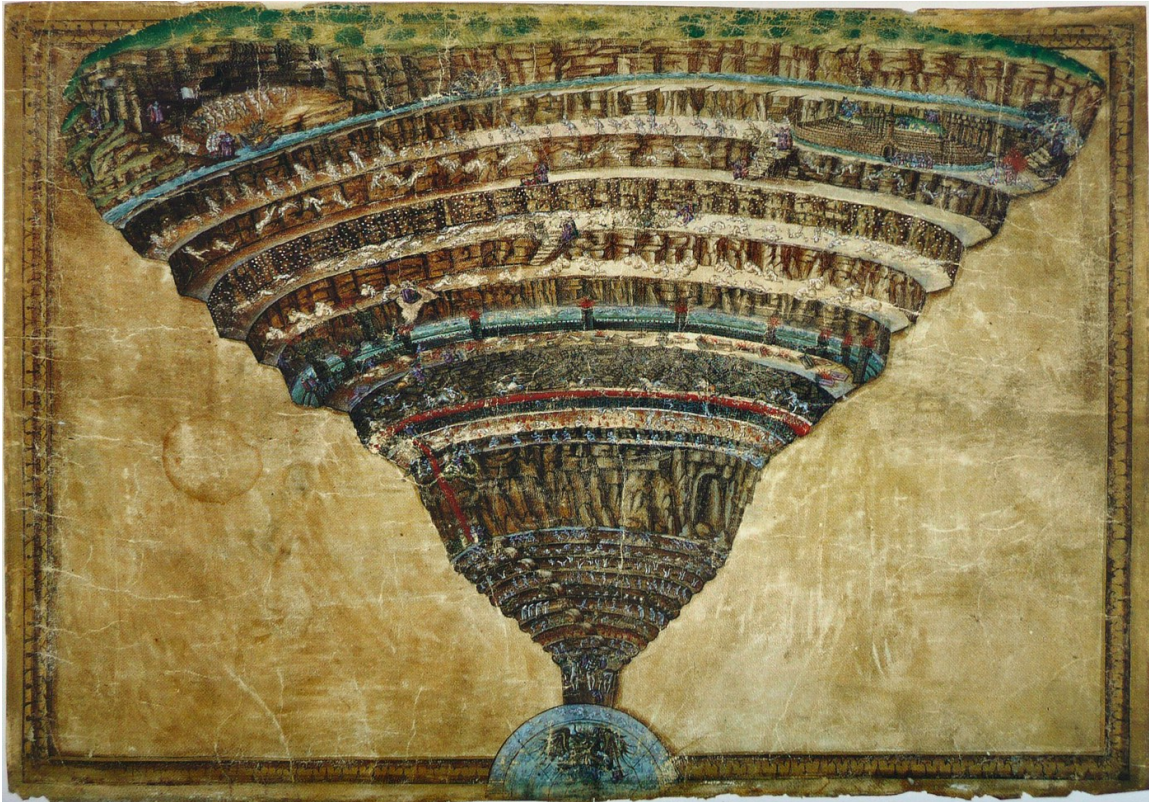


ENG 3011, Section 9005

Allegory, Allegoresis, and the Art of Reading



Sandro Botticelli, [The Map of Hell](#) (1485)

Professor Phillip Wegner
MWF 4 (10:40 -11:30 a.m.)

Office: Turlington 4115
Office Hours: Wednesday, 1-3 p.m., by appointment
Also Zoom meetings available by appointment

Phone: 294-2813
Email: pwegner@ufl.edu
Website: <https://phillipewegner.org>

Nearly a half-century ago, the literary critic Morton W. Bloomfield observed, “The problem of interpretation is the problem of allegory. . . . Allegory is, in this sense, that which conquers time, that which perpetually renews the written word.” However, even today, because allegory and allegorical reading, or *allegoresis*, open up onto the possibility of multiple competing interpretations of any literary work or visual text—the perpetual renewal celebrated by Bloomfield—other contemporary readers, ranging from literary critics to members of the U.S. Senate and Supreme Court, find a deep threat in such practices. In our class, we will delve into some of the debates surrounding allegory and allegoresis through a careful engagement with a number of different kinds of readings. We will then turn our attention to some of the most influential examples of traditional allegorical literature, including Dante Aligheri’s early fourteenth century masterpiece *Inferno* and Edmund Spenser’s *The Faerie Queene*, Book I (1590), as well as a number of more recent efforts to theorize the nature of allegory and allegoresis. Finally, we will undertake our own allegorical readings of works from the nineteenth, twentieth, and twenty-first centuries.

