Honors ACS 1242 -004
Modernity and Its Discontents

Professor Doody                                                                Office: SAC 104 X94691
Spring 2007                                                                        Office Hours: Every Day by appt.

COURSE DESCRIPTION
This course will focus on several questions. One will be “What is freedom?” One way to understand the ancients and medieval world, which you studied last semester, is to say that for them, freedom is related to virtue and order, primarily the order of higher goods, especially the order of goods as seen in a Christian universe. Some, such as Augustine, believe that the question of freedom is linked to the question of happiness and what will make me happy in this world. This semester will raise these questions anew as we study enlightenment, romantic, modern and contemporary thinkers. Because it is only here, beginning with Hobbes, that we can begin to see ourselves in these texts, hear ourselves asking the question of how do I become free and how can I keep and protect that freedom, my liberty.

Some of the questions that we will consider are:

Is freedom primarily an economic, psychological, political or a spiritual condition? Or is it some combination of these (or other) things?

Is freedom the absence of restraints, i.e., a negative concept? Or is it freedom for, a positive notion?

Is unassisted human will sufficient to achieve freedom or must it be informed by reason? Or informed by God's grace?

Is freedom (autonomy) the most essential of modern concepts, or is there anything more important to us than freedom?

We will also look at how “virtue” is understood in these thinkers and compare ancient and modern conceptions of virtue. We will also look at concepts of class, race and gender to see how these contemporary sociological concepts shed light on questions of freedom and virtue. Finally, we will also look at Freud’s critique of the role religion plays in the modern world.

This is an ACS seminar class, which means that you have to read the text before coming to class, bring it to class, highlighted and all marked up, and then discuss it in class. I have put the class participation grade at 30% to reflect the importance of coming to class prepared and with something to say.
BOOKS
Kant, *Perpetual Peace and Other Essays* (Hackett Press)
Stowe, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* (Norton Critical edition)
MacIntyre, *After Virtue* (Notre Dame Press 2nd edition)

Villanova One Book Club

*Tyson, Blood Done Sign My Name*

Internet Readings or Handouts

Jefferson, *Declaration of Independence*
Madison, *Federalist Papers*
Tocqueville, *Democracy in America*
Marx, *Paris Manuscripts*
Marx, *Thesis on Feuerbach*
Marx German Ideology
Lincoln, *Selected Speeches*

STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES

Scholarly Integrity: Please read the university policy on Academic Integrity very carefully. Plagiarism in this class will result in an F for the course. In particular, we will not use the Cliff Notes or Spark Notes when we read *Pride and Prejudice* or *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.

Class Preparation: You are expected to do all of the assigned reading for each class. Brief reaction papers may also be assigned to enhance class preparation.

Class Contribution: Each member of the class will be responsible for two class presentations, working in teams of two. These presentations should be of ten minutes in length per team. Everyone is expected to attend class regularly and contribute significantly to seminar discussions, not just on the days you present. Please be on time for class. More than four absences will affect your final grade.

Papers: A minimum of 30 pages will be assigned throughout the semester, as this is the first year writing program as well.

Cultural Events: All ACS students are required to attend a minimum of three outside of class events. Three lectures for our class have already been scheduled. The Villanova One Book Club is sponsoring Timothy Tyson, author of *Blood Done Sign My Name*. He will speak in the Villanova Room on Thursday January 25. On Monday February 5, Professor Viroli of Princeton
will be lecturing on Machiavelli. On February 26 Professor Lawler of Berry College will be
lecturing on Tocqueville. Lectures will be at 7:30 in the evening.

Examinations: There will be a final examination in this course. The exam will be an oral exam.

GRADING FOR THIS COURSE
Grading for this course is based on seminar preparation and contribution, brief essays, papers and
the final examination.

Papers 50%
Class participation 30%
Final Exam 20%

TENTATIVE SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND LECTURES

Week 1: W: 1/17   Introduction; Machiavelli
                 Hobbes, Leviathan
Week 2: M: 1/22  Hobbes
                W: 1/24  Hobbes,
Week 3: M: 1/29  Kant
                W: 1/31  Kant
Week 4: M: 2/5   Franklin, Autobiography
                W: 2/7   Federalist Papers # 10 & 51
Week 5: M: 2/12  Austen, Pride and Prejudice
                W: 2/14  Austen
Week 6: M: 2/19  Tocqueville
                W: 2/21  Tocqueville
Week 7: M: 2/26  Tocqueville, Lincoln, Speech on the Dred Scott Decision
                W: 2/28  Lincoln Peoria Speech, Second Inaugural

Spring Break

Week 8: M: 3/12  Stowe, Uncle Tom's Cabin
          W: 3/14  Stowe, continued
Week 9:  M: 3/19  Stowe  
        W: 3/21  Stowe  

Week 10: M: 3/26  Marx, Paris Manuscripts  
        W: 3/28  Marx  

Week 11: M: 4/2  Marx German Ideology  
        W: 4/4  Marx Thesis  

Week 12: M: 4/9  Easter Break  
        W: 4/11  Freud  

Week 13: M: 4/16  Freud  
        W: 4/18  Freud  

Week 14: M: 4/23  MacIntyre After Virtue  
        W: 4/25  MacIntyre  

Week 15: M: 4/30  MacIntyre  
        W: 5/2  Review