

DANTE AT NOTRE DAME

“I am a man of letters and I believe that the apex of literature, of all literature, is the *Commedia*.... The *Commedia* is a book that everyone ought to read. Not to do so is to deprive oneself of the greatest gift that literature can give us.” -- Jorge Luis Borges



“Dante wrote his poems to MAKE PEOPLE THINK.”

-- Ezra Pound

“Dante makes you think seriously about your own life. He makes you want to *have* your own life, and to do the best you can with it.”

-- Charles Wright

“Whatever shore we reach in our journey, we arrive only to find that Dante has arrived there before us.” -- Eugenio Montale

Dante's *Comedy* is one of the supreme poetic achievements in Western literature. It is a probing synthesis of the entire Western cultural and philosophical tradition that produced it, a radical experiment in poetics and poetic technique, and a profound exploration of Christian thought and spirituality. Many students find that it is through reading Dante that the profound depths of the Catholic vision of reality first come to life for them, in all their subtlety, beauty, radical challenge, and life-changing power.

NOTRE DAME OFFERS THREE COURSES ON DANTE:

ROIT 40114: Dante's *Divine Comedy*: The Christian Universe as Poetry. A lecture course offering an introduction to Dante and to the *Commedia* as a whole, focusing on the *Inferno*, with significant attention also to the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*. Normally taught by Zyg Baranski.

ROIT 40115: Dante I. A discussion course that introduces the works that precede the *Comedy* (*Vita Nuova*, *Convivio*, *De vulgari eloquentia*, and Dante's poetic precursors) and then focuses on a close reading of the *Inferno*, the first of the three canticles of the *Comedy*. Normally taught by Ted Cachey.

ROIT 40116: Dante II. A discussion course that focuses on the two culminating canticles of the *Comedy*, the *Purgatorio* and *Paradiso*, where Dante pursues the deepest Catholic theological and philosophical understanding of what a human being is, and of the human relation to the world and to the divine. Normally taught by Christian Moevs.

Basic information: All the courses are taught in English; all read the text in a facing page translation, so that we can also refer to the Italian; all count for the Literature requirement and as Italian Studies courses; all have numerous cross-lists (e.g., Medieval Studies). If the course seems full, check the crosslists!!

Choosing the courses: You can take any one of these courses alone; if you take two, take one of ROIT 40114 or 40115, along with ROIT 40116. While it is ideal to take 40116 second, you can do the courses in any order (in other words, you can take 40116 and then one of 40114 or 40115).

Dante Resources at Notre Dame:

The Zahm Dante Collection, one of the three greatest Dante collections in North America.

The William and Katherine Devers Program in Dante Studies sponsors lectures, visiting professors, conferences, publications, exhibits, and rare book acquisition.

The Devers Dante Corner, a one-stop reference point in Special Collections for all basic Dante editions, translations, commentaries, dictionaries, bibliographies, and related classical texts.