

World Literature from the Antiquity to the Renaissance

ENGL 2413, Fall 2020

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This course is designed to introduce students to a selection of classic texts from antiquity through the Renaissance, which have been chosen for their significance in shaping the institutions, thought, literature and arts of Western civilization. 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 context; 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.

- Aug.** 24 Introduction
27 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Books 1-4
31 *The Odyssey*, Books 5-8
- Sept.** 3 *The Odyssey*, Books 9-13
7 **Labor Day: No Assignments Due**
10 *The Odyssey*, Books 14-17
14 *The Odyssey*, Books 18-20
17 *The Odyssey*, Books 21-24
21 *Gilgamesh*
24 Euripides, *Medea*
28 Plato, *The Symposium*, pp. 1-39
- Oct.** 1 *The Symposium*, pp. 40-77
5 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book 1
8 *The Aeneid*, Books 2-4 (focus on Books 2 and 4)
12 *The Aeneid*, Books 5-8 (focus on Books 6 and 8)
15 *The Aeneid*, Books 9-12 (focus on Books 10-12)
19 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 1, lines 1-747
Optional Midterm Paper Proposal Due
22 *Metamorphoses*, 3.131-251, 339-520, 4.55-166, 5.341-571, 6.1-145, 411-674
26 *Metamorphoses*, 8.611-724; 10.1-297; 12.39-61
Midterm Paper Due
29 *Metamorphoses*, 13.1-381, 740-895, 14.621-771; 15.745-878
- Nov.** 2 Dante, *Inferno*, Cantos 1-3
5 *Inferno*, Cantos 4-7
9 *Inferno*, Cantos 11, 13, 15, 17, 20
Close Reading Paper Due
12 *Inferno*, Cantos 24-27, 33-34
16 Boccaccio, *Decameron*, Prologue and Introduction
19 *Decameron*, Day 2, Stories 7 and 10

- 23 *Decameron*, Day 3, Stories 1 and 10
26 **Thanksgiving: No Assignments Due**
30 *Decameron*, Day 4, Story 1; Day 5, Story 8
Dec. 1 *Decameron*, Day 8, Story 7; Day 10, Story 10
3 *Decameron*, Day 10, *Conclusion*; *The Author's Conclusion*
Optional Final Paper Proposal Due
9 **Final Essay Due**

Course Requirements:

1. Written Responses (25%): Study questions have been posted in the dropboxes for each class meeting except the first. You will also find the questions in the Content section for each week. Please submit your response to one of the questions, or one part of a multipart question, through Dropbox twice a week, on Mondays and Thursdays by 11:30. The questions should also serve as a guide to your reading, so you know what to look for. Your written response should be brief: between half a page and one page long, double-spaced, without a heading. Responses will be graded using the rubric posted on D2L. You can reach the written assignments through the calendar on the righthand side of the course homepage, through Content, or through Assessments > Assignments.

2. Discussion (30%): When discussing the study questions for the day, you should first post what you think is most interesting from your response. You may copy and paste it from the response if you wish. Please indicate at the beginning of your response which question you are responding to. You should then reply to a response to a different question by one of your classmates. If no one has responded to a different question yet, you should either wait or post your second response to a different question. Again, if a study question has several parts to it, you do not need to respond to all of those parts. A typical discussion board response on the reading for the day, just to give you an idea, should be about 4-8 sentences long. So in total, for each discussion we hold on the study questions, you should post at least two responses, but you should feel free to post more. Your participation in the discussions will be graded based on both quality and quantity. You should post on the discussion board by 10 p.m. on every Monday and Thursday, starting Thursday, Aug. 27.

In addition, you may post responses and/or questions to any videos I put up for the day, or any other comments or questions. These comments and questions may be of any length.

3. Quizzes (10%): Quizzes will count for 10% of your grade cumulatively. For each quiz you will have three attempts, and the highest grade will be recorded in the Gradebook.

4. Midterm Paper (2-3 pages; 10%): I will give you a list of topics for your paper. If you have an A in the course so far and you would prefer to choose your own topic, please submit a brief, informal proposal by email by **Oct. 19**. The paper is due on **Oct. 26**. 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 emailed me about it beforehand.

5. Close Reading (2-3 pages, not counting the cited text; 10%): We will practice close reading in the class, and this paper will help you to develop this skill on your own. The close reading paper is due on **Nov. 9**, and the same late paper policy applies.

6. Final Essay (15%): The final will include a close reading and an essay topic. If you have an A in the course so far, you may choose to write a 3-4 page paper rather than using my prompts. If this is what you would like to do, please submit a brief paper proposal by **Dec. 3**. The final essay is due on **Dec. 9**.

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 deliberately plagiarize on any assignments or papers (that is, copying or cutting and pasting), or engage in any other form of academic dishonesty as defined by the MSU Student Handbook, you will get an F in the course and disciplinary proceedings will be initiated.

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.

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

THE ODYSSEY (Harper, tr. Lattimore)
GILGAMESH (Hackett, tr. Lombardo)
MEDEA (Euripides I, U of Chicago, tr. Warner)
SYMPOSIUM (Hackett, trs. Nehamas, Woodruff)
THE AENEID (Bantam, tr. Mandelbaum)
METAMORPHOSES (Penguin, tr. Raeburn)
INFERNO (Bantam, tr. Mandelbaum)
DECAMERON (Penguin, tr. McWilliam)

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 on Communications > Chat every day from two to three, or you can send me an email at any time. We can also set up a Zoom 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 issues, 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. An alternative is to send an email to D2Lhelp@msutexas.edu describing your problem in detail and providing the full course number and title.

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. Writing tutors are available Monday through Thursday from 11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. and Sunday 2:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. Remember that you don't need an appointment to utilize these services.

Additional Tutoring: TASP has partnered with Thinkingsorm, an online tutoring company that provides you with high-quality, 24/7 tutoring support. Located at the top of your D2L course page, select More > Tutoring to book an appointment with a tutor.