

Humanities 124.H21: The Ancient World



Spring, 2009

MWF 11:25-12:35

Lipinsky Auditorium on Mondays; KH 221 on WF

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Office Hours: MWF 1-2; TR 11-12; F 9-10

And by other arrangement

Welcome to Humanities 124. This is the first in the series of Humanities courses which form the core of general education at UNCA. This course examines the ideas, values, and world-views of the ancient world from the beginnings of civilization until about the fall of Rome.

Among the themes which are common to the whole Humanities series at UNCA, and which we will trace in 124, are these:

- The nature of humankind: good/bad? essential/existential? malleable/fixed? universal/contingent? given/socially constructed?
- Epistemology. What can we know? How do we know? Ways of knowing including revelation, reason, mysticism, science vs emotion, etc.
- The relationship between the self and the society or group; individual values vs conformity or social controls. This theme includes questions about how people are to be governed; about equality vs inequality or hierarchy, types of equality, and gives rise to significant comparison/contrasts with other cultures.
- Human beings in relation to the transcendent, the divine, the sacred. Spiritual journey; problem of suffering.
- Ethics: how we should live, and how we ground our ethical decisions.
- The nature of love and family.

Learning goals include:

- Students realizing that they are the heirs of ages of accumulated thought, decisions, and productions, and co-creators of contemporary culture.
- Student familiarity with major trends in the development of Western civilizations; with aspects of the development of other cultures; and with human accomplishments which are both noteworthy and representative.
- Developing awareness of the validity of different perspectives, and to go beyond relativism to appreciate underlying human values.
- Understanding the concept of "community" and realizing the ways in which individuals both develop, and are developed by, their communities; questioning social conventions critically and responsibly; and realizing the effects of one's decisions upon the community.

This class is based on the idea that the full development of human beings in the educational process involves experiencing the best that has been thought, said, and done. This liberal learning (liberal=suitable for the education of free men and women; liberating) is not vocational or professional; it is instead valuable for its own sake. I hope that you will share my enthusiasm for the things we will be learning.

Liberal learning involves critical thinking, discussion, and expansion. I will expect all of you to contribute to the class, by expressing your opinions, asking questions, and exchanging ideas. Liberal education cannot coexist with a party line; though I naturally have ideas and beliefs, you are not here to be indoctrinated in them.

This is an Honors section. This means that you will have certain kinds of experiences afforded because you are in the University Honors Program. You will also be expected to operate at a high intellectual level, as appropriate to your status. You will make high grades if you perform at a high academic level. It isn't automatic.

REQUIREMENTS

Two hour tests (one of them will be take-home). Two five-page essays relying on and demonstrating analysis of the primary readings. Quizzes, unannounced, from time to time. A final examination, partly comprehensive.

Outside Learning activities: (1) Service-learning activities. I will help with arranging these; I prefer a group activity when possible. They're required, and they're graded. They include not only the activity but written reflection on it afterwards. You need ten points worth of service learning. In addition (2) you'll attend one cultural event and write a thoughtful review of it, minimum length two printed pages.

Intelligent and forthcoming class participation. Participation includes "answering questions asked by the teacher or other students; asking questions of the teacher or other students; commenting on the questions and answers of other students; asking questions about the reading or material presented previously and offering examples or experiences to illustrate" (M. Weimer, 2002). You are entitled and encouraged to have opinions, or beliefs, and to express them; this is not the same as having them accepted as correct without support.

Comment cards. I will use these both to keep track of your presence in class and as a means of communication with you each day. You may use them to comment on something, to ask a question, or for any other purpose.

COURSE POLICIES

a. Attendance. You are expected to attend every class. Some absences are excused, if you have good reason for missing. If you have more than two unexcused absences, your grade for the course will be lowered, by as much as one letter grade for each additional absence. If you miss a test without advance permission it cannot be made up. Likewise late papers will not be accepted unless with some compelling reason.

