This course serves as an introduction to the concept of narrative. We will be reading literary and philosophical texts that both define and question conventional ideas about fiction, history, and ethical action. We will think about how narrative creates a sense of identity, and consider the relationship writers see, and we ourselves construct, between our stories and our actions. I hope to focus some of our discussion on fields that reflect the interests of members of the class, and in that sense, our course will be formed by collaboration. By familiarizing you with some fundamental works in the history of narrative, this course aims to deepen your ideas about the role of narrative in your lives and your work.

Course Requirements
The work for the class combines class participation, intensive reading, and various types of writing. Class discussion will enable us to make connections between the material we are studying and your areas of interest. As your explorations of narrative progress, please feel free to propose readings and activities and to bring any additional material to the class that you feel might make it more meaningful.

Ground rules: Attendance is required. Habitual lateness and more than two unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade in the course. You are expected to have completed the readings before the class for which they are assigned. Plagiarism will result in no credit for the assignment. Papers are due on deadline.

Texts (required editions; no substitutions please)
Plato, Republic, books 2, 3 and 10. Handout.
Selected handouts and occasional blackboard postings.

**Papers**
Requirements: Five 500-word responses and two 1500 to 2000-word essays. Writing must be handed in on time. Responses are important for my understanding of what you’re thinking about as you read, so it’s vital that you hand them in on deadline. They are also sources for your essays.

Specifications: All essays must have a title. When you quote from and cite your sources, you are expected to use the MLA citation format, either parenthetical documentation or footnotes. All essays must include a list of Works Cited following the MLA format. (I’m serious about this, so pay attention!). See *MLA Handbook* or you can find MLA format on line! Excellent site: http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/. Every essay should be typed, double-spaced, and carefully proofread, with pages numbered. Please use 12-point font!

**Due Dates**
Responses of various kinds (see syllabus for instructions): 9/13, 9/20, 10/4, 11/6, 11/27
Essay #1 10/23
Essay #2 12/6

**Grading**
Participation 15%, Responses 35%, Essays 50% (25% each)

**Academic Integrity**
As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website for a full description of the academic integrity policy [www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html](http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html)

**Schedule**
9/4    Introductions. In-class writing.
9/6    READING DUE: Plato, excerpt from *Republic* (handout).

DISCUSSION: Why is art discussed in the context of education in books 2 and 3? How does the discussion change in Book 10? What effect does art have the emotions? What is the relationship do you think there is between art and the state?
9/11  Continued discussion of Plato and Aristotle.
     READING DUE: Plato, excerpt from *Republic* (handout) and Aristotle, *Poetics*.

     DISCUSSION: Bring in passages that show Aristotle’s notion of mimesis in contrast to that of Plato. In what different ways does Aristotle justify poetry? What is the difference between Aristotle’s notion of catharsis and Plato’s idea? What is catharsis, anyway, and what do you think about it? Think about the relationship Aristotle sees between plot and human action. Why is plot so important? Bring in one question or idea to start off discussion.

9/13  More on Plato and Aristotle and notions of narrative.
     READING DUE: Plato, Aristotle, Forster, chapters II-V (inclusive); handout on Narrative.

     DISCUSSION: How does Forster describe the importance and relation of character and plot? What useful things does Forster tell you about story? about time? space? voice?

     **WRITING DUE: RESPONSE #1**  500-word response discussing Plato’s, Aristotle’s, and Forster's ideas about the relationship between stories and the way we live our lives.


     DISCUSSION: Look carefully at the Prologue. Who is the author and what is he up to here? What are the main themes that you see introduced in the opening chapters? Choose some passages that illustrate them. What relationship do the author, the narrator, and the reader have? How does Don Quixote become a knight? How do people treat him at the inn? Bring in your questions.


     DISCUSSION: Bring in passages that you have found important. Look carefully at the movement from chapter 8-chapter 9. What is happening in the transition? We’ll discuss the story of Marcela. What do you think about Sancho? Who is Dulcinea?

     **WRITING DUE: RESPONSE #2**  Initial response to DQ, prologue-chapter 15. What do you think is important? What does the book make you think about? Pick an idea, a motif, or a passage and explore it. Which ideas do you want to discuss?


     DISCUSSION: Bring in passages that you have found important. Look at the story of what happens at the inn that DQ takes for a castle, and at the episode with Mambrino’s helmet. Think about Sancho's naming of DQ and Sancho's story of the goatherd in chapter 20.
hint: If you are observing the Jewish holiday on Wednesday, 9/26, try to read in advance for the week (i.e. chapters 16-27).


DISCUSSION: Bring in passages you have found important. We’ll discuss Sancho’s story, the galley slaves and Gines de Pasamonte, and Cardenio. Pay special attention to ch. 25. What do you make of it? What do you think about what the story of Cardenio et. al. is saying about love and about women? Think about what interruptions and digressions are saying about literature and life. Think about the relationship of Cardenio’s and DQ’s notions of honor.

