



SPRING 2021

GLOBAL WORKS AND SOCIETY IN A CHANGING WORLD

GWC-UF 9102 F01

Tuesday-Thursday 10:00-11.15 am (Florence time)

ONLINE COURSE- REMOTE SYNCHRONOUS

We know that you may be taking courses at multiple locations this semester. If you are enrolled in this course 100% remotely and are not a Go Local/Study Away student for this course site, please make sure that you've completed the online academic orientation via NYU Classes so you are aware of site-specific support, policies and procedures.

Please contact florence.academicssupport@nyu.edu if you have trouble accessing the NYU Classes site.

Course Description:

Prerequisites: Global Works and Society. Antiquity

Covering broadly the period 700-1700, this interdisciplinary, cross-cultural course addresses the contribution of religion, philosophy, science and political thought to the rise of modernity. Articulating mainly on four concepts - Man, God, Knowledge and Power - the discourse sets out from the experimental wisdom in Sufism and Christian mysticism, analyses the medieval alliance of theology with philosophy in Islam, Judaism and Christianity, and moves to the turn of mind actualized in the Italian Renaissance and its consequences: the beginning of science, the formation of colonial empires and their consequences, the mutations in the religious field caused by the Reformation and the new ideas on governance and toleration.

A significant part of the course are the open or guided debates aimed at stimulating the students' capacity of argumentation.

Instructor Details:

Name: GABRIELA DRAGNEA HORVATH, PhD

NYU Global Home Email Address: gd43@nyu.edu

Office Zoom Hours: Friday 10.00- 11.00 a.m. (Florence time)

[Appointments available via Zoom on request](#)

Inclusion, Diversity, Belonging and Equity

NYU is committed to building a culture that respects and embraces diversity, inclusion, and equity, believing that these values – in all their facets – are, as President Andrew Hamilton has said, “...not only important to cherish for their own sake, but because they are also vital for advancing knowledge, sparking innovation, and creating sustainable communities.” At NYU Florence, we are committed to creating a learning environment that:

- fosters intellectual inquiry, research, and artistic practices that respectfully and rigorously take account of a wide range of opinions, perspectives, and experiences; and
- promotes an inclusive community in which diversity is valued and every member feels they have a rightful place, is welcome and respected, and is supported in their endeavours.

NYU Florence embraces diversity and recognizes our responsibility to foster an open, welcoming environment where students, faculty and staff of all backgrounds can collaboratively learn, work and communicate. We will continually strive to work together to nurture a culture of inclusivity, compassion and mutual respect.

There are both on-campus and NYU Global resources available to students and staff wishing to share their experiences with us or offer suggestions for improvement. On-campus, students, faculty and staff can contact any one of our three local IDBE Liaisons, Mary Barbera, Lisa Cesarani and Angelica Pesarini. Students can also contact the Office of Academic Support or the Office of Student Life to talk to a member of staff. Students are invited to join the NYU Florence IDBE Student Committee and take on an active role in planning encouraging dialogues on issues around diversity and inclusion.

The Global NYU community can access the Office of Global Inclusion, Diversity and Strategic Innovation who works closely with students, faculty, administrators, and staff, regardless of where you may be located, to help make every aspect of NYU more equitable. You can contact them at globalinclusion@nyu.edu for more information and resources.

Bias Response Line

NYU's Bias Response Line (BRL) provides an open forum to members of our community and helps to

ensure that our community is equitable and inclusive. It is a centralized way to share or report experiences and concerns regarding bias, discrimination, or harassing behavior that may occur within our local or global NYU community. To contact the BRL, please email or call: 212-998-2277.

Desired Outcomes:

On completion of this course, students should:

- comprehend the connection between ideas and social and political realities in their historical embeddedness
- be able to appreciate the relevance of religion, philosophy, politics and science in the forging of modernity and to identify the historical roots of contemporary ideas
- have a better understanding of modern achievements and tensions by identifying their historical roots
- have improved their ability to think critically, engage in complex reasoning and express their thoughts clearly both orally and in written form
- master the basics of researching a topic using both primary and secondary sources

Assessment Components

- Attendance and Participation: 20%
- Written Assignments 1: 20%
- Written Assignment 2: 20%
- Midterm Exam: 20%
- Final Exam: 20%

Failure to submit or fulfill any required course component results in failure of the class.

Attendance and Participation

A good class participation implies a good attendance. The attendance rules are written further below.