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, and the late start schedule is online at <http://www.unca.edu/registrar/late.html>) or they will operate on a normal schedule. If that happens I will be here and class will occur. You are not expected to endanger your life to get here; make an adult choice about safety. One principle I believe in: if you can get to a job, you can get to class. Also: BE ON TIME. 11:25 or even 11:00 is not really "early."

b. Readings. Do all the readings by the date for which they are assigned. Notice ahead of time which are long (e.g., the *Iliad*, *Aeneid* etc.) and don't wait until the last minute to get started on them. Reading is an aggressive and engaged act, not a passive one, so you haven't really read something if you haven't thought about it, questioned it, had a reaction (logical or emotional) to it. I may give occasional quizzes or short reaction papers in class on the readings. The main task in this class is reading, thinking about the reading, talking about the reading, and writing about the reading. Obviously keeping up with the reading (while sometimes difficult – there's a lot of it) is crucial. You may find that sometimes we spend a lot of time on one reading and not much, or maybe even none, on another. It's still part of the assignment.

c. Academic honesty. Any act of plagiarism or cheating is grounds for failure for the assignment or for the course, depending entirely on my decision. Plagiarism is the unacknowledged, or insufficiently acknowledged, use of the words or ideas of someone else. I will be happy to make clear what your responsibility is.

d. Lectures. Attending the Monday lectures is a required part of this class, as they constitute one-third of class meetings. But attendance is not sufficient--you need attention, as well. Arrive on time and stay until the lecturer has finished speaking. Take notes. Tests and quizzes will cover lecture material. I'll always have some time in class on Wednesday or Friday for reactions to or questions about the Monday lecture. Don't remain bewildered if you can help it.

Additional

Please notice that I have official office hours; but these are not the only times you can see me. If you need to talk with me, speak to me in class about a good time for you, or drop by, or send me an email. You may phone me, either in my office (which has voice mail) or at home (253-6940) though I ask that you not call late at night.

Students with disabilities. If you have a disability that requires any sort of accommodation, please make sure that you are registered with the office of Disability Services, located in University Hall 219A; and make your needs known to me (in confidentiality) immediately.

Grades: Your final grade will consist of

Two tests	30%
Two essays	30%
One final	20%
Quizzes, class participation, service learning, cultural events	20%

Notice that you get no credit FOR attending classes – that is the expected, or default, position. But you may lose credit for NOT attending classes, or for handing in work late. See above.



Except in an emergency, explained to me beforehand, cell phones must be turned off in class.

Required Textbooks

(These specific titles and editions are available at the UNCA Bookstore):

Fiero, ed., *The Humanistic Tradition*, 5th edition, Vol 1
Hook, Moseley, Peters, eds., *The Asheville Reader*, Vol 1
Miller, ed., *The Bhagavad-Gita*
Weller, ed., *Plato, The Trial and Death of Socrates*
Kovacs, ed., *The Epic of Gilgamesh*
Fagels, ed., *The Iliad*
Clay, *The Trojan Women*
Virgil, *The Aeneid*

Reading Assignments

(Week 1, begins Wed. Jan. 14)

Readings: Fiero 1-17, 36-45, *The Asheville Reader (AR)*: "Reading a Primary Text from Antiquity", "Essay on Translation" (appendices), Hammurabi

(Week 2, begins Jan. 19)

No lecture: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Readings: **Epic of Gilgamesh**

(Week 3, begins Jan. 26)

Egypt (Dr. Hopes)

W: Fiero 19-35; F: **AR**: Sinuhe, Love Poems, Instruction of Amenemope

(Week 4, begins Feb. 2)

China (Dr. Hardy)

Readings: Fiero 61-65, 158-170; F: **AR**: Confucius, Laozi, *The Book of Songs*, Han Feizi

(Week 5, begins Feb. 9)

India (Dr. Ho)

Readings: W & F: Fiero 58-61; **Bhagavad Gita**

(Week 6, begins Feb. 16)

Buddhism (Dr. Falls)

Readings: W: **AR**: Selected Buddhist Texts (all);

F: **First test**

begin reading **Iliad**

(Week 7, begins Feb. 23)

The Iliad and Warfare (Dr. Hardy)

Readings: W and F: **Iliad**; F: Fiero vol. I 67-73, 76-77

(Week 8, begins Mar. 2)

Greek City-States and Greek Tragedy (Dr. Mills)

W: Fiero 78-93; **AR**: Lyric Poetry (all); Herodotus (excerpt on 297-321), Thucydides

F: The Trojan Women;

(Week 9, begins Mar. 9)

Spring Break: No Lecture, no class

(Week 10, begins Mar. 16)

Ancient Philosophy (Dr. Hook)

