This fall we will study quest literature of the ancient world. We will begin with Gilgamesh's quest for a remedy for death in *Gilgamesh*, and ending with Pilgrim's quest for salvation in *Pilgrim's Progress*. In between, we will study several fictional accounts of quests, as well as two historical ones—Xenophon's *Anabasis*, which vividly records his quest for home and survival after his small band of mercenaries is stranded in the middle of a huge, hostile Persian army thousands of miles from home, and Christopher Columbus's *Journal*, which records his journey away from home and toward the New World. The central work of the course will be Dante's *Divine Comedy*, in which the author travels from the bottom of hell to the highest point in heaven while settling old scores with his home town enemies.

Written work for the course will consist of daily written discussion questions, three critical discussions of 3-5 pages, and a final 5-7 page creative paper—an original quest story, written by each student, photocopied and distributed to all members of the class for discussion.

Richard Cecil holds a joint appointment as an assistant professor in the English department and the Hutton Honors College. He is the author of two collections of poetry, *Einstein's Brain* (University of Utah Press, 1986) and *Alcatraz* (Purdue University Press, 1992).

**COURSE TEXTS**

- *Gilgamesh*
- Homer's *The Odyssey*
- Virgil's *Aenead*
- Xenophon's *Anabasis*
- Dante's *Divine Comedy*
- Parts of Malory's *Morte d'Arthur*
- Columbus's *Journal*
- Bunyan's *Pilgrim's Progress*