

College of the Humanities
MEMS 3001

**Dante's *Divine Comedy* and Medieval Theories of Love
Winter 2016**

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office hours: Fridays, 9:30a.m. – 11:30a.m.

Course Description:

Dante's *Divine Comedy* is a love poem – perhaps the greatest ever written – dedicated to the memory of his Beloved Lady, Beatrice Portinari. It is equally true to say that it is a poem *about* love. It presents, in poetical form, a comprehensive theory of the nature, origin, function, aim, corruption, and purification of human love. This course will endeavour to shed new light on the *Comedy's* theory of love. It will do so by interpreting it as a bold and original synthesis of the tradition of courtly love literature represented by such authors as Andreas Capellanus, Chrétien de Troyes, and Dante himself in his early *Vita Nuova*, and the writings on love of such theologians and mystics as the twelfth century Cistercian, Bernard of Clairvaux, and the thirteenth century Dominican, Thomas Aquinas. But the medieval theories of love we will be exploring in this course did not arise fully formed *ex nihilo*, and we will begin the course with a survey of some of their most notable ancient Greco-Roman matrices: namely, Plato's *Symposium*; Cicero's *De Amicitia*; Early Christian views on love as encapsulated in the Gospel of John and writings by Origen and Augustine; and, time permitting, Ovid's *Ars Amatoria*.

Prerequisites: MEMS 2001 or special permission from the instructor.

Lectures: Tuesdays and Thursdays, from 11:30am to 1pm, in 303 Paterson Hall

Required Texts: The following texts are available at Singing Pebble Books (206 Main Street, across from Saint-Paul's University and a few doors down from the Green Door restaurant; tel. 613-230-9165).

Bernard of Clairvaux. *Bernard of Clairvaux: Selected Works*. Tr. G.R. Evans. New York: Paulist Press, 1987.

Chrétien de Troyes. *Arthurian Romances*. Tr. W.W. Kibler. London: Penguin, 2004.

Dante. *La Vita Nuova*. Tr. B. Reynolds. London: Penguin, 2004.

Dante. *The Divine Comedy: 3 Volumes*. Tr. D. Sayers. London: Penguin, 1949-1962.

Other assigned readings will be made available to students *via* CuLearn.

Grades: Grades will be based solely on individual, academic merit as judged against absolute standards. Grades will not be adjusted to achieve a supposedly normal distribution or manipulated in any other way.

Grades for the course will be based on the following:

- (1) Class participation, for a total of 25% of the final mark;
 - (2) One annotated bibliography with 10 entries, due on the final day of class, and worth 25% of the final mark
 - (3) One term paper, approximately 10 to 15 double-spaced pages in length, worth 50% of the final mark, due on April 23rd – i.e., the last day of the April examination period.
- Regarding (1): class participation includes attending class, listening actively, asking questions, engaging in class discussions, completing the assigned readings, and submitting a paper proposal at least two weeks before the term paper is due. I reserve the right to ensure that everyone is completing the assigned readings through the use of unscheduled pop-quizzes. Please note that students not in class for such unannounced quizzes will not be allowed to write make-up quizzes unless they were absent for a valid and documentable reason.
 - Regarding (2): a separate document will be distributed early in the semester describing the nature of this assignment. For the moment, suffice it to say that each entry will need to distil the argument and most salient features of a particular piece of secondary literature (or primary literature not assigned as compulsory reading for the course but somehow relevant to it), and be cited at least once in your term paper. Moreover, the entries will have to come from a variety of sources that I will describe in the assignment sheet.
 - Regarding (3): a separate document will also be distributed early in the semester describing the nature of this assignment. Suffice it to say here that I expect the term paper to try to make an original claim regarding its subject matter, and to be well researched, well argued, and well written. It will also have to contain properly formatted citations. It can be about anything remotely related to this course, but the topic must be presented to me for approval in the form of a short (no longer than 1 double-spaced page) paper proposal no less than three weeks before the term paper due date, and – most significantly – it must in some way be interdisciplinary and/or inter-textual.

Learning Outcomes:

- This will be an interdisciplinary course in what one might, loosely speaking, call the history of ideas. It will seek to retrace the story of the genesis, transmission, and creative appropriations of certain conceptions of love in the middle ages, culminating in Dante's *Divine Comedy*. As such, it will primarily involve various disciplines in which the textual analysis of primary sources is absolutely central: e.g., literature, theology, and philosophy. Thus, students will leave this course with a deeper understanding of the methods of textual analysis deployed in these various disciplines. This includes a better sense of how primary texts in the history of ideas should be studied in light of their broader historical context. Of course, students will not just come away with an improved theoretical understanding of the art of hermeneutics: their ability to perform such textual analyses of primary sources themselves will also be improved.
- Students will gain an appreciation for how works within very different media and disciplines can influence each other within a cultural tradition. They will learn how to read such works in light of each other, and how to identify long-term trends, affiliations and influences, departures, conflicts, and novelties, and so on, within a relatively cohesive cultural tradition.
- By the end of the course, students will have been introduced to various databases, collections, and research tools relevant to the specific subject matter(s), and/or widely used in the study of medieval literature, theology, philosophy, *et alia*.