Participation

Participation implies an academically appropriate department, attention and response to the professor's inquiries, engaging in team-work and class debates. Every student is supposed to watch the recorded introduction and read the text before class, guided by the study questions. Students are expected to accomplish various assignments for each class: answer a study question, a philosophical

dilemma, prepare a written report or power point presentation on a contemporary issue in a compare-contrast perspective with an analogous issue in the past. To optimize the assimilation of the course material, students are encouraged to voice their own questions or perplexities, which will then be solved together under the professor's guidance.

It is easy to get distracted by messages on your laptop or phone. Participation in class implies that students are continually mentally present and responsive. If a student is repeatedly exchanging private messages or doing other work in class, the attendance-participation grade will be automatically lowered and the final grade accompanied by a report on disrupting behavior.

For the sake of academic *decorum* students are kindly asked not to have their meals during class time. Beverages are accepted.

Roles, workshops, presentations and debate

Every student is expected to participate in debates and workshops, do a team presentation in class, and acquire specific skills by taking on various roles during the semester: Study Questions Master, member of a presentation team, Dilemmas Elucidations Master, Contemporary critic, debate participant.

Exams (totalizing 40%)

Midterm Exam – February 25

Final Exam – May 11

Written Assignments

Written Assignments – 20% each, so totalizing 40%

Written assignments need to totalize 3000-3750 words /or 15-20 pages, Times New Roman, font 12, double spaced, which means that each essay has to have around 7-8 pages.

The written assignments are to be sent to my mail: gd43@nyu.edu from your NYU mail in electronic format, .doc or .docx extension or as a Google shared doc that allows me to read and edit.

The topic regards the readings discussed in class. There are various formulas:

1. analyze a text placing it in its context going beyond the class discussions
2. inquire into one question in two texts in a comparative perspective
3. examine a topic (mysticism, religion and philosophy, philosophy and politics, the beginning of the scientific revolution) in one of the texts under study and in the contemporary world

First Essay: due on February 23 - 20%

Second Essay: due on May 6 - 20%

Written assignments requirements: For more details, please consult Paper Requirements in the shared Google folder.

General requirements:

- suggestive title (an essay without a title is not accepted)
- clear topic/dilemma formulation
- in-depth analysis
- balanced judgement
- well-reasoned and well-articulated discourse
- inquisitive approach and creative thinking
- ability to transpose into mentalities of other epochs and cultures
- clear and convincing style (rhetorical strategies)
- well-formulated conclusions
- **correctly quoted and correctly listed bibliography (an essay without bibliography is not accepted)**
- **good language command**

Assessment Expectations:

Grade A: The student's work demonstrates an understanding of the subject that goes beyond assigned course readings. The student writes essays/exam questions that are an original synthesis of source materials, demonstrating the ability to evaluate source material critically. Written arguments are clear, well-organized and well-presented; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student has distinguished himself/herself throughout the course of the semester for his/her contributions to class discussion.

Grade B: The student's work shows a clear understanding of assigned readings and materials covered in class. The student writes clear, well-organized and well-presented essays/exam questions; oral presentations are concise, incisive and supplemented by appropriate visual materials. The student is prepared in class and asks relevant questions.

Grade C: The student's work shows a basic understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. However, written and/or oral work is deficient in one or more of the following areas: clarity, organization or content. The student's work is generally in need of improvement

Grade D: The student's work shows occasional understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work is deficient in one of more of the follow areas: clarity, organization or content. The student does not participate in class discussion and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.

Grade F: The student's work does not demonstrate understanding of the subject treated in assigned readings and covered in class. Written and/or oral work are either insufficient or are not submitted. The student appears unprepared in class and has not frequented the instructor's office hours.

Grading Guidelines

A=94-100

A-=90-93

B+=87-89

B=84-86

B-=80-83

C+=77-79

C=74-76

C-=70-73

D+=67-69

D=65-66

F=below 65

Grading Policy

Please refer to Assessment Expectations and the policy on late submission of work

Academic Accommodations

Academic accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Please contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at 212-998-4980 or see the [Moses Center](#) for further information.

Students with disabilities who believe that they may need accommodations in a class are encouraged to contact the Moses Center for Students with Disabilities at (212) 998-4980 as soon as possible to better ensure that such accommodations are implemented in a timely fashion. For more information, see [Study Away and Disability](#).

