This course proposes a reading of Dante’s work from Vita nova to the Commedia, considered in light of the theological, rhetorical, and philosophical learning of Dante’s time. Dante’s Commedia will be considered in the context of his minor works. The objective of the course is to familiarize students with one of the most significant authors of Western culture. Through Dante’s texts, students will gain a perspective on the Biblical, Christian, and Classical traditions as well as on the historical, literary, philosophical context of medieval Europe.

Attention is directed to literature, art, and music, in addition to political, religious, and social developments of the time. The course emphasizes the continuity of the Western tradition and its intellectual history, especially the classical background of medieval culture and its transmission to the modern world.

Readings include selections from Dante’s works as The New Life, The Banquet, The Divine Comedy, and The Monarchy, along with texts by St. Augustine, Severinus Boethius, Thomas Aquinas, and Boccaccio. Works of vernacular poets of 13th century and artists from Romanesque to Gothic will be considered. Texts to be read will be available as photocopies.

Offered to qualified undergraduates only. Please contact department for permission.