

## IDSC 251: Windows on the Good Life Fall term, 2025

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Office hours: Th 3:30-5:30, F 2-4,  
and by appt.

Liberal education, which consists in the constant intercourse with the greatest minds, is a training in the highest form of modesty, not to say of humility. It is at the same time a training in boldness: it demands from us the complete break with the noise, the rush, the thoughtlessness, the cheapness of the vanity fair of the intellectuals as well as of their enemies. It demands from us the boldness implied in the resolve to regard the accepted views as mere opinions, or to regard the average opinions as extreme opinions which are at least as likely to be wrong as the most strange or the least popular opinions. Liberal education is liberation from vulgarity. The Greeks had a beautiful word for "vulgarity"; they called it *apeirokalia*, lack of experience in things beautiful. Liberal education supplies us with experience in things beautiful.

- From Leo Strauss, "What is Liberal Education"

This course will be offered in two sections:

- IDSC 251.01: Monday, 3:10 – 4:55 PM
- IDSC 251.02: Monday, 8:00 – 9:45 PM

**Text:** Plato's *Symposium*, translated by Seth Benardete (The University of Chicago Press)

Class schedule:

September 15  
September 22—NO CLASS  
September 29  
October 6  
October 13  
October 20—NO CLASS  
October 27  
November 3

Readings will be assigned weekly.

*To receive a satisfactory mark for this S/CR/NC course you are expected to:*

- Attend every class session unless you have received *specific* permission from the instructor.
- Come to classes well-prepared to contribute to the seminar conversations.
  - Note: You will occasionally be called on to participate by presenting an informed question or interpretation from your reading. You must be prepared to do so at any time.
- Complete, adequately and on time, all writing assignments.