Attendance Policy

Study abroad at Global Academic Centers is an academically intensive experience, in which students from a wide range of backgrounds exchange ideas in discussion-based seminars. Learning in such an environment depends on the active participation of all students. In blended course format, students, based on need and circumstance may attend class sessions in-person or remote synchronously online. Both are acceptable and would be considered present in class. Since classes typically meet once or twice a week, even a single absence can cause a student to miss a significant portion of a course. **To ensure the integrity of this academic experience, class attendance at the Global Sites is expected. Unexcused absences will affect students' semester participation grade.** Faculty will take attendance at the beginning of every class. For Go Local Students studying in Florence, **if you have scheduled a remote course immediately preceding/following an in-person class, you may want to discuss where at the Academic Center the remote course can be taken.** Both in-person and remote students are responsible for making up any work missed due to absence. Repeated unexcused absences in a course may result in failure. Please be in contact with your professor via email to meet during office hours to discuss any missed lectures and assignments and arrange a timeline for submitting missed work.

Excused Absences

In case of absence, regardless of the reason, the student is responsible for completing missed assignments, getting notes and making up missed work in a timely manner based upon a schedule that is mutually agreed upon between the faculty member and the student. **Absences should be**

reported to the Office of Academic Support via email and to your faculty member BEFORE your class meets for lesson.

Categories of Excused Absences

Absence Due to Illness

- If you are a Go Local student present in Florence and feel sick, please contact the Office of Student Life for assistance.
- COVID-19 related family emergencies will be considered as an excused absence
- The Office of Student Life, when assisting you in cases of severe or extended illness, will coordinate with the Office of Academic Support to properly record your absences

Due to Religious Observance

- Students observing a religious holiday during regularly scheduled class time are entitled to miss class without any penalty to their grade. This is for the holiday only and does not include the days of travel that may come before and/or after the holiday
- Please note that no excused absences for reasons other than illness can be applied retroactively.

Students with questions or needing clarification about this policy are instructed to contact a member of the Office of Academic Support located in Villa Ulivi or to email florence.academicsupport@nyu.edu

Late Submission of Work

- All course work must be submitted on the date specified on the syllabus.
- **This requirement has to do with respecting deadlines, but also with fairness: all students need to have the same amount of time to complete their work.**
- **If the deadline is, for example, March 14, midnight Florence time, then, for every 24 hours that pass a point will be subtracted from the grade. This is valid for seven days. A paper delivered on the 7th day will be graded starting from 93 points. After seven days the paper will no longer be accepted.**
- To request an extension on a deadline for an assignment, students must speak to the professor and the Assistant Academic one week prior to the due date
- **Extension is allowed only if health issues or serious family matters make it impossible for the student to complete the work on time. Excuses like lost document, etc. are not accepted. Students must make sure their work is preserved on pen drives or as a Google document in Google Drive.**

- To receive an incomplete for a course at the end of the semester, two weeks before final exams, both the student and the faculty member must meet with the Assistant Director of Academic Affairs to review the request and if granted, they must both sign an Incomplete Contract detailing the terms for completing missing coursework.

Plagiarism Policy

PLAGIARISM WILL NOT BE TOLERATED IN ANY FORM

The presentation of another person's words, ideas, judgment, images or data as though they were your own, whether intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes an act of plagiarism.

In the event of suspected or confirmed cases of plagiarism, the faculty member will consult first with the Assistant Director for Academic Affairs as definitions and procedures vary from school to school.

Writing Center

The NYU Florence Writing Center offers you feedback on any type of writing, at any stage in planning or drafting; very rough drafts are welcome. Sign up for an online consultation at the [Writing Center's website](#) and submit your working draft or ideas at least six hours in advance to [NYU Florence Writing Center](#). Please also note that the Writing Center does not correct or "fix" your writing but prompts you to think and work. The aim is to create stronger writers in the long term, not necessarily perfect papers in the short term.

Required Texts

You find all readings under NYU Classes Resources

Some are links to the texts, others scanned texts

Internet Research Guidelines

The careful use of internet resources is encouraged and a list of recommended websites will be given. Failure to cite internet and other non-traditional media sources in your written work constitutes plagiarism.

In NYU Classes on the left you have a list of links that help you get a first orientation on a subject or even secondary sources, like JSTOR, Internet Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, Encyclopedia Britannica

Additional Required Equipment:

N/A

Class Assignments and Topics:

Session 1 – Thursday, January 28

Introduction to the course. General survey of the main topic: the contribution of religion, philosophy, magic and science to modernity.

