**Galileo essay topics**

**Arts One, Seeing and Knowing, Fall 2016**

1. Plato, Hildegard and Galileo all claim to be able to see things that others can’t. Using evidence from *The Starry Messenge*r and/or “Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina,” argue for how Galileo tries to convince others that what he sees nevertheless counts as true knowledge. Alternatively, you may compare how he tries to do so with Plato’s or Hildegard’s attempts to convince others that what they see counts as knowledge.

2. Analyze the rhetorical strategies Galileo uses in the “Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina” and/or *The Starry Messenger* to try to show that observation of nature is as good a source of knowledge as Biblical scripture. Discuss not only *what* he says, but *how* he argues.

3. What do Galileo's "Letter to the Grand Duchess" and *The Starry Messenger* suggest about the value of gaining knowledge?

4. How does Galileo negotiate the relationship between knowledge and power in *The Starry Messenger* and “The Letter to the Grand Duchess Christina”?

5. Plato looks inward, Galileo looks outward. Discuss.

6. On the basis of our selected readings, is Galileo clear, and does he remain consistent, about the nature of the relationship between religion and science?