

**Program in Cultures, Civilizations and Ideas**  
**Humanities 112: Modernity and Tradition**  
**Spring 2022 Topic: Alternative Worlds and Utopias**

A map of the world that does not include Utopia is not worth even glancing at, for it leaves out the one country at which Humanity is always landing. And when Humanity lands there, it looks out, and, seeing a better country, sets sail. Progress is the realization of Utopias. — Oscar Wilde, *The Soul of Man Under Socialism* (1891)

Instructor: Dr. Angelina Del Balzo  
Email: angelina@bilkent.edu.tr  
Office Location: G B18-1 (basement level)  
Office Hours: Tuesdays 13:30-15:20 and by appointment in person or via Zoom

### **Course Schedule**

Section 13: Tues. 9:30-10:20 (Spare Hour 8:30-9:20), Thurs. 13:30-15:20 (G-227)  
Section 25: Tues. 11:30-12:20 (Spare Hour 10:30-11:20), Thurs. 15:30-17:20 (G-152)

### **Course Description and Objectives**

This course is the second in a two-semester sequence that considers the meaning of culture in the Western tradition: what it is, how it functions, and how we participate in it. Here, we will read texts from the European Middle Ages to the contemporary moment. Reading across genres of literature and philosophy, we will compare different strategies for making “meaning” through the written form and learn how to critically participate in our cultural environment. Right now, the pandemic has upended the world as we know it, and so this semester we will focus on readings that engage in world making and re-making. In doing so, we will consider: What different forms does world-making take? What are the historical and philosophical foundations of each imagined world? Who or what are missing or excluded from this world? How does speculation relate to knowledge production and artistic expression? We will grapple with these questions and others while developing skills in critical reading, analytical writing, and oral discussion.

### **Required Course Texts in Meteksan**

- Thomas More, *Utopia* (Penguin, 2012) ISBN: 978-0-141-44232-7
- William Shakespeare, *The Tempest* (Oxford, 2008) ISBN: 978-0-19-953590-3
- Margaret Cavendish, *The Blazing World and Other Writings* (Penguin, 2004) ISBN: 978-0-140-43372-2
- Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (Verso, 2012) ISBN: 978-1844678761

### **Texts on Moodle**

- Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (Penguin, 2000) ISBN: 978-0140446890
- Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, *Sultana's Dream* (Penguin, 2005)
- Ursula Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walked Away from Omelas”
- Octavia E. Butler, “Speech Sounds”

### **Course Requirements**

*Participation (10%):* **This course is modeled on the seminar rather than the lecture format.** Seminars require students to actively contribute to group discussions, rather than passively listen to an instructor’s presentation. You must do the assigned reading listed on the syllabus before class meets, attend classes **with a**

**copy of the text**, regularly contribute to discussion, and actively take notes on discussion during class. **Remember: you cannot participate in class if you do not attend class.**

**\*A note on participation:** Some students feel like they don't know enough about the topic to participate, or their English isn't strong enough, or have a variety of other reasons why they don't feel comfortable participating. However, I promise you that everyone else is in the same boat. Participation is crucial for the learning process and is also important as one of the main ways beyond graded assessments that I can understand how students are understanding the material. You will never be graded on if your contribution is "right." Participation, much like close-reading and academic writing, is a skill you develop through practice, not a gift you are born with or without. I am looking for development and improvement over the semester, so it is never too late to participate!

*Short Assignments (30%):* There will be a **syllabus quiz**, a take-home **annotated reading assignment**, and **three in-class short assignments** given in the second half of class on the days marked on the course schedule. If a student is unavoidably absent that day, they may complete the assignment in my office at another time.

*Course Project (30%):* The course project will have two parts: an analytical close reading of a passage and a creative description of a utopia, dystopia, or alternative world of your own creation. Further details to follow.

*Final Exam (30%):* The final exam will be three close readings based on provided prompts. Date and time TBA. Further details to follow.

## Grading

93-100%	A	Outstanding	73-76%	C	Pass
90-92%	A-		70-72%	C-	
87-89%	B+	Very Good	67-69%	D+	
83-86%	B		60-66%	D	Lowest Grade for Credit
80-82%	B-	Good	Below 60%	F	Fail
77-79%	C+				

I am always happy to discuss your work and ways to improve in office hours. You may request a formal regrade of any assignment, but please be aware that your grade **may go up or down**.

## Course Policies

*Attendance:* Attendance will be taken at the beginning of class. Per Bilkent policy, the grade **FZ** will appear on the transcript of those who miss more than **20%** of our scheduled meetings (8 hours of class time), regardless of reason. Late arrivals count toward the hourly total. **20% is the absolute maximum you can miss and still pass the class.** You never know when you may need to miss class, so please plan accordingly. I recognize, however, that we are in an ongoing emergency situation. **Please get in touch via email if persistent obstacles arise.** I will do my best to be as flexible as I can be within university policies.