Session 2- Tuesday, February 2

Sufism

Reading: NYU Classes Resources – Al-Qushayri's *Epistle on Sufism*

Sufism: pp.288-292

The Oneness of God: pp.306-312

How some Sufis (of old) behaved at the time of their departure 312-319

Divine gnosis: 319-325

Love and Passionate Longing: 325-339

The vision of the Sufis: 392-403

For an explanation of the terms consult

Ch. 2 pp. 75-110

+ documentary on Sufism and its inspirer Rumi:

[Rumi documentary](#)

Session 3 – Friday, February 5

EXPERIMENTAL WISDOM – Christian Mysticism

Reading: *The Cloud of Unknowing* [in NYU Classes Resources](#)

Prayer+Prologue (pp.11-12); Chapters 1-37; 43-52; 61-67

Session 4- Tuesday, February 9

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY - Averroes (1126-1198)

Reading in NYU Classes: *On the Harmony of Religion and Philosophy*, (Kitab fasl al-maqal) –

Introduction

Problem First: The Creation of the Universe

Problem Second: The Advent of the Prophets

Problem Third: Of Fate and Predestination

Problem Fourth: Divine Justice and Injustice

Problem Fifth: The Day of Judgement

Session 5 – Thursday, February 11

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY - Maimonides (1135-1204)

Reading in NYU Classes: *The Guide for the Perplexed* (pp. 51-77)

Proofs for the existence of God; (pp.89-99)

The purpose of creation (149-157)

Session 6 – Tuesday, February 16

RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY - Thomas Aquinas (1225-1274)

Reading: NYU Classes- *Summa Theologica*

Question 1: The Nature and Extent of Sacred Doctrine

Question 2: The Existence of God

Thursday, February 18 – no class – finalize the first essay and prepare the exam review

Session 7- Tuesday, February 23

Exam Review

FIRST ESSAY DELIVERY

Session 8- Thursday, February 25

MID-TERM EXAM

Session 9 – Tuesday, March 2

THE RENAISSANCE Pico della Mirandola (1463-1494)

Reading: NYU Classes

Oratio de hominis dignitate/Oration of the Dignity of Man

Part II – Text begins on p. 107

Human Nature: articles 1-44

Magic & esoteric knowledge: articles 214-237

Session 10 – Thursday, March 4

THE RENAISSANCE Nature and experimentation – Leonardo da Vinci (1462-1519)

Reading: NYU Classes *Notebooks*: True Science (pp.3-13); Microcosm and Macrocosm (pp.44-50); Flying Machine (pp. 98-101); The Eye and The Appearance of Things (pp.102-112); The Life and Structure of Things (pp. 137-143)

Session 11 – Tuesday, March 9

THE RENAISSANCE Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)– Political thought

Reading: - The Prince, Chs I-XIII, including dedication (How to come to power)

Session 12 – Thursday, March 11

Niccolò Machiavelli (1469-1527)

Reading: *The Prince*, chs XIV- XXVI (How to keep power)

Session 13 – Tuesday, March 16

Debate on Machiavelli's ideas and his controversial reception in the posterity

Session 14 – Thursday, March 18

THE REFORMATION - Martin Luther (1483 – 1546)

Reading: NYU Classes *The Freedom of a Christian Man*

Session 15 – Tuesday, March 23

COLONIALISM: Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484-1566)

Reading in NYU Classes: *The Destruction of the Indies*

Description of the Destruction: pp. 1-53

Session 16 – Thursday, March 25

COLONIALISM: Bartolomé de Las Casas (1484-1566)

Reading: *The Destruction of the Indies*, pp. 89-119 (Other documents related to the conquest)

Class debate on the motivations and consequences of colonialism

Session 17 – Tuesday, March 30

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN SCIENCE Francis Bacon (1561 – 1626)

Reading: NYU Classes *Novum Organum*: Book I pp.33-56 (APHORISMS I to LXVIII, THAT IS 1-68)

Session 18 – Thursday, April 1

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN SCIENCE, Galileo Galilei (1564 – 1642),

Reading: NYU Classes *Dialogue Concerning the Two Chief World Systems*

To the Discerning Reader: pp. 77-82

First Day: pp. 83- 117

(Arguments ag. Aristotle's theories:83-107

Human versus Divine Understanding:107-117)

Session 19 – Tuesday, April 6

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY René Descartes (1596 – 1650)

Reading: NYU Classes- *Meditations on First Philosophy*, First, Second, Third, Meditations

Session 20 – Thursday, April 8

René Descartes (1596 – 1650)

Reading: Fourth, Fifth and Sixth Meditation

Session 21 – Tuesday, April 13

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY - Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

Reading: NYU Classes- *The Leviathan*

Part I, Ch. XIII- Of the Natural Condition of Mankind pp. 76-79

Part I, Ch. XIV – 79-88

Session 22 – Thursday, April 15

Thomas Hobbes (1588-1679)

Reading: NYU Classes: *The Leviathan*

Part II, Chs XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX, XXI, pp.103-137

Session 23 – Tuesday, April 20

THE BEGINNING OF MODERN PHILOSOPHY

John Locke (1632-1704); *Essay Concerning Human Understanding*

Book II, Ch XXVII: *Of Identity and Diversity*, pp. 262-280.