Readings

Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode*

Fredric Jameson, *Allegory and Ideology*

Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses*

Dante Aligheri, *Inferno*

Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book I

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet*

Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein; or, the Modern Prometheus*

Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys*

Other essays, short stories, and novellas, recommended and required, will be available in Canvas files.

Students will also be responsible for viewing three films on their own.

As we will be engaging in a good deal of close analysis in class, which you will be responsible for in your papers, and as there are a number of radically divergent editions of many of these works—for example, translations of Dante’s *Inferno* vary widely and the original 1818 *Frankenstein* is quite different from the 1832 edition we will be reading—I strongly advise that you get copies of the editions ordered for this class. Please note that while electronic editions are also permitted, you will be required to have the readings available and open during the class meetings in which they will be discussed, and will be asked to refer to, read from, and discuss specific passages in class. Supplemental readings will be made available on Canvas.

Aims and Methods

1. Because of the ongoing Covid Emergency and a series of state-mandated policies (please refer to below the UF Policy Statements, “Covid Policies” and “In-Class Recording”), we will be facing some unique challenges this fall. I sincerely hope that through honesty, open communication, and a willingness to do what is the best for every member of our little “interpretive community,” we can create an environment of trust and respect that will enable this course to achieve the high levels of excellence that have been in the past hallmarks of all of my courses as well as undergraduate education at the University of Florida more generally.

2. One of the central aims of this course is to expand your horizons to encompass new approaches and new questions. However, for such a journey to have any meaning, you first need an intellectual home, a disciplinary base, from which to begin. This means there are some basic requirements for participation in this course. This is an *upper-division* English major course, and thus assumes you have completed, at least, the requirements for a lower-division composition and *English* major courses. During the semester, you will be asked to demonstrate, in both your oral *and* written contributions to the class, proficiency in the kinds of critical, analytical, writing, and reading skills expected of advanced literary and cultural studies majors. The readings themselves are drawn from a range of different national traditions and disciplines, and they will offer a number of different kinds of challenges. You will be required to keep up with them, and to respond to them in a variety of oral and written forms. Finally, I expect on the part of each and every student an open-mind and a willingness to carefully and seriously engage with the works we will be discussing: this means cultivating the readerly stance that has been described in a number of different traditions as *deep listening*, bracketing aside assumptions, opinions, and judgments and demonstrating an openness to the voices addressing you, even, and especially, if these offer challenges. If you have any questions about whether this course is right for you, please speak with me soon.

3. Readings should be completed before the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. This means that from our first meeting, you should be reading continuously, getting well ahead of our discussions. Moreover, I do expect lively participation on everyone's part in the class discussion. If conversation lags, expect occasional quizzes or other short in-class writing assignments.

4. Attendance and participation in class discussion are indispensable parts of our work. It is vitally important that you arrive on time and attend the entire course meeting. If you will have any difficulty in so doing, or have an obligation that will force you to miss, be late, or depart early from any class meeting, I ask that you speak with me in advance. Any student who misses more than 4 class meetings—with the exception of documented emergencies, waivers, and absences cleared in advance by me—will result in a lowering of the final course grade. Moreover, if you miss an excessive number of class hours, for whatever the reason, you will have

been considered not to have completed the requirements of the course, and hence will not receive a passing grade. Finally, late arrivals and/or early departures from class meetings will be counted as absences. Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with [university policies that can be found here](#).

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

- 0-2 unexcused absences: (A)
- 3 unexcused absences: (A-)
- 4 unexcused absences: (B+)
- 5 unexcused absences: (B)
- 6 unexcused absences: (B-)
- 7 unexcused absences: (C+)
- 8 unexcused absences: (C)
- 9 unexcused absences: (C-)
- 10 or more unexcused absences: automatic failure of the course

If you have any questions please speak with me soon.

