

BASIC PROGRAM of LIBERAL EDUCATION for ADULTS

Autumn Quarter 2024 CALVINO'S WORLDS

INSTRUCTOR	DATES AND TIMES	LOCATION
Katia Mitova	COURSE LENGTH: Ten weeks DATES: October 5 – December 14 (no class on 11/30)	GLEACHER CENTER Please make sure to accept your invitation to Canvas.
EMAIL: kmitova@uchicago.edu (The instructor can be contacted through a Canvas message as well.)	DAY OF THE WEEK: Saturday TIME: 9:30 AM – 12:45 PM	COURSE CODE AND SECTION: BASC 70262 24A2 PREREQUISITES: NONE

Although this is an in-person course, supplementary materials will be posted online. Please accept the electronic invitation to join Canvas. (You will receive it about a week before the course begins.) Canvas login instructions are available here: <https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts>.

Shortly before his death, Italo Calvino (1923-1985) wrote: “*The grand challenge for literature is to be capable of weaving together the various branches of knowledge, their various ‘codes’ into a manifold and multifaceted vision of the world*” (*Six Memos for the Next Millennium*). As a young writer, Calvino had accepted the challenge, left behind neorealism and, intrepidly, like a modern Marco Polo, set out to discover new worlds. Inspired by the “codes” of myth, history, literature, art, architecture, philosophy, astronomy, physics, mathematics, semiotics, and biology, his imagination and masterful storytelling wove an enchanting, uniquely Calvinian universe. We will discuss *Invisible Cities* (1972), *If on a Winter Night a Traveler* (1979), and *Mr. Palomar* (1983) as well as a selection of Calvino’s essays and short stories from *Cosmicomics* (1965), *Difficult Loves* (1970), and *The Castle of Crossed Destinies* (1973). Expect weekly reading assignments of about 70-90 pages.

SYLLABUS

This preliminary version of the syllabus is meant to give you a general idea of the organization of the course. The selections of short stories from *Difficult Loves* and *The Complete Cosmicomics* will be specified in the updated syllabus (to be posted in September).

REQUIRED BOOKS

1. *Difficult Loves*. Mariner. ISBN 978-0544959125
2. *The Complete Cosmicomics*. Mariner. ISBN 978-0544577879
3. *Invisible Cities*. Mariner. ISBN 978-0156453806
4. *If on a Winter’s Night a Traveler*. Harcourt Brace Jovanovich. ISBN 978-0156439619
5. *Mr. Palomar*. Mariner. ISBN 978-0156627801

RECOMMENDED PRELIMINARY READING

1. *The Baron in the Trees*, Mariner. ISBN 978-0544959118. (Even better, the whole trilogy, *Our Ancestors*. Vintage. ISBN 978-0099430865.)
2. *The Castle of Crossed Destinies*. Mariner. ISBN 978-0156154550

Students can purchase books at the Gleacher Center Bookstore online at <https://chicagobooth.bnccollege.com/shop/chicagobooth/page/find-textbooks> using the Textbook order form, or by using the ISBN number to order the correct edition elsewhere.

WEEKLY READING SCHEDULE

DAY	READING ASSIGNMENTS FROM ITALO CALVINO'S WORKS
WEEK 1 10/5	Story-making, Story-telling, Story-reading: Introduction to Calvino "The Adventure of a Reader" and "The Adventure of a Poet" (from <i>Difficult Loves</i>) "The Distance of the Moon" (from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i>) Excerpts from <i>The Castle of Crossed Destinies</i> (handout in Canvas)
WEEK 2 10/12	<i>Invisible Cities</i> (Parts 1-3, pp. 5-56) Selection from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i> (TBD)
WEEK 3 10/19	<i>Invisible Cities</i> (Parts 4-6, pp. 59-99) Selection from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i> (TBD)
WEEK 4 10/26	<i>Invisible Cities</i> (Parts 7-9, pp. 103-165) Selection from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i> (TBD)
WEEK 5 11/2	<i>If on a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> (pp. 3-67) Selection from <i>Difficult Loves</i> (TBD)
WEEK 6 11/9	<i>If on a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> (pp. 68-131) Selection from <i>Difficult Loves</i> (TBD)
WEEK 7 11/16	<i>If on a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> (pp. 132-198) Selection from <i>Difficult Loves</i> (TBD)
WEEK 8 11/23	<i>If on a Winter's Night a Traveler</i> (pp. 199-260) Selection from <i>Difficult Loves</i> (TBD)
WEEK 9 12/7	<i>Mr. Palomar</i> (pp. 3-66) Selection from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i> (TBD)
WEEK 10 12/14	<i>Mr. Palomar</i> (pp. 67-126) Selection from <i>The Complete Cosmicomics</i> (TBD)

DISABILITY INFORMATION: Student Disability Services (SDS) works to provide resources, support and accommodations for all students with disabilities and works to remove physical and attitudinal barriers, which may prevent their full participation in the University community. Students that would like to request accommodations should contact SDS in advance of the first class meeting at 773.702.6000 or disabilities@uchicago.edu.