Book IV, Ch. X: *Of Our Knowledge of the Existence of a God*, pp. 515-524.

Session 24 – Thursday, April 22

John Locke: *Second Treatise on Government*

Chapters 1-13

Reading: NYU Classes Resources

Session 25 – Tuesday, April 27

Locke: *Second Treatise on Government*

Chapters 17, 18, 19. +

Letter Concerning Toleration

Reading: NYU Classes Resources

Session 26 – Thursday, April 29

Workshop: main directions of early modern philosophy and religion: Pico della Mirandola, Martin Luther, Descartes

Session 27 – Tuesday, May 4

Workshop: Theory and practice in politics: Machiavelli, Hobbes, Locke

Session 28 – Thursday, May 6

Workshop: early modern scientific revolution: Leonardo da Vinci, Francis Bacon, Galileo

Delivery of second paper

Session 29 – Thursday, May 11

FINAL EXAM

Class Time Expectations

We ask students to consider the following class time expectations to ensure a productive class:

- Prepare your workspace for class, limit non-class activities during synchronous class time.
- If you are not using your cell phone to follow the lesson, cell phones should be turned off or in silent mode during class time.
- If deemed necessary by the study away site (i.e. a COVID related need), synchronous class sessions may be recorded and archived for other students to view. This will be announced at the beginning of class time.
- Students should be respectful and courteous at all times to all participants in class. Consider using the chat function or “raise hand” function in order to add your voice to class discussions.
- Please be mindful of your microphone and video display during synchronous class meetings. Ambient noise and some visual images may disrupt class time for you and your peers.

Your Instructor

TEACHING COMMITMENT

Technology is rapidly changing the approach to teaching and learning. True to the old Socratic method, I am trying not to deliver information, but to create the conditions for the students to comprehend the past and its importance for the present, using their own critical and creative capacities. Encouraging them to make analogies to their own experiences or their previous knowledge, to ask questions, motivate their discourses and challenge convictions, including my own, stimulates their self-awareness. Einstein said once: "A person starts to live when he can live outside himself." The students' journey to

the past enabled by this course is also a quest for their own identity. As far as I am concerned, teaching the past is reviving it with every group of students and every time this becomes a new intellectual adventure. I am the guide, but I benefit from this process of live thought as much as I hope students do, as I learn to look with their eyes, which is a form of participation in the future.

BIO-NOTE

Gabriela Dragnea Horvath teaches for the NYU Global Liberal Studies Program, serves as general editor for the on-line publication *Voyages-Journal of Contemporary Humanism* and is a member of the Academic Advisory Committee. She has two Masters degrees, one in English and German (Bucharest) and another one in English literature, religion and philosophy (Florence), a degree in journalism (Romanian Academy of Journalism) and a PhD in philosophy at the Free University Berlin. Her publications include essays, book reviews, translations of poetry and short stories in magazines and anthologies in Italy, Romania, USA, Canada, Great Britain, Australia. She has authored a monograph in Italian, *Shakespeare ermetismo, mistica, magia* (Rome, 2003); has co-authored a book of fiction in Romanian (*Preludi epici* Epic Preludes, Bucharest, 1990), has co-translated with Stuart Friebert and Adriana Varga the volume *Hands Behind My Back*, by Marin Sorescu (Oberlin Translation Series, 1991), prefaced by Seamus Heaney. In 2015 her essay *Philosophie, Magie de la parole, encyclopédie: la Tipocosmia d’Alessandro Citolini*, was published in the volume *Le masque de l’écriture*, Droz, Geneva. Her comparative study *Theatre, Magic and Philosophy: William Shakespeare, John Dee and the Italian legacy* was published in 2017 with the Routledge printing house. In 2019 her essay *A’ la recherche du sens perdu: Walter Whiter et la doctrine de Locke sur l’association des idées*, appeared in the volume *John Locke: les idées et les choses*, Éditions Mimésis, Philosophie, volume published with the support of C.N.R and the Istituto per la storia del pensiero filosofico e scientifico moderno (ISPF), Napoli-Milano.

In 2019 she received the NYU Global LSP Teaching Excellence Award.

On the NYU campus she is in charge of organizing pedagogy seminars for faculty and has created with the freshmen of the academic year 2013-14 the *Giglio Viola Ethics Society*, a campus organization aimed at bringing together students interested in exploring the ethical dimension of controversial contemporary issues beyond the class environment. It promotes fairness, transparency and respect for cultural diversity.