mysticism The planets <i>Readings:</i> <u>Pseudo-Dionysius</u> (e-b), 183-236; <u>Lewis</u> , 92-121, 139-146, 152-161, 165-169, 185-197	(9am)
Feb. 23	Modern Thought: Leibniz Perfect Rationality The Principle of Sufficient Reason <i>Readings:</i> <u>Leibniz</u> , <i>Monadology</i> (e-b or e-r); <u>Cottingham</u> (e-r), 101-114	Reading Response (9am)
Feb. 28	9am via Blackboard	Essay 2 due
Mar. 1	Modern Thought: Hume The Slave of the Passions Knowledge as Custom <i>Readings:</i> <u>Hume</u> , <i>Enquiry</i> (e-b), Sections II, III, IV, V (part 1 only), VII; <i>Treatise</i> (e-b), Book II, Part III, Section III; <u>Morris and Brown</u> , Sections 4-6 and 7.1	Reading Response (9am)
Mar. 8	Modern Thought: Kant The rationally constructed world Faith postulated by reason <i>Readings:</i> <u>Kant</u> , 1-2, 15-16, 39-40, 42-49, 78-83, 107-111, 141-145, 196-202, 209-218; <u>Höffe</u> (e-r or e-b), 31-38, 65-73, 114-118; <u>Gardner</u> (e-r), 166-176, 315-319; <u>Wood</u> (e-r), 76-83	Reading Response (9am)
Mar. 15	Spring Break (no class)	
Mar. 22	Post-Modern Thought: Nietzsche The shadow of God Metaphor <u>Nietzsche</u> , <i>The Gay Science</i> , Book One: §§1-4, 11-14, 19, 21, 26, 28, 39, 54; Book Two: §§57-59, 75; Book Three: §§108-145; Book Four: §§276, 277, 283, 285, 289, 290, 326, 327, 333, 335, 340-342; Book V: §§343-349, 355, 371-374, 377, 383 <u>Allison</u> (e-r) (71-109)	Reading Response (9am)
Mar. 27	9am via Blackboard	Essay 3 due
Mar. 29	Post-Modern Thought: Borges Order within disorder <i>Readings:</i> <u>Borges</u> (e-b), 3-10; <u>Bloch</u> (e-b), 11-25	Reading Response (9am)
Apr. 5	Presentations I	
Apr. 12	Presentations II	
Apr. 19	Presentations III	
Friday, May 1, 6:30pm		Final Essays Due