5. Students may use computers or other electronic platforms for accessing readings and/or taking notes. However, Wi-Fi connections should be turned off unless otherwise instructed, and students are not allowed to surf the web, work on other assignments, read novels, play games, view other pages, or engage in any other such activities during course discussion. Cell phones also should be turned off or silenced as soon as class begins. Violations of this policy will be counted as unexcused absences for that class meeting. While according to a recent state mandate currently under legal challenge (please see [UFF statement](#)) students can record course meetings, I expect that you will speak with me in advance about so doing. This is necessary if we are to keep a positive working environment in the class room. If you have any questions about appropriate use of these devices, please speak with me.

6. Readings should be completed before the class meeting in which they are to be discussed. This course will require you to do a good deal of reading, some of which you may find challenging in that they may lead to questions about deeply ingrained assumptions and uninterrogated “common sense” expectations. If you approach these works with an open mind, a spirit of adventure, and a willingness to expand your horizons, I think you will find the effort required well worth it. However, this will also mean that you need to work on developing in your reading skills new levels of attentiveness, concentration, and listening.

The first step in becoming a stronger critical reader is to become a more active, engaged one. If you do not already do so, start reading with a pencil or pen in hand, marking passages that seem especially important or intriguing to you, and jotting insights and questions in the book’s margins or on a near-by note pad. At the same time, you should try as much as possible to inhabit the intellectual and cultural

contexts of the work's author. Ask yourself these questions of the readings: What are the writer's goals? What things does she or he challenge or call into question? What are the writer's expectations and assumptions? How does she or he work to achieve both their stated and implicit goals? And most importantly, in what ways does this work enable you to think in new ways?

7. Throughout the semester, I will be asking you to prepare short written responses to questions we will address in class. These responses will be picked up at the beginning of the meeting and may be used by me to help open up our conversation. You may also find it very useful to keep a reading journal where you jot down your thoughts and questions, and where you indicate passages that strike you as particularly interesting or significant. Finally, on occasion I will ask to review your in-class notes to determine your grasp of the material and our discussions.

8. The major writing assignment will consist of two formal papers, ranging in length. Presentation will count toward the grade of the paper: for example, each paper is expected to be double-spaced, with one-inch margins, printed in a reasonable 12-point or smaller font, and use a consistent bibliographic and reference format. You will also be required to present specific supporting evidence for your claims, in the form of citations from the work, page numbers included. Each paper will focus on the course readings and will address a set of questions, issues, and themes we develop together in our class discussions. These papers will be your best opportunity to demonstrate your skills as an advanced prose writer and your grasp of both the readings and our discussions in class. Approximately two weeks before each paper is due, I will provide you with questions that will help frame your discussion, and you will be required to develop each of your papers in response to them. Any paper that does not meet the basic requirements listed above—including, but not limited to, using a consistent format; meeting at least the minimum length requirement; including specific citations from the readings; and making explicit connections to and engaging specifically with the prompts and class discussions—will be seen as not fulfilling the assignment, and will be returned for revision and a late grade.

Papers are due on the dates noted; late papers, including any returned to the student for revision, will receive lowered grades, unless other arrangements have been made in advance.

9. No final or midterm examinations.

10. Grades will be based on the conscientious completion of all of the above requirements. Please feel free to ask any questions in class or on an individual basis. Information on [current UF grading policies](#) for assigning grade points can be found [here](#).

10. Finally, communication is crucial to everything we are going to do in the next four months. Thus, if you are unsure about any of these course requirements, or run into any kind of difficulty, academic or otherwise, as the semester progresses, please

Speak with me as soon as you can. I will try to be as accommodating as possible, but I cannot help you if you do not convey to me what is going on. Also if you have any general questions, or even just feel like continuing the discussion begun in class, I encourage you to make an appointment to see me.
 Once again, welcome – I look forward to an exciting and rewarding semester!

