NEW COURSE PROPOSAL

Course Title
HON 300?: Dante’s Afterlife

Course Description
This course is devoted to one of the most fascinating and influential masterpieces of Western literature, Dante Alighieri's Divine Comedy. Dante's poem relates one man's journey from the dark wood of error to the vision of truth, but as readers we not only observe the pilgrim's journey through the afterlife, we participate in it as well. We encounter questions about the nature of evil, the possibility for spiritual improvement, and the experience of true happiness, and we discover surprising parallels with our own time. While situating Dante's work within the intellectual and social context of the late Middle Ages, the course also challenges students to recognize Dante's presence in modern and contemporary global culture and mediascape.

Honors Program Learning Outcomes
Upon completing a course in the University Honors Program students will have:

a. obtained a starting point for integrative exploration of the development of cultures and intellectual achievements through a variety of disciplinary and interdisciplinary perspectives;
b. sharpened their ability to critically analyze and synthesize a broad range of knowledge through the study of primary texts and through engagement in active learning with fellow students, faculty, and texts (broadly understood);
c. understood how to apply more integrative and interdisciplinary forms of understanding in the advancement of knowledge and in addressing complex challenges shaping the world;
d. developed effective communication skills.

Course Learning Outcomes
Upon completing this course students will be able to:

• Describe and discuss main historical events of the period
• Discuss Dante's Divine Comedy, with particular emphasis on its historical and aesthetic significance.
• Investigate and interpret the influence of Dante's Divine Comedy in contemporary global pop culture and media.
• Improve critical thinking, reading, writing skills while examining some episodes of the poem using a variety of media.

Content
• Defining features of the cultural, religious and political context for Dante’s work.
• Theological, literary, geographic, and historical references in Dante's Divine Comedy.
• Aims and layers of Dante’s narrative and poetic style.
• The structure of Dante’s afterlife and its religious and philosophic basis.
• Digital humanities approaches to the study of literature and Dante’s Divine Comedy in particular.
• Adaptations of Dante’s Divine Comedy in various media and its contemporary cultural influence.

Texts
• **Websites:**
  - Danteworlds (University of Texas at Austin) http://danteworlds.laits.utexas.edu/
  - Digital Dante (Columbia University) http://digitaldante.columbia.edu/
  - The World of Dante (University of Virginia) http://www.worldofdante.org/
  - The Dante Society of America https://www.dantesociety.org/

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**Teaching Strategies**
- Interactive lectures
- Class discussions and activities
- Critical essays
- Collaborative presentations
- Reading reports
- Audio and visual materials provided by instructor

**Assessment Strategies**
- Class discussions and activities
- Critical essays
- Creative assignments
- Collaborative presentations
- Reading reports