



The New Liberal Arts 2901E

Fall/Winter 2025/26

The Birth of the Modern

Course Information:

Calendar Description: An interdisciplinary exploration of social structures and literary-cultural expressions of Western thought from the medieval era to the Enlightenment. It incorporates: 1) engagement with primary historical, literary, philosophical texts/ideas; 2) training in public speaking and critical argument; 3) 'hands-on exposure' to music, art during seminars and field trips; 4) a Research Project.

Pre-requisite(s): Enrolment in the King's Scholar program or permission of the Dean.

Anti-requisite(s): None.

Extra Information: 3 lecture hours.

Course Weight: 1.00 **Breadth:** Category B

Subject Code: TNLA

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

King's University College
TNLA 2901E: The Birth of the Modern
2025-2026

Course information:

TNLA 2901E: The Birth of the Modern
Instructor(s): Jason Hoult and Mark Sholdice
Contact Information: jhoult2@uwo.ca / msholdi@uwo.ca
Office hours: TBA

Course description:

An interdisciplinary exploration of social structures and literary-cultural expressions of Western thought from the medieval era to the Enlightenment. It incorporates: 1) engagement with primary historical, literary, philosophical texts/ideas; 2) training in public speaking and critical argument; 3) 'hands-on' exposure to music, art during seminars and field trips; 4) a Research Project.

Course learning outcomes:

New Liberal Arts is a *personalized* program of study that offers students the chance to access knowledge and experiences beyond their Honors discipline. Through both lectures and discussion, students study the ideas that have shaped today's modern world: concepts about love, duty, the Self, democracy, diversity, equality, marginalization, science, etc. Students will be acquainted with the radical doers and shakers of the past. Most importantly, the New Liberal Arts allows students to direct their own learning; *you* choose your own research topics and work with a supervisor on a project meaningful to you. Looking ahead toward post-graduate and career decisions, students learn professional competencies such as seminar participation, public speaking, as well as research and communication skills. Part of the 'fun factor' of the course is the experiential learning component.

The King's Scholar courses evolve into a supportive cohort of students keen to learn from each other. Study groups emerge, and every KS student is given a KS student Mentor as well as membership in the FY/KS Student Club. More importantly, you work closely with the KS faculty to strengthen your specific challenges and to hone your unique skill-set.

Mode of Instruction:

in-person

Course textbooks:

Plato, *Republic*, trans. by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett) - \$24.51 (new paperback)
Bible, Revised Standard Version (Meridian) - \$32.00 (new paperback)
Shakespeare, William, *King Lear* (Signet) - \$7.95 (new paperback)
other course readings will be provided digitally via OWL Brightspace

Course Assignments:

Participation in class discussions	15%
Integrated assignment (28 October 2025)	15%
Term test (11 November 2025)	15%
IRP outline (12 February 2026)	5%
IRP presentation (10 and 12 March 2026)	5%
IRP final paper (7 April)	25%
Final exam (to be scheduled during exam period, 12-30 April)	20%

Academic consideration for the term test and IRP outline requires submission of formal supporting documentation

Late Policy

A penalty of one mark per day (including weekends) will be assessed for late assignments beginning the first day after the deadline. No assignment will be accepted after the seventh day.

AI Policy

King's is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students—have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor.

Within this course, use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as Chat GPT) is not permitted for written work submitted for evaluation.

Western's scholastic discipline policy can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf.

If you are unsure of AI use in this class, please consult with your instructor.

Course Schedule

Fall 2025

Week 1, 4 September: Introduction (JH & MS)

- course overview

Week 2, 9 and 11 September: Classical Thought (JH)

- Plato, *Republic*
 - Book I, 336b – 354c
 - Book II, 357a – 367a
 - Books II and IV, 412b – 445e
 - Book V, 471c – 480a

Week 3, 16 and 18 September: Classical Thought continued (JH)

- Plato, *Republic*
 - Book VI and VII, 484a – 521a
 - Book IX, 588b – 592b
 - Book X, 595a – 612a

Week 4, 23 and 25 September: Biblical Thought (JH)

- Bible, RSV
 - Genesis 1-3, 6-10, 11, 12, 17, 22
 - Exodus 1-15, 19-20.20
 - Leviticus 19
 - Deuteronomy 10.12-22, 13, 18.9-21, 19.15-21, 29-31
 - Hosea 1-4, 6, 11, 14

Week 5, 2 October: Biblical Thought continued (JH)

- no class on 30 September (*National Day for Truth and Reconciliation*)
- Bible, RSV
 - Matthew (complete)
 - Luke 14.25 and 17.20-21
 - John 1.1-18
 - Colossians 2.8-17
 - 1 John 2-5

Week 6, 7 and 9 October: The Italian Renaissance in the Mediterranean World (MS & JH)

