

HUMANITIES 124 HON: The Ancient World

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MWF 11:25-12:35 (LS: 12:35)
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COURSE DESCRIPTION AND GOALS

This course is a study of representative works of world literature from antiquity (3000 BCE-400CE). The focus of this course will be the analysis of the thematic, symbolic, aesthetic, stylistic, generic, and linguistic features of some of the great works of the western and non-western literary tradition. An important goal of the class is to promote an understanding of the works in their cultural and historical contexts and of the enduring human values that unite the different literary traditions. Those values include friendship, love, courage, fame, purpose, destiny, meaning, sacrifice, and community; the more you think about these things, the better our class will be. All the literature is read in translation; there are works of prose and poetry, including epic, drama, lyric poetry, history, philosophy, biographies, and other works.

REQUIRED TEXTS

Fiero, Gloria *The Humanistic Tradition*, Vol I: The First Civilizations and the Their Classical Legacy (McGraw-Hill)
Hook, Moseley, Peters, eds., *The Asheville Reader*, Vol. 1
The Epic of Gilgamesh, trans. Maureen Gallery Kovacs (Stanford)
Homer, *The Iliad*, trans. Robert Fagles (Penguin)
The Bhagavad-Gita, trans. Barbara Stolen Miller (Bantam)
Plato, *The Trial and Death of Socrates* trans. B. Jowett (Dover)
Virgil, *The Aeneid*, trans. Allen Mandelbaum (Bantam)
Euripides, *The Trojan Women*, trans. Diskin Clay (Focus)
Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, trans. D. C. Lau (Penguin) – **particular to our section**

Additional assigned readings will be found on the Internet, the addresses for which appear below in the syllabus, and on electronic reserve in Ramsey Library.

Requirements of the course:

Weekly Routine: Our class meets Monday, Wednesday, and Friday. Every MONDAY will be the group lecture, held in Humanities Lecture Hall. Wednesdays and Fridays we will meet in our own section in New Hall 015. Most WEDNESDAY classes will begin with a short quiz on the material assigned or the lecture. Some FRIDAY classes will

begin with a short in-class writing assignment, which is explained below.

1. **Preparation:** We are reading quite a bit in this course, and at the beginning you should make a commitment to complete the assignments and to think about what you have read. I would encourage you to reserve 1-2 hours a day every day for the reading. We will not cover the same amount of material each class, so I encourage you to look and read ahead for the longer assignments (e.g. *Bhagavad-Gita*, *Iliad*, *Aeneid*). **Being prepared for class means having your books in class.** I will not ask you to leave or to remain silent if you come without your books (penalties that other professors impose), but I will ask you whether you have them and note that you do not. Bring the book under discussion to class **every day**.

2. **Attendance:** Attendance is absolutely necessary for a successful class; absences should not occur except in extraordinary circumstances, that is, in true emergencies. **Three absences will not be penalized, but after that, the following penalties accrue: for your fourth absence, your course grade will fall by 5 points; for your fifth, another 10 points; and for your sixth, you will fail the course.** The lectures are counted as any other class. Documented legal or medical emergencies *may* be an exception. **If it snows:** Either classes will be cancelled or operate on a delayed snow schedule (you can find this out by calling the Snow Line (828) 259-3050; our late start time is 12:35) or they will operate on a normal schedule. If you cannot attend, try to notify me *prior* to missing class. Weather may or may not be a legitimate excuse; however, if you live remotely and you do not feel safe to drive, do not drive. I'll work with you. Tardiness is frowned upon, and if excessive or chronic (i.e. more than 30 minutes late, or late repeatedly) will affect your participation grade and may be counted as an absence.

3. **Participation:** This class is primarily a discussion class, and it is vital that we share our ideas and talents with each other. Feel free to ask a question, offer a comment, take a stand on an issue, or disagree with what others say. It is through free and lively exchange that we refine our skills and our views. Several guidelines can help govern this exchange: enter this class intending to learn a great deal; bring an open and critical mind; a sense of humor; an interest in people of other times and places; a willingness to offer your own ideas and to comment respectfully on the ideas of others. You will be assigned a grade on your participation, which necessarily involves your respectful attention and preparation. The grading scale will be as follows:

A (Excellent) = Contributes regularly and enthusiastically to every class; sets agenda for class discussion and moves it forward; states ideas clearly; supports ideas and opinions with specific evidence from the text or elsewhere; follows up on own ideas and refines them; takes the lead in engaging others in discussion; recognized by peers in class.

