

SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY

Course Syllabus

Department of History

Course No. UI 418

The European Mind

New: Fa 1998

- I. Catalogue Description and Credit Hours of Course: An examination of the origin and development of modern European thought and culture. (3 credit hours)
- II. Interdisciplinary Nature of the Course: This course investigates the main currents of European scientific, philosophic, religious, political, social, and economic thought from the Scientific Revolution to the present. In addition, it examines the modern European mind through its art, music, and literature. Each of these ways of seeing the world and the human condition is studied in the historical context of the period. Drawn from the work of the intellectual historians J.G.A. Pocock and James T. Kloppenberg and the political philosopher Quentin Skinner, the methodology underlying this course examines ideas in the linguistics and social milieu in which they arose and flourished. It also strives to ascertain the influence of those ideas on their culture. The European Mind, therefore, is intended to help students understand the interrelationship among the ways of seeing as they are represented in the three perspectives of the University Studies program: Perspectives on the Individual Expression, Natural Systems, and Human Institutions. In particular, it integrates the categories of artistic and literary expression and physical, living, behavioral, social, political, and economic systems in the context of the development of a major civilization.

The following examples from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries are intended to clarify how the perspectives and categories of the University Studies program will be integrated in the study of the European mind. First, in scientific thought, Darwin's theory of evolution was a product of geology [Physical Systems], biology [Living Systems], and Thomas Malthus' theory of population [Economic Systems]. Evolutionary thought also affected theories about how societies developed in Social Darwinism [Social Systems] and how people thought and behaved in the New Psychology [Behavioral Systems]. Second, the writings of philosophers Nietzsche and Bergson [Literary Expression and Behavioral Systems]; physician, psychologist, and social theorist Freud [Behavioral and Social Systems]; and physicists Planck, Einstein, and Bohr [Physical Systems] created a sense of uncertainty about human nature and the physical environment in which humans live. This sense of uncertainty affected European culture and appeared in the work of painters, such as Munk and Picasso, and musicians, such as Schoenberg and Stravinsky [Artistic Expression]. Third, the development of capitalism and socialism [Economic Systems], mixed with nationalism, affected the theory and practice of democracy, communism, and fascism [Political and Social Systems]. Furthermore, the existence of modern collectivist societies [Political, Social, and Economic Systems] worried such novelists as George Orwell and Aldous Huxley [Literary Systems]. Finally, the story of these and other developments in emergence of the modern mind from the Scientific Revolution to the Contemporary Age occurred in the context of European history [Development of a Major Civilization].

III. Prerequisite(s): Junior standing and completion of Artistic or Literary Expression, Physical or Living Systems, Social or Political Systems and Development of a Major Civilization.

IV. Purposes or Objectives of the Course:

- A. To provide students with knowledge of the main currents of modern European scientific, philosophic, religious, political, economic, and social thought. (Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 9)
- B. To introduce students to the modern European mind through its art, music, and literature. (Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, and 8)
- C. To help students comprehend the changing view of the world and the human condition evident in modern European thought and explain how those perspectives have helped to form the intellectual context of the late twentieth century. (Objectives 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 9)
- D. To enable students to demonstrate how the events and intellectual currents of an individual's life affect his or her thinking through an investigation of the life and thought of a modern European intellectual. (Objectives 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6)
- E. To provide students with intellectual tools that will help them make sound judgments regarding the social, political and moral questions they will likely face as a citizen of a democratic society.

V. Expectations of Students:

- A. Complete all reading assignments
- B. Participate in class discussions
- C. Satisfactorily complete two essay examinations
- D. Satisfactorily complete and defend an interdisciplinary research project.

