

Classics of the Ancient World

Fall 2023

HUMN 2013/4013 Honors

TR 12:30-1:50, PY 201

Professor Kirsten Lodge

kirsten.lodge@msutexas.edu

Office: 217 Bea Wood Hall, 940-397-4363

Office Hours: MWF 12-12:50, TR 11-12, and by appointment

This interdisciplinary honors course will introduce students to ancient cultures, including Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, the Near East, and the Byzantine Empire. We will look at all aspects of culture, including history, art, literature, and philosophy. Students will thus acquire an understanding of these cultures and how they developed during this time period; encounter different ways of viewing the world; learn to analyze, interpret, and think critically about diverse works; experiment with interdisciplinary approaches to the material; and learn to identify, describe, and discuss major religions, philosophies, works of art and literature, and landmark historical events. They will also develop critical thinking and writing skills in short essays, evaluating individual works and synthesizing the knowledge they have gained. Participation in class discussion and activities will help them to express themselves and support their ideas at an advanced level. In exploring these different cultures, students will hopefully wish to continue to learn about them after the end of the semester, and even visit some of the countries we will discuss.

This semester I have revised the syllabus to put more emphasis on complete works in the Mesopotamian and ancient Greek cultures.

Course Schedule

Aug. 29 Introduction

Earliest Cultures: Paleolithic Period, Neolithic Period

Reading: 4-8

Chapter 1: Mesopotamian and Egyptian Civilizations

31 Mesopotamia: Sumer, Akkad, Babylon

Reading: 8-12, 42-43

Writing: Response to Enheduanna

Sept. 5 *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Standard Version), Tablets 1-5

Writing: Response

4000-level presentation proposal due

7 *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablets 6-11

Writing: Response

12 Assyria, Nebuchadnezzar's Babylon, Persia

Reading: 12-17

14 Civilization of the Nile: Hieroglyphics, Religious Beliefs; Old Kingdom: Architecture

Reading: 17-22

19 The Book of the Dead, Sculpture, Relief Sculpture and Painting; Middle Kingdom

Reading: 22-25, 43-44

21 New Kingdom: Architecture, Sculpture, Relief Sculpture and Painting

Reading: 25-31

26 Akhenaten and Tutankhamen, Egyptian Music, Literature

Reading: 31-36, 44-47

Writing: Response to Egyptian Love Poetry or "Hymn to the Sun"

Chapter 2: Aegean Cultures and Early Greece

28 Aegean Cultures: Cycladic Culture, Minoan Culture, Mycenaean Culture

Reading: 50-57

Oct. 3 Rise of Ancient Greece: Pantheon of Greek Gods, The Geometric Period

Reading: 57-60, 68-69

Writing: Response to Hesiod, *Works and Days*

5 Homer

Reading: 60-62, 69-76

Writing: Response to Homer, *The Iliad* or *The Odyssey*

10 Sappho and the Lyric Poem; The Archaic Period

Reading: 62-67, 76-77

Writing: Response to Sappho, Archaic Lyric Poetry, or Herakleitos

Chapter 3: Classical and Hellenistic Greece

12 Classical Greece: From Archaic to Classical

Reading: 80-82, 106-8

Writing: Response to Herodotus

17 Golden Age of Athens: Architecture, Sculpture, Vase Painting

Reading: 82-89; 108-10

Writing: Response to Thucydides

19 Emergence of Drama

Reading: 89-92; Aeschylus, *The Oresteia (Agamemnon)*

Writing: Response to *Agamemnon*

24 *Reading:* Aeschylus, *The Libation Bearers* and *The Eumenides*

Writing: Response

26 *Reading:* Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*

Writing: Response

30 Last Day for 'W'

31 Philosophy, Music and Greek Society

Reading: 92-98, 117-22

Writing: Response to Plato

Midterm Paper Proposal Due

Nov. 2 Hellenistic Greece: Architecture and Sculpture, Philosophy

Reading: 98-104, 122-25

Writing: Response to Aristotle

Chapter 4: Roman Civilization

7 The Roman Republic: Art, Literature

Reading: 132-36, 162-63

Writing: Response to Catullus

9 The Roman Empire: Music, Architecture

Reading: 136-39

Midterm Paper Due

14 Sculpture, Literature

Reading: 139-43, 149-51, 163-65

Writing: Response to Ovid, Horace, or Juvenal

16 Painting, Philosophy, Roman Historians

Reading: 144-48, 165-69

Writing: Response to Marcus Aurelius or Suetonius

21 Virgil

Reading: 148-49, 152-62

Writing: Response to Virgil

23 Thanksgiving Break

Chapter 5: Judaism, Early Christianity, and Byzantine Civilization

28 Judaism: History and Religion, The Bible as Literature

Reading: 172-78, 200-5

Writing: Response to Genesis or Job

30 Early Christianity: Jesus and His Message, Christian Antecedents, Early Christian History, Early Christian Art, The New Testament as Literature, Early Christian Music

