

BASIC PROGRAM of LIBERAL EDUCATION for ADULTS

Against Explanation: Wittgenstein on Frazer

September 2022

INSTRUCTOR	DATES AND TIMES	LOCATION
Charles Thomas Elder	COURSE LENGTH: 3 Weeks DATES: September 8-22	Remote Course
EMAIL: celder@uchicago.edu Instructor can be contacted through Canvas message	DAY OF THE WEEK: Thursday TIMES: 9:30 a.m.-12:45 p.m.	COURSE CODE and SECTION: BASC80019 22U1 PREREQUISITES: None

Remote courses require you to login to Canvas to access the Zoom Classroom. **You will receive an invitation to join Canvas about a week before your course begins.** Please visit <https://grahamschool.uchicago.edu/academic-programs/online/learning-resources/liberal-arts> to find Canvas login instructions, Zoom instructions, and student training sessions.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

One of the few truly great thinkers of the last century, Wittgenstein's genius is perhaps nowhere more fully on display than in the collection of strange, enigmatic, and provocative comments published under the title, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*." For Wittgenstein, it was Frazer's great error to have believed that one can and should "explain" ancient religious rites and rituals at all, when in fact what they demand, in his view, is something like a "perspicuous representation," one which allows us to make connections between and among them, as well as to our own deepest needs, dispositions, and aspirations. Students will benefit from a general familiarity with Frazer's argument (and we supplement the discussion with short excerpts from this text), but the text should be accessible to anyone willing to wrestle with it.

REQUIRED TEXT

Wittgenstein, "Remarks on Frazer's *Golden Bough*," pdf posted to Canvas.

Students can purchase books at the Gleacher Center Bookstore online at <https://chicagobooth.bncollege.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	AUTHOR	READING ASSIGNMENT
WEEK 1 Sep. 8	Wittgenstein	"Remarks on Frazer's <i>Golden Bough</i> " [all]
WEEK 2 Sep. 15	Wittgenstein	"Remarks on Frazer's <i>Golden Bough</i> " [all]
WEEK 3 Sep. 22	Wittgenstein	"Remarks on Frazer's <i>Golden Bough</i> " [all]

Students will receive an invitation to join the Graham School Student Community Canvas Site, a place to read announcements, have discussions, ask questions, and find resources.

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.