- selections from Machiavelli, *The Florentine Histories* (1520-1525)

Week 7, 14 and 16 October: Courtesy Books and Renaissance Society (MS)

- selections from Christine de Pizan, *The Treasure of the City of Ladies* (1405)
- selections from Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier* (1528)

Week 8, 21 and 23 October: The Idea of the Human and Neoplatonism (JH)

- selections from Petrarch, Pico della Mirandola, and Marsilio Ficino

Week 9, 28 and 30 October: The Crisis of Modern Political Philosophy, Part 1 (MS)

- Machiavelli, *The Prince* (1513)
- **Integrated assignment due 30 October**

Fall Term Reading Week: 3-9 November

- *no class*

Week 10, 11 and 13 November: term test and Eloquentia Perfecta (MS)

- **11 November: term test**
- 13 November: Eloquentia Perfecta (no readings)

Week 11, 18 and 20 November: Reformations: More, Luther, Erasmus, Calvin (MS)

- selections from Erasmus, *In Praise of Folly* (1511)
- selections from Thomas More, *Utopia* (1516)

Week 12, 25 and 27 November: Reformations continued (MS)

- Martin Luther, *95 Theses* (1517)
- “Luther and the Ethiopian Deacon” (1534)
- John Calvin, *Letter to the King* (1536)

Week 13, 2 and 4 December: Italian Renaissance Art (JH)

- selected works of art
- video: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Episodes 1, 2, and 3

Week 14, 9 December: Northern Renaissance Art (JH)

- selections from Jan van Eyck, Matthias Grünewald, Hieronymus Bosch, and Pieter Bruegel the Elder
- video: John Berger, *Ways of Seeing*, Episode 4

Winter 2026

Week 1, 6 and 8 January: The Beginning of European Colonialism, 1492-1560 (MS)

- selections from the *Florentine Codex*. Jean de Léry, *History of a Voyage to the Land of Brazil* (1578)

Week 2, 13 and 15 January: Carnavalesque Literature (JH)

- selections from François Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel* (1532-1564)
- **make an appointment with your IRP supervisor for 19-30 January**

Week 3, 20 and 22 January: Spain’s Siglo de Oro (Golden Century) (JH)

- selections from Cervantes’ *Don Quixote* (1605-1615)
- various cultural expressions inspired by Cervantes: Picasso “Don Quixote” (1955); Richard Strauss, excerpts from his tone poem *Don Quixote* (1897)
- **meetings with IRP supervisors (19-30 January)**

Week 4, 27 and 29 January: Wars of Religion and Imperialism, 1522-1648, Part 1 (MS)

- Henry IV, *Edict of Nantes* (1598)
- Montaigne, *Of Cannibals* (1580)
- **meetings with IRP supervisors (19-30 January)**

Week 5, 3 and 5 February: The 'Essai' and the Self-Portrait (JH)

- selections from Michel de Montaigne's *Essays* (1570-1592)

Week 6, 10 and 12 February: Baroque Art and Music (JH)

- selected works by Caravaggio (1573-1610), Velasquez (1599-1660), Rembrandt (1606-1669), and Vermeer (1632-1675)
- selected music from Thomas Tallis and Monteverdi to Bach, Vivaldi and Handel
- **IRP outline due 12 February**

Winter Term Reading Week: 14-22 February

- *no class*

Week 7, 24 and 26 February: Wars of Religion and Imperialism, 1522-1648, Part 2 (MS)

- transcript of the trial of Anne Hutchinson (1637)
- selections from the Putney Debates (1647)

Week 8, 3 and 5 March: Power and Politics (JH)

- Shakespeare, *King Lear* (1606)

Week 9, 10 and 12 March: IRP presentations

- presentation order to be scheduled by the drawing of lots

Week 10, 17 and 19 March: Absolutism and Mercantilism (MS)

- charter of the Hudson's Bay Company (1670)
- selections from Bossuet, *Political Treatise* (1709)

Week 11, 24 and 26 March: The Scientific Revolution (MS)

- selections from René Descartes, *The Discourse on the Method* (1637)
- selections from correspondence between Descartes and Princess Elisabeth (1634-1664)

Week 12, 31 March and 2 April: The Crisis of Modern Political Philosophy, Part 2 (MS)

- selections from Hobbes, *Leviathan* (1651)
- selections from Locke, *Two Treatises of Government* (1689)

Week 13, 7 April

- exam review
- **IRP final paper due 7 April**

KING'S UNIVERSITY COLLEGE

GENERAL COURSE POLICIES

2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/SMC-Feb-2025.pdf.

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course.

Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course.

For further information, please see:

https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details (under [Special Examinations](#)).

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-services/personal-counselling/>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help:
https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:
<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by [email](#) or by calling 519-661-3568.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/Originality_Reports - TurnItIn.html.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member. Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.