B (Good) = Contributes good spiritedly to nearly every class discussion; does not dominate; states ideas clearly; supports ideas and opinions with general evidence from

the text or elsewhere; always maintains an active presence in the class; sometimes engages others in dialogue; known to peers in class.

C (Average) = Contributes sporadically to class discussion; offers relevant ideas and opinions, but digresses from the point easily; does not support ideas and opinions with evidence from the text; little follow up or refinement of ideas; speaks declaratively and rarely engages others in dialogue; little known by peers in class.

D (Below Average) = Occasionally tardy; physically present and actively listens, but contributes very little to class discussion; or contributes in disrespectful or dismissive ways; discourages group discussion; unknown to peers in class.

F (Failing) = Absent; tardy; obviously and frequently unprepared and inattentive; or offers unproductive comments and belittles the contributions of others.

4. **WRITING:** Writing is hard. Usually, the more you write, the better you become. Your writing will take several forms in this class: biweekly short in-class writing assignments, reflections on cultural events, a take-home essay exam, and two short interpretive papers. Each of these assignments will enhance your skills of arguing persuasively for your interpretation. We may write more than students in some other sections, and we will pay attention to the various stages of the process of writing, especially the challenge of finding something to write about.

In-class writing: You will spend the first 12-15 minutes about every other week writing a response to an interpretive question that I pose from a reading. These short in-class responses will be graded on the presence and development of three components:

interpretive claim: (what I think the text means regarding the question)

evidence: (quotations from the text that make me think this way)

explanation: (this is why these quotations make me think this way)

These writings will be graded as Excellent (E=100), Satisfactory (S=85), or Unsatisfactory (U=60). Of course, if you are absent or late, your grade will be 0. **These assignments cannot be made up later.** The following criteria will be used:

Unsatisfactory (U): Fails to address the question, or lacks a clear interpretive claim; engages the question only in perfunctory or obvious ways; cites no specific references from text(s) or paraphrases instead; makes no clear connection between evidence and interpretive claim.

Satisfactory (S): Addresses the question with an interpretive claim; engages the question in a thorough manner; supports assertions with specific quotations from the text(s); clarifies interpretations of quotations.

Excellent (E): Claim, evidence, and explanation are integral, clear, and compelling; the answer not only addresses the given question but incorporates other relevant material and interpretations to demonstrate an understanding both broad and specific.

5. **Cultural events:** attendance at two cultural events is required. A few on-campus “Cultural Events” will be announced each week at the start of the lectures. For each event attended, a one-page statement of your reflections on or reactions to the event must be submitted to me **by email**. I will distribute a longer description of these cultural event responses after the beginning of the semester. These will be counted as writing assignments. One must be submitted before the start of fall break, the other before the last day of class, no exceptions.

6. **Journal** (Strongly Recommended): One of the difficult things about reading literature and writing about it is knowing which questions are really useful (i.e. make or bring some sense to the text and help discussion) and which ones are not as useful (i.e. can be answered in one word or not at all and discourage discussion). I recommend that each of you write out thoughts, ideas, responses, or, perhaps best, questions about what we read. You can write in your books or elsewhere, but I recommend that you keep these musings in a separate notebook or journal. Write as much as you can; include reasons why you have your ideas or why you are interested in your questions. Your questions can be factual, if you wish, but preferably they will be interpretive. The substance of your writing can provide the springboard for our class discussions as well as for your interpretive paper. I will not ask you to read from your journal, nor will I ask to read your journal, so feel free to write whatever you like in it.

7. **Papers:** You will have two papers due during the semester. The first will be a short essay (4-6 pages) on the *Apology of Socrates* in response to a question that I pose. The second paper will be slightly longer (5-8 pages) and will pursue an interpretive question that you craft for yourself (i.e. something that you want to learn). We will discuss these in class beforehand and I will be happy to talk to you about your questions to help you shape and limit them appropriately.

8. **Quizzes and Tests:** Most Wednesdays we will have a quiz on the material from the lecture and the readings. These, if missed, should be made up **before the day of the next quiz**. There will be one in class exam, one take-home essay exam, and a cumulative final, which will include not only factual questions, but also identifications and interpretive essays. The format of the final will be discussed in class the last day.

9. **Special Needs:** If anyone has a disability that requires special accommodation for quizzes, writing, or tests, please be sure that you are registered with the Advising and Learning Support Center, 219A University Hall; Ethan S. Fesperman is the Asst. Director and the phone is 232-5050. You should let me know **at the beginning of the semester**

what accommodations you will need.

