

Common Course Outline

HUM 202

Artifacts of Culture: Medieval and Reformation Topics

1 to 3 Semester Hours

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

Artifacts of Culture: Medieval and Reformation Topics

Provides an intensive study of a single masterpiece, theme, or movement of world art, music, literature or architecture; focuses on topics drawn from cultures of the medieval and Reformation periods.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. develop and apply critical and analytical skills to cultural studies
2. detail and analyze comparatively selected relevant cultural artifacts
3. analyze selected relevant cultural artifacts in their cultural contexts, synchronically and diachronically
4. recognize and describe the relevant influences that shape cultural production, including factors of race, class and gender
5. view cultural artifacts with a more sophisticated intellectual appreciation
6. analyze critically the formal qualities and characteristics of selected cultural artifacts
7. assess the different cross-currents of cultural influences that have shaped cultural production in different historical and geographical milieux
8. develop a greater openness to different cultural criteria of beauty and significance
9. produce a careful and thoughtful scholarly or creative project with written and oral components
10. recognize, analyze and assess the historical importance of selected relevant cultural artifacts
11. recognize and describe the impact and influences of medieval and reformation era cultural production on contemporary American and world culture

Major Topics

Depending upon the specific modules offered

I. Evolution and development of literary forms in the given cultural context, in a comparative perspective.

II. Evolution and development of artistic and musical forms in the given cultural context, in a comparative perspective.

III. Evolution and development of musical and theatrical forms in the given cultural context, in a comparative perspective.

IV. Formation and role of individuals or groups crucial to cultural production in a given context.

V. Relationship of selected relevant cultural artifacts to other manifestations of the given societal context: political, economic, religious, recreational.

VI. Concepts and vocabulary relevant to the academic study of a given cultural context.

Common Course Outline-- Artifacts of Culture: Medieval and Reformation Topics

page 2

Course Requirements

1. Regular and punctual attendance and active participation in class
2. Written essay-style examinations
3. Reading and writing assignments
4. Annotated scholarly or creative project with written and oral components

Other Course Information

Artifacts of Culture modules are team-taught interdisciplinary courses in humanities, each devoted to the intensive study of a single masterpiece, theme or movement of world art, music, literature, or architecture. First implemented with the support of a National Endowment for the Humanities program grant, and subsequently selected as one of 13 nationally selected Exemplary Humanities Programs for Adults, Artifacts of Culture was named to the Honor Roll of Outstanding Ideas and Achievements (1987) by the Maryland State Board for Community Colleges, and selected as Distinguished Instructional Program by the Maryland Association for Higher Education (1992). The program is of special interest to those returning to college primarily for purposes of personal enrichment and intellectual stimulation

The Community College of Baltimore County is committed to providing a

high-quality learning experience that results in a growth of knowledge, attitudes, and skills necessary to function successfully as a transfer student, in a career, and as an informed and concerned citizen. To accomplish this goal, we maintain high academic standards and expect students to accept responsibility for their individual growth by attending class, completing all homework and other assignments, participating in class activities, and preparing for tests.

Artifacts of Culture: Medieval and Reformation Topics
HUM 202

A series of team-taught, interdisciplinary courses in humanities, each devoted to the intensive study of a single masterpiece, theme, or movement of world art, music, literature or architecture; the Humanities 202 sequence focusses on topics drawn from cultures of the medieval and Reformation periods. Each semester different course modules may be offered, of from one to three semester hour credits, depending upon topic and duration of course module. Following is a sample course outline for a one-credit module on "Age of Maimonides"

This course is an examination of the great flowering of Jewish culture that occurred in Moorish Spain especially between the years 1000 and 1200, but which continued until the expulsion of the Jews from Christian Spain in 1492. The course begins with an overview of Spanish history, focussing on the period of Moorish conquest and domination and the culture of the Moorish courts, symbolized by the great mosque of Cordoba and the Alhambra palace of Granada. In the wake of this westward sweep of Islam across the Southern Mediterranean followed a resurgent Jewish culture, tolerated by the Islamic state and stimulated by and benefitting from the traditions of Islamic scholarship, including the recovery of Greek classical learning by such figures as Avicenna and Averoes, Arab-speaking Jews embarked on a program of Biblical scholarship, commentary and philosophizing, secular learning and, for the first time in a thousand years, an outpouring of both religious and secular poetry in Hebrew.

The second week of the course begins a focussed study of this golden age of Spanish Jewish culture in the context of the cross-currents of 12th century

Europe, the age of Henry II and Eleanor of Aquitaine, Thomas a Beckett, the Hohenstaufen dynasty of Germanic Central Europe, the Second Crusade, Abbot Suger and the beginnings of Gothic art at St. Denis, and such influential figures as Abelard and Bernard of Clairvaux. Spain at the time is dominated by the courts of the Christian kings of Castile, Alfonso VII and Alfonso VIII, and their campaigns against the dominant Almohade Islamic courts of southern Spain. In this context flourished the great Jewish scholars and poets of the period: Solomon Ibn Gabirol, Moses Ibn Ezra, Judah Ha-Levi, Abraham Ibn Ezra -- and Maimonides, before he left Cordoba for Cairo in 1163. Selections from Maimonides' classic "Guide for the Perplexed" will culminate the first three weeks of the course. The last two weeks of the module will focus on the later centuries of Spanish Jewish culture, prior to the expulsion of 1492, and include a discussion of Jewish liturgical and non-liturgical music and poetry, and the rise of mystical and neo-platonic schools of philosophical theology, culminating in the classic of the kabbalah movement, "The Zohar," and Leon Hebraeus' influential "Dialogues of Love."