

Omnibus 3 (Syllabus):
A Pilgrimage in Modernity

I. Introduction

Welcome to “Omnibus 3: A Pilgrimage in Modernity”. The following syllabus (1) introduces the nature, philosophy, and themes of the course (2) offers a tentative weekly schedule including the subjects and primary texts to be studied and (3) discusses some important housekeeping items, namely the class expectations, a note on assignments and homework, and a schedule of the various types of assessments to be employed in the class, including the grade percentage associated with each. *Bon appetite!*

The Nature of the Course:

The name Omnibus literally means “all things.” This particular course utilizes the third book of the *Omnibus* curriculum (Veritas Press) and supplemental materials to broadly survey important moments and aspects of the intellectual, political, and spiritual history of modernity in the West—ideas, events, and movements which have undeniably altered and shaped the world we Christians must know, experience, and navigate. The heart of *Omnibus 3* is the reading, study, and discussion of primary works from influential authors of the age. Historical instruction will situate these works and authors within their historical and geographical contexts and reflect upon the dynamic relationship between word and deed—how ideas shape history and how in turn, history shapes the next generation of ideas. Through discussion, debates, and various essays and projects we will join in the great conversation, developing our own voices in relationship to those of others, sometimes in opposition, sometimes in harmony. Finally, and perhaps most importantly, we will study and reflect upon a host of great modern hymns which have helped God’s people to recall the great Author, Redeemer, and Lord of history, find in Him their strength and stay, and trust Him as their Light, Guide, and Future Hope.

The Philosophy of the Course:

Omnibus is designed to study ‘all things’ in light of Christ the King. Of course, we time-bound, finite creatures must be choosy. Hence this course seeks to help us gain a ‘heart of wisdom’ through immersion in the habit of studying the very best ‘things’: God, human beings made in God’s image, and the problematic masterpieces made by human creatures. At the same time, a course called “Omnibus” seeks to remind us that nothing is unimportant or beneath the dignity of human notice, for all things have been made by the triune God for His Majesty’s sake, *Soli Deo gloria*. We prayerfully seek that this course will be training for faithful stewardship of time and talents, Kingdom-minded action in the fallen world, and ultimately for the habit of worship that marks our future, the life of the world to come.

The Themes of the Course:

The themes of Omnibus 3: A Pilgrimage in Modernity is largely to be determined by the books we are reading and the sorts of questions by which we seek to understand and interpret the minds of their authors. This being said, certain themes that will no doubt reverberate throughout our study of modernity like a jazzy base line are Creator and creature, faith and reason, authority and power, and the City of God and the City of Man.

II: Course Schedule (Subjects and Primary Texts)

Summer Reading:

Pilgrim's Progress (John Bunyan), *Unbroken* (Laura Hillenbrand)

Semester 1:

Week 1: Course Introduction and the Reformation

Pilgrim's Progress (John Bunyan)

Week 2: Reformation Continued

The Bondage of the Will (Martin Luther)

Week 3: Puritans

Of Plymouth Plantation (William Bradford)

Week 4: The Enlightenment

Meditations on First Philosophy (Rene Descartes)

Week 5: Modernity and its Discontents:

Gulliver's Travels (Jonathan Swift)

Week 7: The American Revolution

"The Declaration of Independence" (Thomas Jefferson)

Week 8: The American Experiment

The Constitution of the United States of America (James Madison *et al.*)

Week 9: Defending the Experiment

The Federalist Papers ("Publius"—Hamilton, Madison, and Jay)

Week 10: Celebrating the Experiment

Billy Budd (Herman Melville)

Week 11: The Great Awakening

Readings from Susannah Wesley and Jonathan Edwards

Week 12-13: Continental Stirrings

The Social Contract (Jean Jacques Rousseau)

Week 14-15: The French Revolution

A Tale of Two Cities (Charles Dickens)

Week 16: Romanticism

Readings from Coleridge, Wordsworth, Byron, Shelley, and Keats

Week 17: Science and Technology

Frankenstein (Mary Shelley)

Week 18: Exams

Semester 2:

Week 19: The Conservative Reaction

Reflection on the Revolution in France (Edmund Burke)

Week 20: The Virtues in Modern Life

Reflections on the Revolution (Burke), *Pride and Prejudice* (Jane Austen)

Week 21: The Virtues in Modern Life

Pride and Prejudice (Austen)

Week 22: Slavery and Abolition

Uncle Tom's Cabin (Harriet Beecher Stowe)

Week 23: The Civil War

Uncle Tom's Cabin and Slave Narratives

Week 24: The Civil War *continued*

Slave Narratives and Lincoln's Speeches (Abraham Lincoln)

Week 25: Naturalism and Social Darwinism

On the Origin of the Species (Charles Darwin)

Week 26: Social Darwinism and Capitalism's Discontents

Origin of the Species (Darwin) and "The Communist Manifesto" (Karl Marx)

Week 27: Capitalism's Discontents

"The Communist Manifesto" (Marx)

Week 28: World War 1

All Quiet on the Western Front (Erick Maria Remarque)

Week 29: The War to End All Wars

The Treaty of Versailles and Selections from T.S. Elliot

Week 30: The Roaring Twenties

The Great Gatsby (F. Scott Fitzgerald)

Week 31: The Russian Revolution

Animal Farm (George Orwell)

Week 32: The Birth of Fascism and World War 2

Selections from *Mein Kampf* (Adolf Hitler)

Week 33: World War 2

Night (Ellie Wiesel)

Week 34: Modernity in Review

Pilgrim's Regress (C.S. Lewis)

Week 35: Review and Overview

Pilgrim's Regress (C.S. Lewis)

Week 36: Exams

III. Other Important Information:

Class Expectations:

1. Come to class on time and prepared (with all assignments and materials)
2. Honor teachers and classmates.
3. Participate in all activities.
4. Follow verbal and written directions.
5. Fulfill class duties as assigned.
6. Show initiative for the wellbeing of the class.
7. Practice Courtesy ("love in trifles" C.S. Lewis)

Assignments and Homework:

- *Reading assignments are due at the beginning of the assigned class.
(reading quizzes will be given at the instructors' discretion)
- *Any homework assignments accompanying the reading are due on the assigned date and will not be accepted afterwards (if you are absent on the due date, these assignments will be due the day you come back).
- *Students are responsible for any homework verbalized by the instructors and written on the board, regardless of whether or not is posted on RenWeb.
- *All projects, tests, and other large assignments are due in their final form on the assigned date. Afterwards they will be assessed a late at the penalty rate of 10% per late day. After the 5th day, the late assignment will turn to a zero.
- *All tests, projects, and essays must be completed to receive your report card.

Assessment(s):

Assessment for *Omnibus* reflects (a) the multi-dimensional character of the class and (b) the goals of classical education in the three aspects of the Trivium: grammar, logic and rhetoric.

(1) Grammar 25%

- *Homework (5%)
- *Reading and other Quizzes (5%)
- *Commonplace Books (5%)
- *Short Answer Tests (10%)

(2) Logic 25%

- * Lecture Notes (5%)
- * Debate (10%)
- * Essay Tests (10%)

(3) Rhetoric 50%

- *Hymn Journals (5%)
- *Presentation of essays/projects (5%)
- *Seminar Participation (preparation, quality, quantity, etc.) (10%)
- *Essays (15%)
- *Projects (15%)