Regulations Applying Specifically to MEMS 3001:

General Course Requirements: To pass, students must regularly attend and do the readings assigned for the lectures, as well as complete all of the written assignments, all unless formally excused by the Instructor because of illness or some other legitimate reason. Failure to complete all of the written assignments will result in the grade 'F'.

Attendance: Students are responsible for all material covered, announcements made, and course documents distributed, whether they are present in class or not.

Late Assignments: Assignments will be docked one third of a letter grade (e.g., from a B+ to a B) for each day after their due-date. Late penalties on assignments accompanied by a medical certificate or other proof of a legitimate reason for lateness will be adjusted accordingly.

Submission Guidelines: All written assignments for this course are to be uploaded to cuLearn.

Lecture and Reading Schedule:

1	7 Jan.	The Platonic Ladder of Love	Plato, <i>Symposium</i> (available on CuLearn)
2	12 Jan.	Love and Friendship	Cicero, <i>De Amicitia</i> (available on CuLearn)
3	14 Jan.	Love in Early Christianity (guest lecture by Prof. Tim Pettipiece)	Origen, <i>Commentary on the Song of Songs</i> , Prologue; Augustine, Homily VII (available on CuLearn)
4	19 Jan.	The Redirection of Love	Bernard of Clairvaux, <i>On Conversion</i>
5	21 Jan.	Love as the Fruit of Humility: Monastic Discipline; The Cistercian Ladder of Love	Bernard of Clairvaux, <i>On the Steps of Humility and Pride</i> , §§ 1-26; and/or (your choice) <i>On Loving God</i>
6	26 Jan.	The Thomist Account of the Ultimate End of Love: the Knowledge of God	Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i> , IaIIae, qq.1-5 (available on CuLearn)
7	28 Jan.	The Thomist Account of the Nature of Love in General, and of Charity in Particular	Aquinas, <i>Summa Theologica</i> , IaIIae, qq.26-28, and IIaIIae, q. 23 (available on CuLearn)
8	2 Feb.	The Theory of Courtly Love	Andreas Capellanus, <i>On Love</i> (selections available on CuLearn)
9	4 Feb.	The Literary Representation of Courtly Love	Chrétien de Troyes, <i>Lancelot (The Knight of the Cart)</i>
10	9 Feb.	The Sorrows of Young Dante: On the Tensions and Transcendence of Courtly Love	Dante, <i>La Vita Nuova</i>
11	11 Feb.	The Dark Wood and the Gate of Hell: The Corruption of Love	Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , Cantos I-III
12	23 Feb.	Upper Hell: The Sins of Incontinence	<i>Inferno</i> , IV-VIII
13	25 Feb.	Nether Hell I: The Sins of Violence	<i>Inferno</i> , IX-XVII
14	1 Mar.	Nether Hell II: The Sins of Fraud Simple	<i>Inferno</i> , XVIII-XXX
15	3 Mar.	The Frozen Lake: The Sins of Fraud Complex	<i>Inferno</i> , XXXI-XXXIV
16	8 Mar.	The Shore of Mt. Purgatory: The Rehabilitation of Love	<i>Purgatorio</i> , I-II
17	10 Mar.	Ante-Purgatory	<i>Purgatorio</i> , III-VIII
18	15 Mar.	The Gate of Purgatory and the Terraces of Love Misdirected	<i>Purgatorio</i> , IX-XVI

19	17 Mar.	The Purging of Love Deficient and Love Excessive	<i>Purgatorio</i> , XVII-XXVII
20	22 Mar.	The Earthly Paradise: Human Nature Restored	<i>Purgatorio</i> , XXVIII-XXXIII
21	24 Mar.	Beginning of the Ascent to God through the Perfecting of Love and Knowledge; the Moon	<i>Paradiso</i> , I-IV
22	29 Mar.	The Heavens Below the Sun (Cont.): Mercury and Venus	<i>Paradiso</i> , V-IX
23	31 Mar.	The Sun and the First Heaven Above the Sun (Mars)	<i>Paradiso</i> , X-XVIII
24	5 Apr.	The Heavens Above the Sun Continued: Jupiter, Saturn, the <i>Stellatum</i> , and the <i>Primum Mobile</i>	<i>Paradiso</i> , XIX-XXIX
25	7 Apr.	The Vision of God in the Empyrean	<i>Paradiso</i> , XXX-XXXIII

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see "Petitions to Defer")
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 7, 2015**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 8, 2016**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Students with disabilities requiring academic accommodations in this course must register with the Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) for a formal evaluation of disability-related needs. Documented disabilities could include but not limited to mobility/physical impairments, specific Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/psychological disabilities, sensory disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), and chronic medical conditions. Registered PMC students are required to contact the PMC, 613-520-6608, every term to ensure that your Instructor receives your Letter of Accommodation, no later than two weeks before the first assignment is due or the first in-class test/midterm requiring accommodations. If you only require accommodations for your formally scheduled exam(s) in this course, please submit your request for accommodations to PMC by **Nov. 6, 2015** for the Fall term and **March 6, 2016** for the Winter term. For more details visit the Equity Services website: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment.

If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar's Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of a final assignment or take home, in courses without a final examination, must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library