Readings: Fiero 94-105; Plato's "Apology of Socrates" from **Trial and Death of Socrates;**

AR: Pre-Socratic Philosophers, Aristotle

F: Undergraduate Research Symposium Day-No Classes **FIRST ESSAY DUE**

(Week 11, begins Mar. 23)

Persia, Zoroastrianism and Alexander the Great (Dr. Hopes)

Readings: W: Fiero 56-57, 122-128; **AR**: Plutarch, Zarathustra,

F: Epicurus, Cleanthes, Epictetus

SECOND TEST (TAKE-HOME) DUE

(Week 12, begins Mar. 30)

Second Temple Judaism (Dr. Kaplan)

Readings: Fiero 46-57; Ecclesiastes, Amos from **AR**

F: **AR**: Judges, Maccabees, Josephus

Begin reading the **Aeneid**

(Week 13, begins Apr. 6)

Rome, Republic to Empire (Dr. Hook)

W: Republic Readings: Fiero 129-143; **AR**: Livy (excerpts on 447-455, 468-481), Polybius;

F: Empire Readings: **AR**: Augustus, Tacitus; **Aeneid**

(Week 14, begins Apr. 13)

Early Christianity (Dr. Moseley)

Readings: W: **AR**: Matthew, Acts, 1 Corinthians;

F: Diary of Perpetua at www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua-excerpt.html

(Week 15, begins Apr. 20)

Gender and Sexuality in Antiquity (Prof. Driggers)

Readings: W and F: **AR**: Gorgias, Musonius Rufus; Sappho, poems 1, 4, and 8, as well as the Shorter Fragments, found at

<http://www.stoa.org/diotima/anthology/rayor.shtml>.

By the end of class on this Friday, April 24, all cultural event reviews and reflections on service-learning must be submitted.

(Week 16, Apr. 27)

Art of the Classical World (Dr. McClain); Fiero 106-122, 143-157 **SECOND ESSAY DUE**

(Week 17, May 4)

No lecture, meet in sections

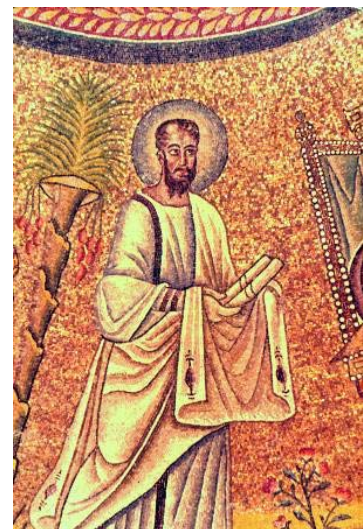
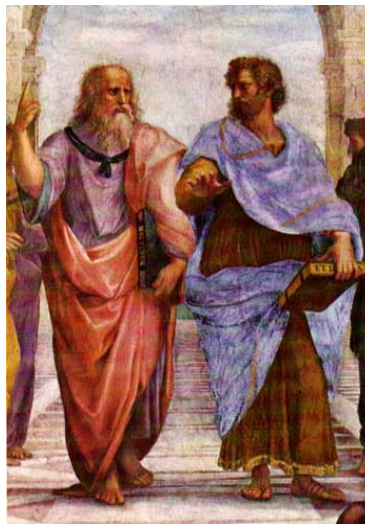
May 6, 11:30 a.m., **FINAL EXAMINATION**



We aren't going to be slaves to the syllabus – there may be some changes – but we'll keep to the readings. This applies to any possible days missed for snow.

Your tests work as follows: each one covers the material up through the previous class. On the final, the essays will be comprehensive (cover the whole semester) while the short answers cover only the period since the second test.

If there is ever anything you do not understand, about this syllabus or about anything else (of course I don't know about everything, but I'll give it a try), **ASK ME.**



IMPORTANT FINAL WORD:

Much of this syllabus is about what is expected of you, and it's plenty. You are entitled to have expectations of me, too. Please do not expect me to have the answers to all

questions or the official interpretation of everything; I do have informed views on the books we're reading and will share them with you. You need not believe them.

You also have the right to expect me to be accessible. I have office hours and try to be in my office during them, though occasionally I'm called away for a meeting or something. If it's more convenient for you to see me at some other time, let me know. I'm happy to receive emails, though I don't promise to answer *immediately*.

Learning doesn't take place just during in-class periods, thank goodness.