VI. Course Content or Outline:

- A. Introduction: The foundations of the Western intellectual tradition (3 hrs.)
- B. Shaping the modern European mind (9 hrs.)
 - 1. The Scientific Revolution
 - 2. Revolution in political thought
 - 3. The Age of Enlightenment
- C. Evolution of the Enlightenment tradition (9 hrs.)
 - 1. Romanticism and German idealism

2. Rise of ideologies
 3. Thought and culture in an age of science and industrialism
- D. The crisis of the European mind (12 hrs.)
1. Modern consciousness
 2. Modern art and music
 3. Irrationalism in political thought
 4. Thought and culture in an era of world wars and totalitarianism
- E. The contemporary age (3 hrs.)
- F. Presentation of seminar papers (9 hrs.)
- VII. Textbook(s) and/or Other Required Materials:
- A. Textbook: Marvin Perry, An Intellectual History of Modern Europe (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1993).
 - B. Supplementary textbook: Marvin Perry, Joseph R. Peden, and Theodore H. Von Laue, Sources of the Western Tradition, 4th ed., vol. II: From the Renaissance to the Present (Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company, 1999).
- VIII. Basis for Student Evaluation
- A. Class participation - 25%
 - B. Essay examinations - 25%
 - C. Research paper - 50%
- IX. Justification for Inclusion in the University Studies Program:
- A. Demonstrate the Ability to Locate and Gather Information.
 1. Emphasis: Significant.
 2. Course Content: Beginning with a bibliographical lesson in the library, a substantial amount of time in this course is devoted to the study of the lives and works of modern European intellectuals. Such study requires the use of a variety of biographical reference works and biographies as well as primary sources and journals in philosophy, history, art, literature, political science, sociology, and religion. These sources illuminate the lives, times, and writings of the people who propounded the ideas that moved European society and, thereby Western Civilization, from the seventeenth to the twentieth centuries.
 3. Teaching Strategies: The primary means of instruction are guided bibliographical research and tutorial sessions on independent research.
 4. Student Assignments: The students will participate in a guided bibliographical research activity in which they will learn to use the tools of gathering biographical information. Following their decision to study a

particular intellectual, they will gather search for biographies about that person, studies of his or her work, and samples of that work. This task will require them to employ the historical method of research and interpretation and the method of interpretation germane to the field of the intellectual's work. For example, a student might study the life and work of Dietrich Bonhoeffer, which would require him or her to use both history and religion in the study of Bonhoeffer's ideas.

5. Student Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on their ability to identify appropriate sources of information on the life, time, and work of a European intellectual; to collect pertinent information about him or her; and to synthesize the information from a variety of primary and secondary sources.

B. Demonstrate capabilities for critical thinking, reasoning, and analyzing.

1. Emphasis: Significant.
2. Content: The content of this course concentrates on the connections between historical forces and modern ideas and intellectual systems. It examines the efforts of intellectuals critically to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate ideas regarding the nature of humanity, the world, and society in the context of modern European history. It presents exemplars of critical thinking in science, religion, philosophy, political and social theory, as well as art, music, and literature. In order to engage in the study of the history of ideas, one must think critically. Thus, the very nature of the content of this course entails critical thinking, analyzing, and reasoning.
3. Teaching Strategies: The primary mode of instruction designed to foster critical thinking in students is large and small group discussion of primary and secondary sources. Often, brief writing exercises are used to stimulate these discussions. Lectures on the period under study supplement this critical investigation of ideas.
4. Student Assignments: Students will engage in a variety of reading, writing, and oral assignments aimed at developing their ability to think critically. They will read about European thinkers and study excerpts from their works for each class session. They will regularly write brief commentaries on the reading assignments and share their thoughts with classmates. Group discussions will require them to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the ideas of the intellectuals under study. They will also provide students with opportunities to compare ideas on a particular issue from different periods and with those of the present. For example, students will read and compare the thought of Mary Wollstonecraft on the condition of women with those of John Stuart Mill and with current feminist thought.
5. Student Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on their ability to analyze, synthesize, and evaluate the thoughts of European intellectuals through the reading, writing, and oral assignments noted above.

C. Demonstrate effective communication skills.

1. Emphasis: Significant.

2. Content: The required readings of this course offer a variety of sources for studying how humans attempt to communicate their ideas in writing. In some cases, the readings are excerpts of speeches, which offer students the opportunity to examine a text intended for oral delivery. For example, Emmaline Pankhurst's speech "Why we are Militant" is part of the readings on feminism.
3. Teaching Strategies: Oral communication skills will be developed through regular class discussions, an oral presentation, and questioning of presenters. Written communication skills will be fostered through in-class writing assignments, essay examinations, and the interdisciplinary paper. Guidelines for writing biographical essays will assist students in preparing their papers.
4. Student Assignment: In each class session students will be expected to participate in discussions of reading assignments. They also will be required to make an oral presentation on their interdisciplinary research paper and to question their fellow classmates on their presentations. Each student will practice written communication through the means noted above.
5. Evaluation: The basis for evaluating students' performance in both oral and written communications will be the organization and clarity of their work and the degree to which they communicate an understanding the topics under study.

