World Literature I: From Antiquity to the Renaissance

Fall 2025
ENGL 2413, Sec. 101
MWF 9-9:50, BW 210

Professor Kirsten Lodge, kirsten.lodge@msutexas.edu
Office: 218 Bea Wood Hall, 940-397-4363
Office Hours: MWF 10-11, TR 11-12, and by appointment

This course is designed to introduce students to a selection of classic texts from antiquity to the Renaissance, which have been chosen for their significance in shaping mostly Western institutions, thought, literature, and arts. As we study these texts, we will develop skills and habits of close observation, analysis and argument, as well as respect for different ideas and cultures. We will discuss the importance of these texts in their cultural contexts; their significance in shaping cultural norms; their influence on literature and art throughout the centuries; and their meaning for us today. We will focus primarily on three skills: a firm knowledge of the content of the works; the ability to do close reading and analysis; and the ability to integrate various works through the discussion of common themes. We will be using *The Norton Anthology of World Literature* and Norton's online resources, which are accessible through D2L.

Core Objectives for LANGUAGE, PHILOSOPHY & CULTURE

- **Critical Thinking-** assessed by the Close Reading rubric applied to the Close Reading Paper
- **Communication-** assessed by the Close Reading rubric applied to the Close Reading Paper
- **Personal Responsibility-** assessed by the Writing Responses rubric applied to In-Class Responses
- **Social Responsibility-** assessed by the Close Reading rubric applied to the Close Reading Paper

Course Requirements

1. Participation (10%): Participation in class discussions will help you to understand and remember the material. It will also demonstrate that you have done the reading and improve your critical thinking and verbal communication skills. I encourage you to speak with all of your classmates and respond to one another's ideas during discussion, rather than addressing your thoughts only to me. Please note that participation is different from attendance. Participation means talking in class.

2. Written Assignments (20%): You have four written assignments, to be submitted through D2L by 9 a.m. on the day of the relevant class. For the Translation Labs, choose one of the questions provided on the Norton site and write an essay of about 1-2 pp. (one full page, double-spaced and without a heading, is the minimum!). No late assignments will be accepted except after an excused absence or with my permission.

3. In-Class Writing (25%): At the beginning of most classes, I will give you a brief question or a quotation from the text to respond to. You should read over my reflection questions on D2L to help you follow the readings. The in-class prompt will be related to one of the questions for the day. You do not have to write complete sentences—bullet points are fine, as long as I can understand what you mean. Spelling and grammar will not count. Your grade for these reflections will be check plus, check, check minus, or X, which will be entered in D2L as A+, B,+ C+, or zero. If you have an excused absence for the day, you may make up the in-class writing in my office.

4. Quizzes (10%): You will have frequent, brief quizzes on your reading for the day on D2L. In most cases, you will have thirty minutes to complete each quiz, and you will be allowed two attempts. Quizzes are due by 9 a.m. on the day of the relevant class.

5. Close Reading Paper (2-3 pages, not counting the cited text, 15%): We will be doing a lot of close reading in class, and this paper will help you to develop this skill on your own. Late papers will be marked down one third of a letter grade per day, including weekends and holidays (i.e., A > A-), unless you have a good reason for lateness and have preferably spoken to me about it beforehand. Note: 2-3 pages means a minimum of two full pages.

6. Final Exam (20%): The final will include a close reading drawn from any of the books we have read this semester and an essay topic on the books we have read since the midterm.

7. Attendance. You must attend class to help you master and contextualize the material. You are permitted three unexcused absences. Absences will be excused on the basis of a note from a doctor, dean, military official, or coach. However, if you believe you have a good reason for missing class but are unable to get a written excuse, please let me know, and if your excuse is valid, I will excuse you.

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.

Any student with more than seven absences for any reason may be dropped from the course.

Course Policies

Plagiarism and Academic Dishonesty: Plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. If you plagiarize on any assignments or papers, or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty as defined by the MSU Student Handbook, you will get a zero on the assignment. Other forms of academic dishonesty include, for instance, forging doctor's notes, and lying to the professor.

AI Use: I understand that AI can be a useful tool, and I am not against AI as such; however, the goal of the assignments in this course is to teach you critical thinking skills, so please do not use generative AI. You may use Grammarly and/or other spelling and grammar checkers, including those on Google Docs, but you may not use them to "rewrite" your paper or change the "tone" (that is, to "make it sound more academic," etc.). Please note, however:

- Grammarly may give you suggestions that actually change the meaning of what you wrote, so always check it carefully;
- Similarly, do not simply accept everything Grammarly suggests. You will not learn anything that way. Go over each suggested change and make sure you understand it and agree with it before you accept it.