Grading Scale

A 4.0 94-100 940-1000	C 2.0 73-76 730-769
A- 3.67 90-93 900-939	C- 1.67 70-72 700-729
B+ 3.33 87-89 870-899	D+ 1.33 67-69 670-699
B 3.0 83-86 830-869	D 1.0 63-66 630-669
B- 2.67 80-82 800-829	D- 0.67 60-62 600-629
C+ 2.33 77-79 770-799	E 0.00 0-59 0-599

Grading Criteria

Attendance (see #4 above)
 Participation and any response papers: 40%
 Formal papers: 60%



Lucas Cranach, [An Allegory of Melancholy](#) (1538)

UF Policy Statements

Covid Policies

August 6, 2021

COVID-19 cases are surging because of the new delta variant and the large numbers of people who are unvaccinated, setting new local and state records for hospitalizations.

All of us at the University of Florida have an obligation to each do our part to prevent further transmission of COVID-19. We are in this together, and each and every one of us plays an important role in furthering the health and safety of ourselves, our neighbors and our loved ones. It is the right thing to do — and medical experts say vaccination and masking are the best ways to do it.

Therefore, we are advising you of the following steps we are taking in our efforts to ensure a safe and successful fall semester:

1. Effective immediately, in light of new guidance from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, we expect everyone to wear a mask at all times when inside any UF facility, even if you are vaccinated. This includes our students, faculty, staff, vendors and visitors. Recent studies and guidance from the CDC state that both unvaccinated and vaccinated individuals can transmit the current COVID-19 variant to unvaccinated persons.
2. If you are not vaccinated, get vaccinated. If possible, students should aim to be fully vaccinated but if unable, should strive to have at least one shot of the Pfizer or Moderna vaccine no later than August 22. Vaccines are readily available at no cost and have been demonstrated to be safe and effective against the COVID-19 virus. Our UF Health experts tell us that even if you've had COVID-19, you still need to get vaccinated. Having had COVID does not provide nearly as much protection as the vaccine. Visit this link for details on where to get your shot, including options that do not require an appointment: <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/vaccinations/vaccine-availability/>. Students who receive the first dose of the vaccine wherever they are currently can still receive their second dose on campus.
3. COVID-19 testing remains available both on and off campus. Testing locations and schedules are available at <https://coronavirus.ufhealth.org/screen-test-protect-2/how/screen/#locations>. In addition, please complete the Weekly COVID-19 Symptom Screening you receive via email. This will help our UF Health Screen, Test & Protect team identify and contain any potential COVID-19 outbreaks.
4. If you are sick, stay home and self-quarantine. Please visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website about next steps, retake the questionnaire and schedule your test for no sooner than 24 hours after your symptoms began. Please call your primary care provider if you are ill and need immediate care.

- UF Health Screen, Test & Protect offers guidance when you are sick, have been exposed to someone who has tested positive or have tested positive yourself. Visit the UF Health Screen, Test & Protect website for more information.
5. Please continue to follow healthy habits, including best practices like frequent hand washing.
 6. Continue to regularly visit coronavirus.UFHealth.org and coronavirus.ufl.edu for up-to-date information about COVID-19 and vaccination.

We will continue our robust contact tracing program through UF Health Screen, Test & Protect in partnership with the Florida Department of Health.

UF Health Screen, Test & Protect, through its collaboration with the Florida Department of Health in Alachua County, will order isolation for those who have tested positive for the virus and quarantine for unvaccinated individuals who are identified as contacts of someone who has tested positive. UF will no longer provide on-campus quarantine or isolation space for students. Quarantined or isolated students will miss classes, and we are unable to offer an online version of every class.

Vaccination not only helps prevent you from becoming seriously ill or hospitalized with COVID-19, the more people who are vaccinated, the more it also protects those around us as well — our friends, families, colleagues and others. This is a natural extension of the culture of care and compassion we've embraced as a campus community.

Our individual decisions matter greatly in this fight to end this global health crisis. Anyone who chooses not to be vaccinated assumes a significant risk of contracting COVID-19 and spreading it to others. As previously communicated, UF cannot be responsible for that risk, given the ready availability of vaccine, and cannot modify the operation of the entire university for a minority of people who may choose not to be vaccinated.

