## Science, Magic and the Passage to Modernity

## Autumn 2013 | I&S Credit | NW | Instructor: Paul Boynton

How did we come to our current state of modernity from the mystical richness of pre-Renaissance conceptions of the natural world?

Modern science is every bit as imaginative as any scholarly or even artistic pursuit. Only in the 20th century does a wall begin to form between physical sciences and the humanities. In *Science, Magic and the Passage to Modernity*, we trace a circuitous path to our current worldview by examining the historical/philosophical roots of the culture of scientific inquiry through four historical periods: Classical Antiquity, Hellenism, the late Renaissance, and the early Twentieth Century. In doing so, we discover not only the success and power of our modern way of knowing the world of matter and energy, but also its inherent limitations and self-imposed boundaries that become evident when attempting to extend it to accommodate the full range of human experience.