D. Demonstrate an understanding of human experiences and the ability to relate them to the present.

1. Emphasis: Significant.
2. Content: This course is a study of how European intellectuals of the modern era responded from their own experience and from what they knew of the experience of others to fundamental human questions, such as What is the nature of reality? Is there a god? What is the nature of the human being? What is knowledge and how do humans come to have? How should humans live and behave? How should society be organized and governed? For example, in the seventeenth century European intellectuals saw physical nature as static and human nature as fixed. But between the end of the eighteenth and the middle of the nineteenth centuries, they had begun to see the world as dynamic and the human species as evolving. The course also will investigate the life and mind of particular intellectuals in an attempt to explain why they responded to the fundamental questions that most interested them. For example, how did his conversion to Roman Catholicism and the ideas of St. Thomas Aquinas affect the thinking of the French philosopher Jacques Maritain after having been reared and educated in a world dominated by science and scientific thinking, especially about humanity? This course is an investigation of the making of the modern European mind. Given that, during much of the period it covers, Europeans and Americans increasingly participated together in the western intellectual tradition, it is intended to provide an understanding of many of the most significant ideas that continue to influence European and American life today.

3. Teaching Strategies: An understanding of human experiences will be fostered through lectures on specific aspects of topics mentioned in the course readings and through large- and small-group discussions with students of the ideas of European intellectuals presented in the primary sources included in those readings.
 4. Student Assignments: Students will read and discuss primary and secondary sources on the European mind. A portion of each class session will be devoted to discussion of student written or oral responses to the assigned primary sources. Often they will be asked to speculate as to how the issues of the readings affect our thinking today. For example, how does the conflict between science and religion over the issue of human origins continue to affect us in late twentieth-century America? In addition to essay examinations over the course materials that deal with human experiences, students will investigate the life of an intellectual in order to deepen their understanding of human experiences. They will, then, share the results of their research with their classmates in an oral presentation, thus furthering the entire classes' understanding of human experiences.
 5. Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the extent to which they are able to connect the ideas of European intellectuals to their lives and times, and where appropriate, to our own time. There will be several opportunities for students to make these connections ranging from class discussions to examinations to their research paper and oral presentation. In as much as this course is a study of the development of modern human thought and its influence on human behavior in the past and present, students also will be evaluated on the logic of their conclusions about effect of ideas on actions.
- E. Demonstrate an understanding of various cultures and their interrelationships.
1. Emphasis: Considerable.
 2. Contents: Although it is fashionable today to see Europe as a monolithic culture, one only has to look at the history of ethnic conflicts and religious wars or the current struggles of ethnic groups for independence to see the various cultures that exist in European countries. The variations in European cultures even affect the acceptance of ideas. In the nineteenth century, for example, Darwin's theory of evolution failed to convince many French scientists who steadfastly held to the Lamarckian explanation. Lamarck was a Frenchman. Hence, one of the tasks of this course is to show how ideas originate in one European country and develop variations in others. In some cases, this effort entails looking at American manifestations of ideas.
 3. Teaching Strategies: In the discussions of primary sources noted above, an effort will be made to point out the cultural variations of ideas and their applications. These discussions will be supported by background lectures on the period.
 4. Student Assignments: The principal means by which students will become aware of various cultural manifestations of ideas is through their reading of the textbook and primary source anthology. In addition, their

major research projects often deal with intellectuals from various national cultures.