We applaud those who are already vaccinated for taking this crucial step toward preventing the spread of the disease and for leading by example. Thank you for helping the university continue to fulfill its important missions of teaching, discovery, patient care and service to others.

In closing, we implore you to do everything possible to keep yourself and those around you safe from this highly contagious and deadly virus.

Joe Glover, Provost & Senior Vice President for Academic Affairs
Charlie Lane, Senior Vice President and Chief Operating Officer
D'Andra Mull, Vice President for Student Life
David R. Nelson, M.D., Senior Vice President for Health Affairs, UF & President, UF

Health

David Norton, Vice President for Research

Win Phillips, Chief of Staff, Office of the President

Accommodations for Disabilities

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor. Students needing accommodations should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Academic Honesty Policy

Students are required to review the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/> Plagiarism or any other violation of the Student Honor and Conduct Code will result in an automatic failure of the assignment. A report will be filed with the Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution Office.

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Conduct Code specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions, and can be accessed at <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-conduct-code/>

Course Evaluation

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>

In-Class Recording

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or

civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third-party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend are in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392-1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu/cwc>, and 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department at 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies), or <http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support: 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu / <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>

Career Resource Center: Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://www.crc.ufl.edu/> (Links to an external site.)

Library Support: <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>

Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center: Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio: 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help with brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>



Sebastiano Ricci,
[*Allegory with Figures of Hope, Time, and Death*](#) (1659–1734);
 with inscription, “Entre le Temps et la Mort, /
 l’Homme invoque l’Espérance”

Tentative Discussion Schedule

I. Introduction to Allegory and Allegoresis

1.) August 23 – Course requirements and policies

August 25-27 – Introduction

Definition from Abrams & Harpham, *A Glossary of Literary Terms*
and Intro. to Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (1964)

2.) August 31-September 3 – Introduction, Part 2

Walter Scott, “The Two Drovers” (1827)
James Cameron, director, *Terminator I & II* (1984; 1991)

II. Post-WW II Reconsiderations of Allegory

3.) September 6 – NO CLASS (Labor Day)

Sept. 8-10

Angus Fletcher, *Allegory: The Theory of a Symbolic Mode* (1964)

4.) September 13-17

Paul De Man, “The Rhetoric of Temporality” (1969)
Morton Bloomfield, “Allegory as Interpretation” (1972)

III. From Allegoresis to Allegory: Gregory of Nyssa and Dante

5.) Sept. 20-24

Book of Exodus (400 BCE) (King James Trans. 1611)
Gregory of Nyssa, *The Life of Moses* (4th c)

6.) Sept. 27-October 1

Dante, *Inferno* (early 14th c)
Dante, “Letter to Della Can Grande”

IV. Allegory in Early Modern England

7.) October 4-8

Edmund Spenser, *The Faerie Queene*, Book I (1590)

8.) October 11-15

William Shakespeare, *Hamlet* (1609)

- 9.) **October 18-22 – Catch-up/reflections thus far**
PAPER #1 Due Wednesday, October 20, by 5 p.m.

V. From Allegory to Allegoresis: Fredric Jameson

- 10.) **October 25-29**
Jameson, *Allegory and Ideology*, Chs. 1-5
- 11.) **November 1-5**
Jameson, *Allegory and Ideology*, Chs. 6-9 and Appendices
Phillip E. Wegner, “Greimasian Semiotic Square”

VI. Allegory and Allegoresis: 1800-present

- 12.) **November 8-12**
Mary Shelley, *Frankenstein* (1818; revised 1832)
- 13.) **November 15-19**
Nathaniel Hawthorne, “Young Goodman Brown” (1835)
James Joyce, “The Sisters” and “An Encounter” (1907; 1914)
- 14.) **November 22**
Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life” (1998)
& Denis Villeneuve, director, *Arrival* (2016)
- November 24-26 – no class (Thanksgiving break)**
- 15.) **November 29-December 1**
Ted Chiang, “Story of Your Life” (1998)
& Denis Villeneuve, director, *Arrival* (2016)
- December 3**
Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (2019)
- 16.) **December 6-8**
Colson Whitehead, *The Nickel Boys* (2019)

Sunday December 12 – FINAL PAPERS DUE by 11:59 p.m.