

World Literature from Antiquity to the Renaissance

ENGL 2413/101, Fall 2023

MWF 9-9:50, 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 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.

Aug. 28 Introduction

30 Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book 1

Sept. 1 *The Odyssey*, Books 2-4

4 **No Class: Labor Day**

6 *The Odyssey*, Books 5-7

8 *The Odyssey*, Books 8-9

11 *The Odyssey*, Books 10-12

13 *The Odyssey*, Books 13-15

15 *The Odyssey*, Books 16-18

18 *The Odyssey*, Books 19-20

20 *The Odyssey*, Books 21-22

22 *The Odyssey*, Books 23-24

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

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

29 Sappho (selections posted on D2L)

Oct. 2 Euripides, *Medea*

4 Virgil, *The Aeneid*, Book 1

6 *The Aeneid*, Book 2

9 *The Aeneid*, Books 3-4 (focus on Book 4)

11 *The Aeneid*, Books 5-6 (focus on Book 6)

13 *The Aeneid*, Books 7-8 (focus on Book 8)

16 *The Aeneid*, Books 9-10 (focus on Book 10)

18 *The Aeneid*, Books 11-12 (focus on Book 12)

20 Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, Book 1, lines 1-415 (through the recreation of the human race)

Optional Midterm Paper Proposal Due

- 23 *Metamorphoses* 1.416-747, 3.131-251, 339-520 (through Io; Acteon; Narcissus)
- 25 *Metamorphoses* 4.55-166; 5.341-571; 6.1-145, 411-674 (Pyramus and Thisbe; Proserpine; Arachne; Procne and Tereus)
- 27 *Metamorphoses* 8.611-724; 10.1-297; 12.39-61 (Philemon and Baucis; from Orpheus and Eurydice through Pygmalion; Rumor)
- Midterm Paper Due**
- 30 *Metamorphoses*, 13.1-381, 740-895 (Ulysses and Ajax; Galatea and Polyphemus)
- Last day for “W”**
- Nov. 1 *Metamorphoses*, 14.621-771; 15.745-878 (Vertumnus and Pomona; ending)
- 3 Dante, *Inferno*, Canto 1-2
- 6 *Inferno*, Cantos 3-4
- 8 *Inferno*, Cantos 5-7, 11
- 10 *Inferno*, Cantos 13, 15, 17, 20
- 13 **Close Reading Workshop**
- 15 *Inferno*, Cantos 24-26
- 17 *Inferno*, Cantos 27, 33-34
- 20 Boccaccio, *Decameron*, *Prologue* and *Introduction*
- Close Reading Paper Due**
- 22, 24 **Thanksgiving Break**
- 27 *Decameron*, Day 2, Story 10; Day 3, Story 1
- 29 *Decameron*, Day 4, Story 1; Day 5, Story 8
- Dec. 1 *Decameron*, Day 8, Story 7; Day 10, Story 10
- 4 *Decameron*, *Conclusion*
- 6 Christine de Pizan, *The Book of the City of Ladies*, Part I, ch. 1-8 and 16
- 8 *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.
- 11 **Final Exam (or optional essay), 8-10 a.m.**

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. Study and Reflection Responses (30% in total): I will post study questions in D2L’s **Dropbox** for each class meeting. Please submit your response to one of the questions by 8 a.m. through the Dropbox, and be prepared to discuss the other questions as well. The questions should also serve as a guide to your reading, so you know what to look for. Your response must have a brief personal, reflective aspect to it: that is, you should bring in your personal reactions to the text (this may be just 2-3 sentences, or it may be part of your answer as a whole). For example, if you are characterizing Odysseus, you should

not merely give a list of characteristics, but also say something about how they make you feel about him. You may also bring in personal experiences.

In addition, your response must contain brief quotations and examples from the text (known as “textual evidence”) to support your points.

Your written response should be at least 300 words long, double-spaced. Most questions will consist of several parts, but you need only respond to one or two. Your responses will be graded using a rubric that I will distribute on the first day of class and post on D2L.

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. Two presentations (5% each): At the beginning of the semester you will sign up for two presentations. In each presentation you will elaborate on your response for at least five minutes. If you don’t think you can speak for at least five minutes on your response, you may also discuss an additional study question or topic of your choice. You should then pose an open question to initiate class discussion. If you are absent on the day of your presentation and do not have a written excuse, you will get a 0 for the assignment.

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. Midterm Paper (2-3 pages; 15%): I will give you a list of topics for your paper. The paper will be comparative: you will be asked to compare a theme in at least three works we have read so far. If your grade to date is an A, you may choose instead to write a paper on a topic of your choice. If you would like to do this, please submit a brief proposal by **Oct. 20**. The paper is due on **Oct. 27**, and the same late paper policy applies.

7. 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. If your grade to date is an A, you may choose to write a 3-4 page paper rather than taking the test. If this is what you would like to do, please submit a brief paper proposal one week before the exam date.

8. 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. 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.

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 to consult them during class discussion and for close reading practice.

Cellphones: You may not use your cellphone in class. Exceptions: 1) if you wish to read the text from your cell phone or another device, please inform me beforehand; 2) if there is a question we cannot answer, I may ask students to look for information on their phones voluntarily.

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, 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.

REPEATED AND/OR SERIOUS VIOLATIONS OF ANY OF THESE POLICIES WILL RESULT IN A LOWERED GRADE WITHOUT WARNING, ESPECIALLY IF YOUR GRADE IS BORDERLINE.

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.

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.

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):

- THE ODYSSEY (Harper, tr. Lattimore; **also available as an audiobook on YouTube**)
- THE EPIC OF GILGAMESH (Norton, tr. Foster, **2nd ed. (2019)**)
- THE BOOK OF THE CITY OF LADIES (Penguin, tr. Brown-Grant)
- MEDEA, in EURIPIDES I (U of Chicago, tr. Traplin, 3rd ed.)
- THE AENEID (Bantam, tr. Mandelbaum)

METAMORPHOSES (Penguin, tr. Raeburn; **also available on D2L**)
INFERNO (Bantam, tr. Mandelbaum; **also available on D2L**)

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