Please note that the PRIMARY emphasis in this class will be upon discussion and analysis of the readings. The objective is to teach you how to read, think, and write critically. Try to keep the main themes in mind as we move from one text to another. Think about how they link up and why they have been included in this syllabus. Question and argue with the author; learn to wrestle with the text. This will facilitate lively discussions and on-line participation and will generate more original thought.

Many of the readings for CVSP 202 can be found online. These can be accessed through WebCT or E-reserves. In addition, the reading schedule, calendar, grades, and other important announcements will be available online through WebCT.

**There will be a mandatory ***WebCT training session on Friday October 10**th **in the Van Dyke Student Computer Labs***

This session will give you an opportunity to learn how to use WebCT. No excuses about WebCT will be accepted after this date!!!

**GRADING POLICY**

**Attendance: 5% of total grade**

You are required to attend unless you have a valid medical excuse. More than 9 absences could result in your withdrawal from the class. Every time you miss class you will be lowering this element of your grade.

**Class Participation: 10% of total grade**

Active participation in class discussions is expected. Come to class prepared to remove the flesh of the text and spit out the bones. The more you participate in discussions in class the higher will be your final grade. An active participant who demonstrates that he/she keeps up with the reading and thinks critically can and will be rewarded a full 10%. So READ and TALK!

If class participation falls and it becomes clear that you are not doing the reading, I will introduce pop-quizzes.

**On-line WebCT Postings: 20% of total grade**

You will be required to make a weekly on-line posting of 5-10 lines pertaining to the reading of the week. This is a simple and painless exercise in which you can raise one element of the reading and comment on it. See the attached sheets for some examples. You may initiate your own comment or
respond to someone else’s. This will automatically generate a discussion and you will find that after the first couple of postings you will be posting regularly and spontaneously.

Folders for each Reading will be CLOSED 1 week after we complete the reading! So get your WebCT postings done on time. In order to do this you will have to keep up with the reading.

Mid-term Quiz: 25% of total grade

There will be one mid-term quiz. This will include some small identification questions, quotations to identify and contextualize, and one essay question. There will be plenty of choice, so please do not panic. The midterm exam will take place during class time and will last for 50 minutes.

Final Exam: 40% of total grade

The final exam will be of the same format as the mid-term quiz except there will be more questions in each category. There will be two essays. Once again there will be plenty of choice.

NOTE: All the exams will be graded name-blind. In other words you will only provide your ID Number not your name!!! Be sure NOT TO PUT YOUR NAME ON YOUR EXAMS, ONLY YOUR ID. #'s.

If you keep up with the reading, attend the general lectures, and participate actively in classroom and on-line discussions, the quiz and final exam will be easy. I want all of you to do well and attain good grades. Your performance is in your own hands! Read and participate and you will be rewarded by more than a good grade: critical thinking and knowledge are great assets for life.

PLEASE NOTE THAT CHEATING AND PLAGIARISM WILL BE STRICTLY PENALIZED. I AM LOOKING FOR YOUR THOUGHTS AND YOUR VOICE NOT THOSE OF OTHERS!

1 plagiarized WebCT posting will result in a serious reprimand and an immediate 0 for that reading assignment.

2 plagiarized messages will result in a report to the Chairman of the CVSP Dept.

3 plagiarized messages will result in Dean's Action.

I am VERY VERY VERY strict about this!!! DO NOT THINK YOU WILL GET AWAY WITH COPYING SOMEONE ELSE’S WORK!

Here’s MY MOTTO:

***BE ORIGINAL AND WIN WITH ME!!!
COPY & FAIL!
Example of a Typical WebCT discussion

Author: str
Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2003 10:42am
In the three Epics (Odepus Rex, Odessey, and Gilgamish) The heroes seemed to be a idealistic heroes who should be followed. And I think that this is the main reason why epics were written, to teach people morals and give them an idealistic person for them to follow.

Reply Quote Download
Author: saa
Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2003 1:00pm
I agree with str...it seems that all these epics were written in a time of suffering when all the people seemed to have lost faith in being able to live a good life...And what these stories gave to the people were much more important than what any king or governor could have given...They gave HOPE!...and it was hope that kept people from surrendering to either the plague...or the wars...or even the tirany of some governors'. People needed something or in this case some1 to look up to...and they got them throught these stories...Look at Odysseus for example, a normal human being with nothing to hope for would have died in this journey long ago...but the fact that Odysseus was able to keep on going and going makes people want to do the same...since he is human like them after all...

PS:i dont know if any1 saw the film"Enemy at the Gates",it talks about the battle of stalingrad and how the russians were able to win it because they had some1 to look up to, that some1 was a russian sniper...and he was the one who gave them hope.

Reply Quote Download
Author: ltb
Date: Sunday, December 7, 2003 10:26pm
i think that all these stories include tragedies because all these stories need heroes, and in order to have a hero, you need to have something tragic for the hero to come save the day. its as simple as that. i think that was the only story-telling style they had back then: tragedy,hero,hero,tragedy. i don't think it neccessarily reflects the sentiments of the overall society, that would be giving the author too much credit.