*Communication:* The best way to discuss your work is during my student office hours, which will be **Tuesdays 13:30-15:20** and **by email appointment**. I need **at least 3 days' advance notice** to arrange a meeting. Make sure that you are following the syllabus, completing the readings on time, starting major assignments before the week they are due, and communicating your issues with me before any university deadlines. **A failure to plan on your part does not constitute an emergency on mine.**

*Email and Feedback Protocol:*

- In all email correspondence, please include your name and your **section number** in the email.

- I will respond to emails within a day during the week. Detailed feedback on writing may take longer.
- I will not answer email on the weekends.
- As a policy, I will read drafts up to a paragraph, but I will not read full drafts before the deadline. I will offer feedback and suggestions, which you can then apply to the rest of your writing. For full draft feedback, please make an appointment at BilWrite well before the assignment is due: <http://bilwrite.bilkent.edu.tr/>
- **I will not respond to emails regarding assignments sent to me 24 hours before the deadline or regarding assignments sent within 24 hours after assignments are returned.**
- I will not discuss grades until 24 hours after graded feedback has been given to students.

*Plagiarism:* Plagiarism is the use of ideas or words of another without citation. The work you do for this course must be your own. Any instances of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Consequences will be determined on a case-by-case basis, but at a minimum plagiarism will result in a 0 on the assignment in question. Other consequences may include failing the course and possible expulsion from the university. For the university policy on plagiarism, see [https://w3.bilkent.edu.tr/web/provost/SAIC\\_Students.pdf](https://w3.bilkent.edu.tr/web/provost/SAIC_Students.pdf)

*Technology:* Please be aware of how your technology usage affects your engagement with the class and those around you. Cell phones may be used for dictionaries during class (on silent) but will not be allowed for the final exam. Cameras should be on in possible and microphones muted when not speaking.

### Course Schedule [subject to change]

Week	Session 1	Session 2
1 31 Jan.-4 Feb.	Course Introduction	No class
2 7-11 Feb.	De Pizan: <i>City of Ladies</i> (1405) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Part I, Ch. 1-8, 14-19, 48 (pg. 5-20, 33-46, 86-87)</li> </ul>	<i>City of Ladies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Part II, Ch. 1-7 (pg. 91-103)</li> <li>• <b>Syllabus Quiz</b></li> <li>• <b>Annotated Reading Assignment due</b></li> </ul>
3 14-18 Feb.	<i>City of Ladies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Part II, Ch. 12-14, 36-37, 47, 54, 68-69 (pg. 107-112, 139-142, 151-152, 171-172, 195-196)</li> </ul>	<i>City of Ladies</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Part III, Ch. 1, 18-19 (pg. 201-2, 235-240)</li> <li>• <b>Short Assignment #1</b></li> </ul>
4 21-25 Feb.	<b>*SPARE HOUR*</b> More: <i>Utopia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Front Matter (poems, pictures, etc.), Letters, and Book I, pg. 11-36</li> </ul>	<i>Utopia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Book I pg. 36-55</li> </ul>
5 28 Feb.-4 Mar.	<b>*SPARE HOUR*</b> <i>Utopia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Book II pg. 57-91</li> </ul>	<i>Utopia</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Read Book II pg. 91-122</li> <li>• <b>Short Assignment #2</b></li> </ul>

6 7 – 11 Mar.	<b>No Class</b>	<b>No Class</b>
7 14 – 18 Mar.	<b>*SPARE HOUR*</b> William Shakespeare: <i>The Tempest</i> • Read Act I (pg. 97-128)	<i>Tempest</i> • Read Act II (pg. 129-151)
8 21 – 25 Mar.	<i>Tempest</i> • Read Act III (pg. 152-169) <b>*Withdraw Deadline 22 Mar. at 17:30*</b>	<i>Tempest</i> • Read Act IV (pg. 170-187)
9 28 Mar. – 1 Apr.	<i>Tempest</i> • Read Act V (pg. 187-205)	<b>No Class</b> • <b>Course Project due 23:59 Sunday 3 Apr. on Moodle</b>
10 4 – 8 Apr.	<b>*SPARE HOUR*</b> Cavendish: <i>The Blazing World</i> • Read pg. 123-145	<i>Blazing World</i> • Read pg. 145-166
11 11 – 15 Apr.	<b>*SPARE HOUR*</b> <i>Blazing World</i> • Read pg. 180-195	<i>Blazing World</i> • Read pg. 203-225 • <b>Short Assignment #3</b>
12 18 – 22 Apr.	Marx and Engels: <i>The Communist Manifesto</i> • Read Intro and Part I pg. 33-50	<i>Communist Manifesto</i> • Read Part II pg. 50-62, Part IV pg. 75-77
13 25 – 29 Apr.	Rokeya Sakhawat Hossain, “Sultana’s Dream” • Read all	“Sultana’s Dream” • Read all
14 2 – 6 May	Le Guin, “The Ones Who Walk Away From Omelas” • Read all	“Omelas” • Read all
15 9 – 13 May	Course conclusion	Exam Review Session

Finals Period 15 – 28 May	<b>Final Exam</b> Date and Time TBA	
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