

Pierce in Vienna- Fall 2007 Course Schedule

Professor Jed Donelan, Assistant Professor of Philosophy and Humanities

Title of Semester Program:

- A Bit More Than Three in Vienna (Ein Bißchen mehr als drei in Wien)

Brief Description of Semester Program:

The Habsburgs, the ruling family of Vienna, were Austrian monarchs, Holy Roman Emperors, and Emperors of the Austrian-Hungarian Empire (plus some). When a Habsburg died, the heart was placed in a silver urn in the Church of Augustine Friars, the intestines were placed in a copper urn in the catacombs of St. Stephen's Cathedral, and the body was interred in the royal Capucine Crypt. But the Habsburgs were more than the sum of these three parts, as Vienna was more than the capital of Austria, the Holy Roman Empire, and the Austrian-Hungarian Empire.

The triple division of the Hapsburgs provides the organizing metaphor for the program of study in Vienna. For a bit more than three months we will study a bit more than three courses, each covering a bit more than three things. In the first course "Habsburgian Divisions," we will study the art (heart), politics (intestines?) and history (body), of the lands ruled by the Habsburgs. The second course, "Three Monotheisms," will engage the Jewish, Christian (primarily Catholic) and Islamic traditions, particularly in reference to the Viennese experience of each religion. The third, "Psyche, Sense, and Science," will look at the thought of Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Karl Popper, with particular emphasis on how their city of origin shaped their respective philosophies. Students will also take on an independent project, wherein they will be responsible for exploring and reporting back on their own Viennese experiences in ways that emphasize course themes.

Course I: Habsburgian Divisions (300 level)

Course II: Three Monotheisms in Vienna (200 level)

Course III: Psyche, Sense, and Science (300 level)

COURSE I

Title: Habsburgian Divisions (300 level)

Course Description:

A Habsburg ruled as Holy Roman Empire from 1273 until the empire's disbandment in 1806 by Napoleon. Habsburgs continued as Emperors of the Austrian, later Austrian-Hungarian, Empire, and were the hereditary monarchs of Austria until World War I put an end to the dynasty in 1918. As such the Habsburgs witnessed the end of the Middle Ages, the Protestant Reformation, the rise and consequences of the French Revolution, and the birth of the 20th Century. This

course will look at European developments from the 14th to the 19th centuries from the perspective of the lands of Habsburg rule. Emphasis will be placed on intellectual and cultural events, such as the power of baroque architecture and sculpture as a symbol of the Catholic Counter-Reformation, and the rise of nationalism among the different peoples ruled by the Habsburgs.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the extent, both in time and area, of Habsburg rule;
- To become familiar with the different cultural and intellectual movements taking place within the Habsburg lands, including the Baroque movement in art and nationalism;
- To engage and be able to discuss works of art – plastic, musical, and literary – that were created within the time frame and area we will be studying;
- To understand how the lands of the Habsburgs both directed and mirrored developments in other parts of Europe.

Method of Instruction and Evaluation:

Course will be conducted as a mix of lecture and discussion. Students will be provided a schedule of course readings. Class lecture and discussion will focus on the day's assigned readings. Students will be required to complete regular reflection papers or quizzes covering course material. Students will be required to undertake one piece of sustained research on a topic of their choice relevant to course themes and materials. Students will also take a midterm and a final.

COURSE II

Title: Three Monotheisms in Vienna (200 level).

Course Description:

This course will look at the three Abrahamic faiths – Judaism, Christianity, and Islam – with particular reference to the Viennese experience of each faith. The sacred texts and developmental history of each faith will be explored; their commonalities and distinctions will be emphasized. Particular historical attention will be given to the rise of Catholicism and Islam as institutional powers and cultural rivals in the Middle Ages, and the place of Jews within each culture. The course will conclude by emphasizing the Viennese experience of each faith by looking at the Catholic nature of Habsburgian civilization, the conditions that led Vienna to be the birthplace of both Zionism and Nazi anti-Semitism, and the Viennese encounter with Islam, from the repelling of the Turkish invasion in 1683 to the contemporary influx of Islamic immigrants.

Course Objectives:

- To understand the shared history and assumptions of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam;
- To understand the theological and doctrinal differences among these three faiths, and the sources of their oft expressed common antipathy toward each other;
- To understand how doctrinal differences and cultural competition shaped the history of Europe from the Middle Ages through the 20th Century;
- To understand how all of this manifested itself in the particular city of Vienna.

- To develop critical thinking, reading, and expressive skills in a sustained and systematic way.

Method of Instruction and Evaluation:

Course will be conducted as a mix of lecture and discussion. Students will be provided a schedule of course readings. Class lecture and discussion will focus on the day's assigned readings. Students will be required to complete regular reflection papers or quizzes covering course material. Students will be required to undertake one piece of sustained reflection on a topic of their choice relevant to course themes and materials. Students will also take a series of exams covering course content.

COURSE III

Title: Psyche, Sense, and Science (300 level)

Course Description:

This course will look at three of the most influential thinkers of the 20th Century – Sigmund Freud, Ludwig Wittgenstein, and Karl Popper – all of whom were born, though did not necessarily work, in Vienna. After a quick exploration of Freudian psychoanalysis we will look at Freud's more "philosophical works" – *Totem and Taboo*, *Civilization and Its Discontents*, and *The Future of An Illusion*. We will then turn to Wittgenstein and his two major works – *Tractatus Logico-Philosophicus* and *Philosophical Investigations* – exploring Wittgenstein's philosophy of language, how it changes between the two works, and what the implications are for "that which cannot be said" (like, for example, what Freud "says" about the unconscious). Finally we will look at Popper's two major works, *The Logic of Scientific Discovery* and *The Open Society and Its Enemies*, and explore the question whether democratic civilization is necessary for scientific progress. Comparisons between the three thinkers will be made. Specifically Wittgenstein and Popper will be compared based on their infamous encounter at Cambridge University in 1946 and their ambiguous relationship to the "Vienna Circle" of Logical Positivism. Also Freud's claims about psychoanalysis will be tested against Popper's demarcation criterion for science, and their views on the nature of civilization will be contrasted. Throughout the course the effect of each thinker's Viennese origins – and their Judaism – will be emphasized.

Course Objectives:

- To explore and begin to understand the thinking of Freud, Wittgenstein, and Popper;
- To understand why questions of meaning and science were so important to 20th Century philosophy;
- To explore how their mutual city of origin – Vienna – and their Judaism informs their philosophies;
- To develop critical thinking, reading, and expressive skills in a sustained and systematic way.

Method of Instruction and Evaluation:

This course will be conducted as a seminar, where students will read, present, and discuss their understanding of primary texts of the thinkers being investigated. Students will be evaluated on their contributions to seminar discussion as well as a semester-long research project.

Course IV, Vienna Across the Ages, will be taught by Heinz Kroll. In consultation with the Vienna Franklin Pierce Faculty member, Mr. Kroll services shall take students on excursions in and around Vienna, Austria and provide an introduction to the historical, cultural, architectural and artistic aspects of Vienna, Austria. Mr. Kroll's aim will be to enhance the Pierce in Vienna program by providing expert services that will compliment the existing Franklin Pierce course offerings.