If you use Grammarly, Google Docs, or a similar program, please state what program you used and for what purpose at the end of the assignment. If you are not sure whether a program incorporates AI, acknowledge its use "just in case."

Note that there is no uniform policy on AI use at MSU. Make sure that you understand the policy for each course you are taking.

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.

Cellphones: You may not use your cellphone in class except to consult the texts we are discussing, or to google a question we cannot answer.

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

Computers: You may not use a computer in class except to consult the text, or for another justifiable reason. 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 classroom 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.

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 their schedule for more information about times and offerings.

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.

Research and Creative Activity Opportunities at MSU: Enhancing Undergraduate Research Endeavors and Creative Activities (EURECA) is a program that provides opportunities for undergraduates to engage in high-quality research and creative activities with faculty. EURECA provides incentives and funding through a system that supports faculty and students in a cooperative research process. Information and

resources are available from [The Office of Undergraduate Research](#).

Course Schedule

Aug. **25** Introduction
27 Why Literature Matters, AI discussion
Assignment Due: Watch the five short videos on D2L about why literature matters and the one on active reading; read "An Introduction to Thoughtful Reading and Annotation"; write 1-2 pp. on what your favorite book is and why (submit through D2L)
29 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book 1
Assignment Due: Watch "The Homeric Poems and Greek History"; listen to "Among the Ancients: *The Odyssey*"

Sept. **1 No Class: Labor Day**
3 *The Odyssey*, Books 2-4
5 *The Odyssey*, Books 5-7
8 *The Odyssey*, Books 8-9
10 *The Odyssey*, Books 10-12
12 *The Odyssey*, Books 13-15
15 *The Odyssey*, Books 16-18
17 *The Odyssey*, Books 19-20
19 *The Odyssey*, Books 21-22
22 *The Odyssey*, Books 23-24
24 *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Standard Version), Tablets 1-5
26 *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablets 6-11
29 Sappho, Poem 31
Assignment Due: Translation Lab (submit through D2L)

Oct. **1** Euripides, *Medea*
Assignment Due: Watch the four videos on ancient Greek drama
3 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book 1 (also read the summaries of the books we are skipping throughout *The Aeneid*)
6 *The Aeneid*, Book 2
8 *The Aeneid*, Book 4
10 *The Aeneid*, Books 6
13 *The Aeneid*, *From* Books 8 and 12
15 Catullus, poems
Assignment Due: Translation Lab (submit through D2L)
17 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (pdf on D2L), Book 1, lines 1-415 (through the recreation of the human race)
20 *Metamorphoses* 1.416-747, 3.131-251, 339-520 (through Io; Acteon; Narcissus)
22 *Metamorphoses* 4.55-166; 5.341-571; 6.1-145, 411-674 (Pyramus and Thisbe; Proserpine; Arachne; Procne and Tereus)

24 *Metamorphoses* 8.611-724; 10.1-297; 12.39-61 (Philemon and Baucis; from Orpheus and Eurydice through Pygmalion; Rumor)

27 *Metamorphoses*, 13.1-381, 740-895 (Ulysses and Ajax; Galatea and Polyphemus)

29 *Metamorphoses*, 14.621-771; 15.745-878 (Vertumnus and Pomona; ending)

31 Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 1-2

Nov. **3** *Inferno*, Cantos 3-4

Assignment Due: Translation Lab (submit through D2L)

5 *Inferno*, Cantos 5-7, 11

7 *Inferno*, Cantos 13, 15, 17, 20

10 *Inferno*, Cantos 24-26

12 *Inferno*, Cantos 27, 33-34

14 Boccaccio, *Decameron, Prologue* and *Introduction* (pdf on D2L)

17 Close Reading Workshop

Assignment Due: Watch the six videos on writing an essay (the two videos on MLA citation are optional and not necessary for this assignment)

19 *Decameron,* Day 2, Story 10; Day 3, Story 1

21 *Decameron*, Day 4, Story 1; Day 5, Story 8

24 *Decameron*, Day 8, Story 7

Close Reading Paper Due

Last day for "W"

26 *Decameron*, Day 10, Story 10

28 Thanksgiving Break

Dec. **1** *Decameron, Day 10 Conclusion* and *Author's Epilogue* (pp. 1406-18)

3 Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies* (pdf on D2L), Part I, ch. 1-8 and 16

5 *The Book of the City of Ladies*, Part I, ch. 27, 30, 32; Part 2, ch. 7, 13, 44, 55 and 56; Part III, ch. 1, 3, 19.

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