Reading: 178-86, 205-9

Writing: Response to the Gospel of Matthew or the Gospel of Luke

Dec. 5 Philosophy

Reading: 186-88, 209-13

Writing: Response to Augustine

4000-level Paper Proposal Due

7 Byzantine Civilization: Byzantine Art, Golden Age of Constantinople

Reading: 188-98

14 Final Exam, 10:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m.

4000-level paper due by noon

Course Requirements:

1. Participation (2033, 10%; 4033, 5%). It is essential that you participate in class discussion and activities to help you understand and master all of the material we cover. Please note that participation is different from attendance. Participation means **talking in class**.

2. Critical Writing Assignments (2023, 30% total; 4023, 25% total). You will write short critical responses of at least 300 words, double-spaced, to the **primary readings** in the textbook as indicated in the syllabus. Note: these are the readings **at the back of each chapter** in the textbook, as indicated by the last set of page numbers. Your response should 1) briefly demonstrate your understanding of the text; 2) offer an interpretation or commentary with a personal, reflective aspect to it; 3) briefly situate it within the context we are studying and/or compare and contrast it with other primary texts. One way to situate the text within the context is to do the background reading on it in the textbook and at least say who the author is, what they were known for, or something similar. Another way to put the text in context is to compare it with texts or artworks we have already discussed, or even with works you have encountered in other classes or on your own. You should not use the Internet to situate the works in context. This last part of the assignment will teach you how to take an interdisciplinary, contextualizing approach. The quality of your writing (grammar, spelling, and organization) will also be counted for these assignments, which should be considered “mini-essays.” I have posted the rubric on D2L and will distribute it in class.

Please submit your daily assignments through D2L on Tuesdays and Thursdays by 11 a.m. on the day they are due. You may click on the assignment on the course homepage calendar or click on Assessments > Assignments. The Dropbox has already been prepared for all of your assignments, so you may work ahead if you choose to.

If you have an excused absence, you may submit the assignment for the day you missed by the day after you return to class. If you are absent and your absence is not excused, you are nevertheless responsible for submitting the day's assignment on time. ***No other late study question responses will be accepted, except as agreed upon between the student and the professor in exceptional circumstances.***

3. Midterm Paper (2033, 30%; 4033, 20%, 4-5 pages). You will write a midterm paper on one of the full-length works that we cover: *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *The Oresteia*, or *Oedipus the King*. Your paper should have an original interpretive thesis that is supported in each body paragraph using textual evidence—that is, quotations and examples—to support your points. You must quote the edition required for the course. Your paper should also have an introduction and a conclusion, and it should be written in appropriate academic English. Your paper should focus on your interpretation of the work or of some aspect of it. You should not do any research for the paper, although you may cite secondary sources minimally as necessary for your understanding and interpretation of the work. If you do consult any secondary sources, you must list them in a Works Cited Page in MLA or APA style. You should submit a brief, informal paper proposal to me, either by email or orally, by **Oct. 31**, and the paper is due on **Nov. 9**. I will not require you to come discuss the paper with me, but I highly encourage you to do so.

4. Final Exam (2023, 30%; 4023, 20%). The final exam will consist in a critical thinking essay that will allow you to demonstrate your understanding of the course material as a whole.

5. Research-Based Presentation (4023, 15%). Upper-level students must choose a topic for a 10-15 minute presentation. The topic should complement the textbook, not repeat what it says. You will be expected to consult at least three scholarly sources, and give me an outline of the presentation and a bibliography in MLA or APA style on the day of your presentation. You should look through the textbook and submit a topic proposal to me by **Sept. 5**, and we will set a date for your presentation.

6. Research Paper (4023, 15%). Upper-level students will write a 7-8 page research paper on a topic of their choice, but not on the same topic as their presentation. **The paper must be in MLA or APA format, including in-text citations.** Any cover page and the works cited list will not count toward the 7-8 pages. Please submit a brief paper proposal by **Dec. 4**. The paper is due on **Dec. 15**. If it is late, your grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter grade (e.g., A > A-) per day.