5. Evaluation: None.

F. Demonstrate the ability to integrate the breadth and diversity of knowledge and experience.

1. Emphasis: Significant.

2. Contents: At the heart of this course is integration of knowledge. Through the lenses of the disciplines intellectual history and philosophy, it attempts to examine the range of European ideas in science, philosophy, religion, political and social thought, art, music, and literature, and show how these ways of seeing influence each other in the formation of various worldviews. It also attempts to show students how ideas generated in one field of human endeavor were absorbed into other fields of study. For example, the way of seeing the natural world that had emerged in the Scientific Revolution of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries changed European intellectuals' sense of reality from one of being to that of becoming by the end of the eighteenth century. This dynamic outlook in the form of scientific thinking then began to permeate the European mind in the nineteenth century. Thus some European intellectuals, such as August Comte, revolted against speculative philosophy and sought to formulate a science of society, and historians, such as Leopold von Ranke, endeavored to make history a genuine science. Later in that century, scientific thinking led to the creation of the so-called New Psychology. Wilhelm Wundt, a philosopher who studied the working of the human mind, established the first experimental laboratory for the study of psychology at the University of Leipzig in 1879. His work, along with that of G. Stanley Hall and others, led to the reorientation of the study of human psychology away from introspection toward experimentation, and to the establishment of psychology as a discipline. Finally, the scientific outlook was not limited to what eventually became modern social science. It also permeated the humanities in the latter half of the nineteenth century, as exemplified in the novels of Emile Zola, Jack London, and Gerhart Hauptmann.

3. Teaching Strategies: To demonstrate further the integration of knowledge, the various intellectual movements studied in this course are investigated through historical and philosophical analyses in lectures and discussions of readings with students. In addition, guest scholars from the fields of science, art, and music analyze intellectual developments in their respective fields. For example, a music historian discusses how modern ideas in music of the early twentieth century, such as Arnold Schoenberg's twelve-tone scale, reflected the doubts about fixed rules grounded in the certainty of truth that were coursing through the European mind.

4. Student Assignments: Through reading of primary and secondary sources, their research project and through lectures, in-class writing assignments, and discussions, students will be exposed to the integration of knowledge. Especially in the readings, they will see first hand, for example, the influence of scientific thinking on various dimensions of the European

mind outside of the natural and physical sciences. In essay examinations, they will be expected to explain the differences and similarities between the Enlightenment view of the human condition and that of the Romantic Era. The major research assignment is intended to provide an opportunity for students to apply the method of historical and biographical analysis to the life and work of a European intellectual. The interdisciplinary nature of this project becomes readily apparent when a student is confronted with the problem of demonstrating some understanding of the research perspective of intellectual history and of the field of endeavor that the intellectual represents. To study work of Jacques Maritain, for example, one must understand the method intellectual history and the disciplines of philosophy and religion. Students in this course will be introduced to this interdisciplinary task.

5. Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the extent to which they are able to show how knowledge is integrated. There will be several opportunities demonstrate this skill: class writing assignments and discussions, on essay examinations and in their interdisciplinary research project.

G. Demonstrate the ability to make informed intelligent value decisions.

1. Emphasis: Significant.
2. Contents: The study of the European mind is essentially the investigation of the values that have informed the thinking of European intellectuals as they have struggled with the problems of human life and society. For example, in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, conservatives, liberals, and radicals sought to convince the citizens of England and France that their respective ideologies were best for organizing and governing society: Edmund Burke and Joseph de Maistre espoused tradition as the organizing principal of society; John Stuart Mill and Benjamin Constant looked to the liberal ideal of individual freedom; and Thomas Paine and Jeremy Bentham represented the radical tradition in their faith in individual goodness and the expansion of happiness to the greatest number. The debate among conservative, liberal, and radical political and social ideologies continues today, albeit in a different context. Thus, by providing an understanding of the clash of the values these ideologies espoused in the past and how they have evolved, as well as an opportunity to debate them, the course lays the foundation for intelligent value decisions regarding the society in which students live today. Another example of how the study of the European mind informs value decisions is in the discussions of the value of equality as manifest in the struggle over women's rights in Europe. The course traces the evolution of the ideas about the rights of women through comparisons of the writings of Mary Wollstonecraft, John Stuart Mill, Emmaline Pankhurst, and Simone de Beauvoir. Again, although the context has changed, this issue affects the lives of students today. By studying and debating the evolution of feminist thought, students have an opportunity to make up their own minds about the value of equality.