10. **Cell phones, pagers, etc.** While you are in class, I expect you to restrict your contact to those who are in class with you. That means under no circumstances should you look at or respond to a text message during class, or even check to see who just called you. I prefer that you turn off all electronic devices before class so that they do not distract you or those around you. If there is a situation that requires you to be accessible, please let me know in advance. I hope that this notice will suffice, but if not, I will begin by talking to you individually, but repeated distractions may result in your having to leave the class and take an absence – it is that serious.

11. In addition to the quizzes, the midterm, and the final, you will be graded on your written work. And a grade will be given for your participation. Grades will include plus and minus. The percentages are as follows: A=93-100, A-=90-92, B+=87-89, B=83-86, B-=80-82, C+=77-79, C=73-76, C-=70-72, D=below 70, F=below 60.

Every classroom has standards of academic honesty. The basic idea of academic honesty is that all the work that you represent as your own is in fact your own, that you never take anyone's else words or ideas and pass them off as your own, neither on a test nor in a written assignment. All of you will be held to the standards of academic honesty as described in the 2009-2010 catalog, which can be found on UNCA's website as Catalog, under the heading "Academic Regulations and Procedures" and subheading "Student Responsibilities", where academic misconduct is discussed. A breach of academic honesty will result in, at the very least, the unacceptability of the work under question; and at the very most, expulsion from the university. Please commit yourself to these standards.

A breakdown of the grade distribution appears thus:

quizzes	- 5%
writing assignments	- 5%
in class exam (9/25)	- 10%
take home exam (due 10/9)	- 15%
first paper (due 10/28)	- 15%
second paper (due 11/30)	- 15%
final (12/7)	- 15%
preparation/participation	- 20%

Syllabus: This syllabus is intended more as a guide than as a straitjacket, but we will have to stick to it pretty closely. If circumstances require it, quizzes or writing assignments may be omitted at the professor's discretion. You are responsible for every reading listed below, whether or not it is fully discussed in class. The readings that you should do **for homework** appear below after **HW:** you are to read each of those assignments for the next class after which they appear. (**NB: AR = *The Asheville Reader***)

Wk. I: 8/17: LECTURE: **Intro to Humanities/Mesopotamia** (Dr. Moseley) **HW:** **AR:** Two appendices “Reading a Primary Text from Antiquity” and “Essay on Translation” (pp. 540-551)

8/19: Intro to course: syllabus, material, assignments. Context and interpretation of literature: what do we ask? how do we talk about it? what does it all mean? **HW:** *Gilgamesh* I-VII (pp. 2-66); Fiero I, pp. 1-18, 36-48.

8/21: *Gilgamesh*. **HW:** *Gilgamesh* VIII-XII (pp.68-108); Fiero, pp. 19-35; **AR:** The Story of Sinuhe (pp. 148-158); Love Poems (pp. 165-170).

Wk. II: 8/24: LECTURE: **Egypt** (Dr. Hopes)

8/26: *Gilgamesh*. Quiz. **HW:** **AR:** The Hymn to Hapy (pp. 159-164); Amenemope (pp. 171-188); Herodotus (pp. 294-297)

8/28: Writing assignment. The Story of Sinuhe; The Instruction of Amenemope **HW:** Fiero pp. 61-65, 160-172; **AR:** Book of Songs (pp. 202-211); Confucius (pp. 212-219).

Wk. III: 8/31: LECTURE: **China** (Dr. Hardy)

9/2: Quiz. *Book of Songs* **HW:** **AR:** Han Feizi (pp. 231-235)

9/4: Confucius, Han Feizi. **HW:** Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Book One (pp. 5-42)

Wk. IV: 9/7: NO LECTURE: Labor Day – No Classes

9/9: *Tao Te Ching* Book One (pp. 5-42) **HW:** Lao Tzu, *Tao Te Ching*, Book Two (pp. 45-88)

9/11: *Tao Te Ching* Book Two (pp. 45-88) **HW:** Fiero pp. 58-61; *Bhagavad-Gita*, Teachings 1-11 (pp. 21-109).

Wk. V: 9/14: LECTURE: **India and Hinduism** (Dr. Maitra)

9/16: *Bhagavad-Gita*, Teachings 1-11. **HW:** *The Bhagavad-Gita*, Teachings 12-18 (pp. 111-154).

9/18: Writing Assignment. *Bhagavad-Gita*. **HW:** Fiero II pp. 12-16, 36-44 (Buddhism) on electronic reserve in Ramsey; **AR:** Selected Buddhist texts (pp. 264-269); watch *The Life of Buddha* (<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P2NLQGrbf5U>). Begin the *Iliad*.