7. Attendance. You must attend class to help you master and contextualize the material. You are permitted two unexcused absences. Absences will be excused only on the basis of a note from a doctor, dean, military official, or coach. Your final grade will be lowered by one point for each unexcused absence in excess of the two permitted unexcused absences. In addition, three “lates” will add up to one unexcused absence.

Course Policies:

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated, including on the daily assignments. If you plagiarize on any assignments or papers, or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty as defined by the MSU Student Handbook and the Academic Dishonesty Policy (distributed in class and available on D2L), *you will get an F in the course and disciplinary proceedings will be initiated.* Other forms of academic dishonesty include, for instance, forging doctor's notes and lying to the professor.

AI Use: The use of AI is highly discouraged in this class. Turnitin does have an AI detector, but it is not 100% accurate, and thus leaves room for "reasonable doubt." Therefore, if you do use AI, you must state at the end of your response how you used it. If Turnitin indicates that your response is 100% AI-generated, I will ask you about it, especially if it happens more than once. Note that AI will not be able to provide a personal take on the readings or quote from them, as required for your responses.

Midterm Progress Report: I will submit a Midterm Progress Report to your WebWorld account. Midterm grades will not be reported on your transcript; nor will they be calculated in the cumulative GPA. Students earning below a C at the midway point will receive an email from Tutoring and Academic Support.

Books: Please bring your books to class when we read primary texts to consult them during class discussion.

Cellphones: No cellphones should be visible in class at any time. Exceptions: 1) if you wish to read an assigned text from your cell phone or another device, please inform me beforehand; 2) if we need to look up information, we may use cellphones to do so together.

Food: In accordance with the building policy, you may bring only bottled water to class.

Computers: No computers are permitted in class unless you are using it to consult the text during class. If this is the case, please inform me beforehand.

Attention: Please be alert and do not lay your head down on your desk during class, or I may mark you late or absent without warning.

Class Dismissal: Please do not start to pack up your things or leave until I have dismissed the class. If you believe I have gone over the allotted time, please raise your hand and let me know.

Email Communication: The only way I can communicate with you outside of class is through D2L email. You should set up D2L so that D2L emails are delivered to your email account. *You are responsible* for checking your email or D2L daily for any reminders, clarifications, or other communications from me.

Safe Zone Statement: This class is a "safe zone" in which all students will be treated and will treat one another equally, regardless of gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religious affiliation, sexual orientation, political beliefs, age, or ability. Diversity of thought is encouraged.

Other Important Information:

Office Hours: My office hours are given above, and I am always happy to help you with any questions you may have, whether they are about the texts we are reading, assignments, exams, absences, or anything else—or you may just come by to talk. If you can't make my office hours, we can make an appointment.

D2L: Study questions, handouts, and additional course-related material, required or recommended, will be posted on D2L.

Academic Accommodations: If you require special accommodations, please contact Disability Support Service, 168 Clark Student Center, 397-4140, at the beginning of the semester so that appropriate arrangements can be made. Arrangements cannot be applied retroactively.

Required Texts (available at the College Bookstore or Amazon, and on reserve at the library):

Aeschylus II: The Oresteia (U of Chicago Press, tr. Lattimore).

Benton, Janetta and Robert DiYanni. *Arts and Culture: An Introduction to the Humanities*. Vol. 1. 4th ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2012.

The Epic of Gilgamesh (Norton, tr. Foster, 2nd ed. (2019)).

Sophocles: Three Theban Plays (Penguin, tr. Fagles et al., 2000).

You must use these editions! Translations vary widely, and there are a lot of really bad translations out there—especially on the Internet!

Additional Assistance:

Office Hours: I will be in my office at the times listed at the top of the syllabus. If these times do not work for you, we can schedule an appointment. We can also set up a Zoom or telephone meeting to discuss any questions you may have.

D2L Problems: If you are having trouble submitting an assignment, or if you are having any other technical, please also email me and let me know. It may be a glitch in D2L that I can easily fix, and I can inform other students of the problem as well as assisting you. You may also go to the D2L homepage and click on “Report a Problem.” Fill out the form and submit it.

Tutoring Support: Tutoring and Academic Support Programs (TASP) provides free drop-in tutoring for MSU students. Located on the first floor of Moffett Library, TASP's Learning center provides tutoring support in a number of core courses and subject areas. Please see our schedule for more information about times and offerings.