3. Teaching Strategies: Through in-class writing, discussions, and debates about readings, supplemented by background lectures, instruction in this course will emphasize the evolution and influence of values. Students will be challenged to examine their own values in relation to those promoted by the intellectual movements of modern Europe through guided discussions that consider the context and meaning of values.
4. Student Assignments: By reading the primary sources for the course, students will gain some knowledge of the values that underlay the intellectual movements of modern Europe. They will then be asked to write, in class and on examinations, about the ideas of the intellectuals and evaluate their viewpoints, in light of the context in which they were written and the extent of their continued influence on the present. Students also will debate the merits of various viewpoints as a means of cultivating the critical capacity to make value decisions.
5. Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on their ability clearly and accurately to describe the values of the European mind and how they evolved as the context changed. They also will be evaluated on their ability to compare the competing values of a given era and to argue for one viewpoint over another.

H. Demonstrate the ability to make informed sensitive aesthetic responses.

1. Emphasis: Some.
2. Contents: There are two senses in which the contents of this course cultivate aesthetic responses. First is the aesthetic sense offered by the worldviews of the competing intellectual movements of modern Europe, which attempted to make sense of the world and bring order to human existence. A case in point is the contrast between the Enlightenment view of the human nature and that of the Romantic Era. The philosophes tended to emphasize the importance of human reason over that of the emotions and imagination. In their political and social tracts, they attempted to show how human reason could solve the problems of the social order. The romantics, on the other hand, wanted to liberate the imagination and the emotions, and not rely solely on reason in human life. Through poetry, prose, and paintings, they attempted to express the range of human emotion and the extent of human imagination. Thus these worldviews contrasted the idea of humans as thinking machines with the notion of flesh and blood human beings. Each one offered its adherents a perspective on life that was ordered, consistent, and meaningful. The second sense in which the course aims at fostering aesthetic responses is by showing works of art reflected the changes in how Europeans saw themselves and their world. This effort to look at a more traditional sense of aesthetics is accomplished most clearly through lessons on modern art and music.
3. Teaching Strategies: The first sense of aesthetics will be fostered through discussions of readings on the various worldviews and their images of human life and society. The second aesthetic sense will be cultivated through presentations by art and music historians.

4. Student Assignments: Students will read primary and secondary sources that portray the various intellectual movements of modern Europe. They will then be asked to describe orally or in writing their understanding of how the intellectuals of these movements saw the world and the human condition.
 5. Evaluation: None.
- I. Demonstrate the ability to act responsibly in one's natural, social, and political environment.
1. Emphasis: Considerable.
 2. Contents: This course is designed to teach students about the contributions of European intellectuals to the formation of what might be called the modern mind. Through historical and philosophical examinations of the scientific, philosophic, religious, political, social, and economic ideas propounded over the past four centuries, it investigates the solutions to fundamental human problems offered by European intellectuals. In so doing, it provides students the opportunity to expand their knowledge and understanding of the various field of human thought and, in some instances, to test their values against those of the European intellectuals. Thus, this course is intended to give students the intellectual tool which to act responsibly in their natural, social, and political environment. For example, by studying and debating the conservative, liberal, and radical ideologies of the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, and by comparing them with their contemporary counterparts, students will be better prepared to make responsible political decisions than if they merely relied on the superficial rhetoric proffered by politicians in their election campaigns.
 3. Teaching Strategies: The principal means by which the mental tools for responsible action will be developed in this course are class discussions and debates, supplemented by background lectures. Students will be challenged in guided discussions to think critically about the worldviews presented in the course and to examine the implications of those viewpoints for responsible decisions in their original context and, where appropriate, in the present.
 4. Student Assignments: As with the other objectives, students will read primary and secondary sources that portray the evolution of the European mind. They will then be expected to participate in discussions on those readings. Examinations will challenge them to demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the intellectual movements and, where appropriate, to draw their implications for responsible decisions.
 5. Evaluation: Students will be evaluated on the extent of their knowledge and understanding of the intellectual movements of modern Europe, on their ability critically to analyze and compare various ideas, and on their ability to apply their knowledge and understanding to responsible decisions.
- X. Background: This course allows for individual or team instruction. An individual with interdisciplinary preparation in intellectual history and philosophy, or related fields, could

teach it with the assistance of scholars in science, art, and music. A team composed of an intellectual historian and a philosopher, supplemented by scholars in science, art, and music also could teach this course.

- XI. Class Size: Due to the amount of time devoted to class discussions and writing assignments in which students must actively participate, the optimum class size for this course is twenty-five students.