10/02   READING DUE: *Don Quixote*, Part 1, chapters 28-32.

DISCUSSION: How does this adventure, as well as the narrative about Cardenio's situation, change when Dorotea enters the story? Think about honor and what it means to Dorotea. What do you think about the Priest and the Barber?


DISCUSSION: Look carefully at The Tale of the Man Who Was Recklessly Curious. What issues does this tale raise? What emotions does this story explore? What is it suggesting about honor? Pay attention to the discussion about arms and learning. What are the different layers of the actual, enchanted, and fictional worlds here? Pay attention to the role Dorotea plays.

**WRITING DUE: RESPONSE #3**  Response to chapters 16-38, in which you raise questions and respond to the text. Reflect on some the questions we’ve asked in class and the role of the interpolated tales. What connections do you see among the interpolated tales? Follow out ideas you've been pursuing, connecting them with text and with how it is evolving.


DISCUSSION: The Captive’s Tale. More on Mambrino’s helmet. BRING IN questions and ideas you want to focus on in the Captive’s Tale.

10/11   READING DUE: *Don Quixote*, Part 1, chapters 44-52.

DISCUSSION: The resolution of the Dorotea story. Pay attention to chapters 48, 49 and 50. What is the discussion with the cathedral priest about? What positions about literature are they expounding? Why bring in Leandra? What do you think of the end of part 1?

10/16   NO CLASS

DISCUSSION: How does Book 2 seem so far? Has Don Quixote changed? What is the relationship between him and Sancho like? Why do you think the story of Sancho’s conversation with Teresa is included? What does it show?

10/23   READING DUE: *Don Quixote*, Part 2, chapters 6-17.


WRITING DUE: Essay #1: 1500 to 2000-word paper (see specs in syllabus for format)


DISCUSSION: What do you make of Camacho's wedding and DQ's role? What is going on in the Cave? IS DQ dreaming or?

10/30   READING DUE: *Don Quixote*, Part 2, chapters 24-35.

DISCUSSION: Master Pedro, Don Quixote and the puppets. What do you think about his reactions and about the resolution of this incident? What’s going on with Sancho’s salary? Think about reality, illusion, and literature.

11/1   READING DUE: *Don Quixote*, Part 2, chapters 36-41.

DISCUSSION: The adventures at the Duke and Duchess’s: What do you think about the effect of the Duke and the Duchess on DQ, the character and the text? What do you think this turn of events signifies?


DISCUSSION: Sancho’s governorship and other matters. Why are DQ and Sancho separated? How does their awareness evolve? What do you make of Sancho’s adventure in the pit? Are Sancho and DQ changing? Is their relationship changing? (This is an open question; I don’t have a specific answer that I’m looking for). Follow out themes you’ve been thinking about. Pay attention to chapters 44 and 48, too! Those torn stockings. . .

WRITING DUE: RESPONSE #4   Thoughts about your reading, about how your ideas about book two are developing, and ideas you might consider in an essay.

DISCUSSION: What is happening to Teresa Panza? Ricote. How does Sancho's governorship end? The reunion of DQ and Sancho. What is happening with Tosilos? Think about roles we play, resolutions in stories vs. in life.


DISCUSSION: More on Ricote, on the Knight of the White Moon, and on Roque Guinart. What kind of adventure is this?


DISCUSSION: The end. . . where does it leave you?

11/20 READING DUE: *Jacques the Fatalist*, pp. 21-105.

DISCUSSION: Bring in your questions and observations. Possible ideas: the relation of history and fiction, the relation of the narrator and the reader, the book’s notion of morality, the role of one of the interpolated narratives, digression and interruption.

11/22 NO CLASS--THANKSGIVING BREAK
hint: If you love *Jacques the Fatalist*, finish the novel so you can start ruminating about your second essay.


DISCUSSION: Mme. de la Pommeraye. Why is this tale included? What are the formal and moral implications? Look carefully at the narrator’s address to the reader, and consider the relations between the action of Diderot’s story and the narrative style.

**WRITING DUE: RESPONSE #5** Develop one of your observations about the text into a fuller discussion of the ideas that compel you. Use textual evidence. Consider, if you want, connections you see, if any, between Diderot’s “novel” and Cervantes’s “novel”?

11/29 READING DUE: *Jacques the Fatalist*, pp. 153-end

12/4 READING DUE: Required: Jorge Luis Borges, "Parable of Cervantes and the Quixote" and "Pierre Menard, Author of the Quixote." Also, handouts of Milan Kundera essay, David Foster Wallace, and Jerome Bruner.

12/6 Discussion of Borges, Kundera, Foster Wallace and Bruner.

**WRITING DUE: Essay #2: 1500 to 2000-word paper (see specs in syllabus for format)**
12/11  Discussion of Borges, Kundera, Foster Wallace and Bruner.

12/13  Narrativefest!