Reply Quote Download
Author: fam
Date: Tuesday, December 2, 2003 3:58pm
I don't think that the heroes where idealistic at all, i mean Gilgamesh lost his friend, couldn't find immortality and when he did, he commited a stupid mistake and went to swim, then odessus was crying for his wife on the island when Hermes found him and we where discussing his ability to endure humiliation, then odeipus tore his eyes out after he married his mother who also killed herself. I think the three heroes where unfortunate (maybe odysseus wasn't cause he reached hapiness at the end) and have done stupid mistakes that ordinary people wouldn't commit. In my opinion they are...
Example of a Top-Class WebCT Message

***This message applies the reading and takes the discussion further. It does not regurgitate simplistic plot summaries, like Malik’s Notes! Try to apply innovative analyses that push the text we are reading to a higher level.***

Subject: Highest form of happiness: Contemplation

The art of contemplation, yes I call it the art of contemplation because it is indeed an activity undertaken by only a small portion of persons. It is the expression of the soul with no limits and boundaries. Contemplation is peace of mind and the ultimate goal to association with the infinity.

Around four years ago, I was introduced by my father to a book written by Master Taisen Deshimaru, this book was called in French: La Pratique du Zen, which means the Practice of Zen. The book was followed by the sacred texts of Zen, Hoyko Zan Mai and San Do Kai and of Teisho, teachings given to followers during the za-zen (which I will explain later on). After reading and practicing this book, I consider having achieved a big step in my life: I have being introduced to the art of contemplation and meditation where concentration on calmness is one of the essentials players in this activity.

In the presentation of the text, I was woken up to the fact that we don’t have the time to live. Machines are imprisoning us more than liberating us. If we look around, it’s neither starvations nor extermination wars that have disappeared from the globe. We spend our time fighting with the inquietude of our condition using tranquilizers and anesthetic television (by the way I very rarely spend my time watching TV). If we think about it, our environmental comfort is debilitating our body and the urban stress is overexciting our nerves! In addition, during the night we don’t sleep well and during the day we are not well awake. We don’t think at all. We think a lot to the extent that we don’t stop thinking. We don’t have time to breath anymore.

The message of Taisen Deshimaru is the message of all the Buddha masters: only sit, without having any goal or spirit of profit in mind. The essential is za-zen. If I want to come and explain to you what is Zen, well I will never be able to do so, because Zen can’t be locked up into a concept, it can’t be given by an idea, it has to be practiced. It is essentially an experience. The more I practice it, the more I start to understand myself and my life more and more. The more I meditate, concentrate and contemplate in za-zen, the better I get at it with time, and the more I become calm and efficient. With time you feel wisdom approaching to your mind. This is where you will reach true accomplishment of your endeavor to experiment communication from spirit to spirit. It is the essence of wisdom that can only be found by means of concentration on the void omnipresent, pure and silent, where everything is reality. This is what we can call the passage to the other side. The soul changes all the time and this is what pushes us to think and find the answer in ourselves.

Even for Aristotle, this is the highest form of happiness. The rest of our activities are undertaken in preparation for this state of mind.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>LECTURE</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Oct. 4</td>
<td><em>Bacon</em></td>
<td>Bacon, <em>New Organon</em>. (Web link – E-reserve)</td>
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<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td><em>Descartes</em></td>
<td>Descartes, <em>Discourse on Method</em> and <em>Meditations on First Philosophy</em>, transl. Donald A. Cress (Hackett), Discourses 1, 2, 4 &amp; 5.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td><em>Locke</em></td>
<td>Locke, <em>The Second Treatise on Government</em>, ed. C. B. Macpherson (Hackett); (a separate sheet for selections will be distributed)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Nov. 1</td>
<td>No lecture</td>
<td>No new assignment.</td>
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<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td><em>The Enlightenment I</em></td>
<td>Selections from Diderot and Kant (Web link – E-reserve).</td>
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<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td><em>Id El Fitr, Sunday Nov.</em></td>
<td>Selections from Smith and Bentham (Web link – E-reserve).</td>
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<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td><em>The Enlightenment II</em></td>
<td>Selections from Smith and Bentham (Web link – E-reserve).</td>
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<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Christmas &amp; New Year</td>
<td>Vacation: Wednesday Dec. 24 through Sunday Jan. 2 inclusive</td>
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<td>Vacation: Wednesday Dec. 24 through Sunday Jan. 2 inclusive</td>
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Reading period: Monday January 17 through Tuesday January 18
Final examinations begin: Wednesday January 19.

**Web link – E-reserve:** To access all material, go to: AUB Homepage, University Libraries, under the Electronic Resources section click on E-Reserve; or access them directly at: [http://jft-newspaper.aub.edu.lb/reserve](http://jft-newspaper.aub.edu.lb/reserve)

All CVSP readings are in a common folder named “CVSP”; the access username and password are:
Username = cvsp
Password = cvsp