Wk. VI: 9/21: LECTURE: **Buddhism and Jainism** (Dr. Payne)

9/23: Quiz. Buddhism. **HW:** Prepare for exam; continue the *Iliad*.

9/25: Exam. **Take-home exam given out in class.** **HW:** *Iliad* 1-9

Wk. VII: 9/28: LECTURE: **Heroic and Archaic Greece** (Dr. Hardy)

9/30: Quiz. The *Iliad*. **HW:** *Iliad* 10-14

10/2: Writing Assignment. The *Iliad*. **HW:** *Iliad* 15-20

Wk. VIII: 10/5: LECTURE: **Greek City-States and Greek Tragedy** (Dr. Mills)

10/7: The *Iliad*. **HW:** *Iliad* 21-24

10/9: Writing Assignment. The *Iliad*. **Take-home exam due.** **HW:** Fiero I pp. 69-78, 106-122; *The Trojan Women*; **AR:** Herodotus (pp. 297-321); Lyric poetry (pp. 285-290), Sappho, (pp. 290-1 as well as her poems at www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/rayor.shtml).

Wk. IX: 10/12: **Fall Break!** [Keep working!]

10/14: Quiz. Tragedy and the end of the *Iliad*; *The Trojan Women*. **HW:** **AR:** Thucydides pp. 322-330

10/16: Tragedy, *The Trojan Women*; lyric poetry. **HW:** Fiero 106-122, 143-157

Wk. X: 10/19: LECTURE: **Art of the Classical World** (Dr. McClain)

10/21: Lyric poetry; Art of the ancient world: styles, programs, meanings

10/23: Art of the ancient world. **HW:** Fiero 94-105; Plato, "Apology of Socrates" from *Trial and Death of Socrates*; **AR** Pre-Socratic Philosophers (pp. 277-284)

Wk. XI: 10/26: LECTURE: **Ancient Philosophy** (Dr. Hook)

10/28: Quiz. Pre-Socratics, Socrates, and Plato. **First Paper Due.** **HW:** **AR** Aristotle (pp. 336-354)

10/30: Aristotle. **HW:** Fiero, pp. 56-57, 122-128; **AR:** Zarathustra (pp. 26-33); Plutarch (pp. 393-410); Theocritus (pp. 365-370); Bion (374-377).

Wk. XII: 11/2: LECTURE: **Persia, Zoroastrianism, and Alexander the Great** (Dr. Hopes)

11/4: Quiz. Persia and Alexander. **HW:** *AR*: Epicurus (pp. 355-360), Cleanthes (pp. 371-373), Epictetus (pp. 384-392)

11/6: Hellenistic Philosophies. **HW:** *Aeneid* 1-6; **AR:** Polybius (pp. 378-383); Augustus (pp. 500-509); Tacitus (pp. 516-527)

Wk. XIII: 11/9: LECTURE: **Rome, Republic to Empire** (Dr. Hook)

11/11: Quiz. *Aeneid* 1-6. **HW:** *Aeneid* 7-9

11/13: Writing Assignment. *The Aeneid*. **HW:** *Aeneid* 10-12; **HW:** Fiero 46-57; **AR** Judges (pp. 34-40), Amos (pp. 57-67),

Wk. XIV: 11/16: LECTURE: **Judaism** (Dr. Kaplan)

11/18: Quiz. *The Aeneid* and Rome. **HW:** I Maccabees (pp. 68-81).

11/20: Judaism **HW:** *AR:* Gorgias, *Encomium of Helen* (pp. 331-335); *Laudatio Turiae*, (pp. 493-499); Musonius Rufus (pp. 510-515).

Wk. XV: 11/23: LECTURE: **Gender and Sexuality in Antiquity** (Prof. Driggers)

11/25-27: Thanksgiving Holidays – No Classes. **HW:** *AR:* Fiero II, pp. 3-12, 17-23, on electronic reserve in Ramsey Library; *AR:* Dead Sea Scrolls (pp. 82-87); selections from Matthew, Acts (pp. 92-112)

Wk. XVI: 11/30: LECTURE: **Early Christianity** (Dr. Moseley) **Second Paper Due.**

12/2: Course evaluation. Rome and Christianity. **HW:** *AR:* selections from 1 Corinthians, Titus (pp. 113-125), The Apostles' Creed (pp. 142-143). "The Martyrdom of Perpetua and Felicity" (*Passio Perpetuae et Felicitatis*) (www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/primary/perpetua.html)

12/4: Last day of class. Rome and Christianity. Preview of final exam.

Final exam: Monday, December 7th, 11:30-2:00