

INTD 354: Medieval Studies
Poetry and Cosmology in the Middle Ages
(Also known as ENGL 390)

Fall 2006

This is a course that explores what science and literature had to say to each other in the Middle Ages. Starting in the ancient world with Greek Science and Mathematics, we trace the development of ancient and medieval theories of the universe, and show how they are embodied in important literary texts, as well as in the artistic and architectural “texts” of the Middle Ages, ending with the seminal figure of Dante.

Instructors:

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Texts: The following are available at Sundance Books on School Street

Michael Schneider, *A Beginner's Guide to Constructing the Universe*

Plato, *Timaeus* (Cornford Translation)

Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*

Dante, *Paradiso* (Musa Translation)

Cook and Herzman, *The Medieval World View*

Course packet

Always bring assigned text to class!!

Requirements:

1. A series of geometrical constructions, exercises which will help you to understand the mathematical principles we are studying from the inside. These will count roughly 20% of the course grade.
2. Two papers: the first will be roughly 4-5 pages in length. The second will be 8 pages, not counting notes. Together the papers will count roughly 45% of the course grade.
3. A final examination will count for 25% of the course grade.
4. Participation makes up the remaining 10%.

Class Schedule:

In addition to the schedule of readings below, you are required to read *The Medieval World View*, especially if this is your first real encounter with the Middle Ages. You should read at least two chapters of MWW each week in order to finish the book by week five.

8/28

Introduction / Begin the *Timaeus*, MWW, and Schneider (a chapter per class is a good rate)

8/30 Introduction to Greek mathematics and Science
9/1 – 9/11 Plato, *Timaeus* and Genesis ch. 1
9/13 Aristotle
9/15 -9/20 Boethius, *The Consolation of Philosophy*
and Augustine: Confessions, Book 11
9/22-9/25 Cicero and Macrobius
9/27-9/29 The Art of Justinian / Read the Book of Wisdom
10/2 12th Century Platonism
10/4 Hildegard of Bingen
10/6 Aristotle in the Middle Ages
10/11 Aquinas, Bonaventure, and Siger of Brabant
10/13-10/20 Cathedral of Notre Dame de Chartres
10/23-12/11 Dante: Paradiso 12/13 8 AM Final Exam