

Fall 2018 Graduate Institute Preceptorial Descriptions St. John's College | Annapolis, Maryland

All preceptorials are open to students in any of the Fall 2018 segments: Literature or Mathematics and Natural Science. Preceptorials meet on Thursdays from 7:30–9:30 p.m., starting on Thursday, August 23 and ending on Thursday, December 13.

Cartesian Dualisms

Required Text: Descartes: *Discourse on Method*; *Meditations*, parts 1, 2, 6 complete and excerpts from parts 3 and 4; *Passions of the Soul*, part 1, and selections from parts 2 and 3. Texts that I may hand out: passages from Descartes, *Rules for the Direction of the Native Intelligence*, and *Le monde (The World)*, and from Rousseau and Kant, where they may provide relevant comparison and contrast.

Description: Descartes is often referred to as the “founder” of modern philosophy. The preceptorial will consider the overall purpose of Cartesian thought and reflect on the several kinds of Cartesian dualism, each of which plays an important role in the themes of mind, nature, and freedom.

First Assignment: *Discourse on Method*, Introductory paragraph and part 1.

Tutor: Pamela Kraus

An Introduction to Ancient Greek

Required Text: Mollin and Williamson, *An Introduction to Ancient Greek*

Description: This two-semester course meets on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:30 to 9:30 p.m. because it is language intensive. In this Fall-semester portion of the preceptorial, our approach will be to learn Greek while thinking a lot about English and about language in general. We will also discuss the content, not just the language, of many passages and, eventually, of whole works that we read in the original Greek.

First Assignment: Please study carefully pages 2 through 5, especially with a view to memorizing the Greek alphabet.

Tutor: Paul Ludwig

Tolstoy's *War and Peace*

Required Text: Leo Tolstoy, *War and Peace*. Translated by Pevear and Volokhonsky.

Description: *War and Peace* may be the greatest novel yet written—a titanic mosaic of fiction, history, psychology, spirit, and philosophy. Tolstoy asks, are we to remain whole as we struggle with dialectics of love and rage, poverty and abundance? The reader feels every scene deeply, intimately, and essentially. Tolstoy asks why do we do what we do? How do individuals affect historical events? Who or what is at work as the agency of our freedom?

First Assignment: Volume One, Part One. Pages 1-111.

Tutor: David Townsend

Carlyle's French Revolution

Required Text: Thomas Carlyle, *The French Revolution: A History*

Description: [description pending](#)

First Assignment: Volume I, Books 1 and 2.

Tutor: Mark Sin

Montaigne's *Essays*

Required Text: Michel de Montaigne, *Essays*

The Donald Frame translation, from Stanford University is preferred.

Recommended Editions: Montaigne, the first essayist, champion skeptic and humanist, unsurpassed stylist, always a beginner—therefore student—of himself and mankind, wrote this note to the reader of his *Essays*, “I want to be seen here in my simple, natural, ordinary fashion, without straining or artifice: for it is myself that I portray. My defects will here be read to the life, and also my natural form, as far as respect for the public has allowed. Had I been placed among those nations which are said to live still in the sweet freedom of nature's first laws, I assure you I should very gladly have portrayed myself here entire and wholly naked. Thus, reader, I am myself the matter of my book; you would be unreasonable to spend your leisure on so frivolous and vain a subject. So farewell. Montaigne, this first day of March, fifteen hundred and eighty.” We who undertakes the reading of this frivolous and vain subject, man, shall fare well nonetheless.

First Assignment: “To the Reader” and Chapters I.1, I.3, I.7, I.8, I.9, I.12, I.14 (total 32 pages).

Tutor: Louis Petrich