Spring 1-15-2008

ENG 2601-001

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Goals: The premise of the course is that there are certain works so central to western literature that they simply must be read if that literature is to be understood. Writers often respond to earlier writers in their work; Homer, Dante, Petrarch, and others have served as models for countless English writers. Obviously, it’s useful to have read them. But these works also continue to fascinate in their own right, and the bulk of class-time will be devoted simply to talking about them: what they’re saying, how we respond to them, what makes them work. As we talk about them, it’s important to remember that we’re reading them in translation and many centuries after they were written. In some ways they will remain unreachable, therefore; we read them only in the light of our own culture and language, and must struggle to penetrate the profoundly different worlds from which they emerged. In other ways, though, they are strangely contemporary, posing questions about how one should live, what one should value, whom one should admire . . . questions, obviously, that still concern us.

At the end of the semester you should have a greater familiarity with various literary genres, literary periods, and the western literary canon, as well as a bunch of new books to love.

Policies: English Department statement on plagiarism:
Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism—"The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author and representation of them as one’s original work" (Random House Dictionary of the English Language)—has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and a grade of NC for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. Respect for the work of others should encompass all formats, including print, electronic, and oral sources.

Late work: Plan to hand in papers on time. If you’re having problems, let me know. **Papers a week or more late will not be accepted at all.** Responses will be accepted only when handed in at the class for which they were due. This class involves a heavy reading load; make sure you plan your time so that you can keep up with the reading.

Attendance and classroom etiquette: Attendance at every class is expected. Note that a significant portion of the grade is based on class participation, in-class writing, and responses, all of which require keeping up with the reading and (obviously) being in class. **Excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for the in-class portion of your grade.** If you need to leave early for some reason, please let me know ahead of time. Needless to say, please keep cell phones off.

If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the
Coordinator of the Office of Disability Services (581-6583) as soon as possible.

**Requirements**: midterm and final 30% (10/20)
- 2 essays 30% (10, 20)
- responses, brief at-home writing assignments 20%
- in-class writing, participation and group presentations 20%

Essay grades will be based on Standards for Grading Themes at EIU. I plan to use number rather than letter grades; this will convert into your final grade as follows: 91-100=A; 81-90=B; 70-80=C; 65-69=D. Because I grade on a 100-point scale, missing assignments affect the grade tremendously.

**Responses**: Almost every week you will be required to hand in a 1-page typed response to the assigned reading for any one of the three class periods (you choose which). The response must be about the reading due on the day you hand it in; it should reflect your thoughts BEFORE class discussion. I will not accept responses handed in after the class period in which the relevant assignment has been discussed, nor will I accept responses from students who have not been in class. Responses must be handed in at the end of the class for which they are relevant and must be typed. The point of the responses is to stimulate your thinking about the assigned reading, to give you practice in analyzing it on your own, and to facilitate your involvement in class discussion.

I will often give suggested topics for your response; you might also choose a single question from the list at end of syllabus to answer, or use an observation of your own as a starting point. Feel free to ask questions at the end. The only absolute requirements:
1. Focus on a single issue throughout your response (a single theme or character or passage or event or conflict or connection or image or observation)
2. Establish your focus in opening sentence; then go into more detail about it in the rest of your response.
3. Include a direct quotation (with page number in parentheses) in the course of your response.

I will grade responses on a 10-point scale, in terms of their completeness, depth, precision, thoughtfulness. Every response should be anchored in a careful reading of the text; ALWAYS include at least one brief direct quotation as part of your response.

If illness or personal emergency keeps you from being in class on the day on which you intended to hand in a response, hand in a response for another class day that week instead; if that’s not possible, talk to me so you won’t be penalized for problems beyond your control.

**Presentations**: At times I’ll ask you to discuss assigned texts in groups of 4 or 5. Occasionally I’ll ask each group to take responsibility for a portion of the reading assignment and present it to the rest of the class. You will have time in class to prepare these 10-12 minute presentations. Your presentation will be the only way your classmates will have access to this material, so make sure your presentation is clear, interesting, and fun. The presentations will count toward your in-class activities grade.

**EWP**: this is a writing-intensive course; papers may be used for your electronic writing portfolio.

**Syllabus** (tentative)
I. Ancient World: The Greeks
M January 7: introduction to course.
W9: Homer. Response #1 due W or F. l 2
Fri11: Homer. 3-4
M14: Homer. Response #2 due M, W, or F.
W16: Homer. Template due.
F18: Homer.

M21: No class
W23: Homer. Response #3 due W or F.
F25: Homer.

M28: Sappho in Wilkie and Hurt. Essay #1 due (2-3 pp).
W30: in Grene and Lattimore, Euripides, *The Bacchae*
FFeb 1: *Bacchae*. Bring anthology and both Grene and Lattimore volumes: decide on group tragedy.

M4: Greek tragedy: group discussions
W6: Read Aristotle in Wilkie and Hurt (1229-1238). Group discussions.
F8: Group presentations

M11: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* in Wilkie and Hurt. Response #4 due M or W.
W13: Plato, “Allegory of the Cave” and “The Apology of Socrates” in Wilkie and Hurt (pp. 1197-1219)
F15: no class

M18: Virgil, the *Aeneid* in Wilkie and Hurt. Book 1 (973-991). Response #5 due M, W, or F
W20: Virgil, Book 2, 4
F22: Virgil, Book 6

M25: midterm

III. The Middle Ages
W27: *The Song of Roland* (separate volume), laisses 1-65 (pp. 29-55). Response #6 due W or F
F29: laisses 66-116 (pp. 55-78)
MMarch 3: laisses 117-177 (pp. 78-105). Response #7 due M, W or F.
W5 Lais of Marie de France (separate volume): “Guigemar,” “Bisclavret”
F7: Marie, “Milun,” “Yonec,” “Eliduc”

M10-15: spring break

M17: Dante, *Inferno* (separate volume), cantos 1-2. Response #8 due M, W or F.
W19: cantos 3-6. For fun, see http://www.4degreez.com/misc/dante-inferno-test.mv

M24: meet as group to discuss your cantos
W26: Groups 1, 2, 3 present cantos 12-13; 14-16; 17-20
F28: Groups 4, 5, 6 present cantos 21-25; 26-27; 28-30

M31: Cantos 31-34. Final canto of Paradiso in Wilkie and Hurt.

IV. The Renaissance
WApril 2: Petrarch
F4: Bring in Petrarchan song lyrics. Boccaccio in Musa and Bondanella 1-34.
M7: Boccaccio 69-95; 98-107. Response #9 due M, W or F
W9: Boccaccio 133-47
F11: Rabelais (separate volume) author’s prologue (37-39); ch 1, 3, 4, 6-8, 13

M14: Rabelais ch. 14-29. Response #10 due M or W
W16: Rabelais, ch. 32-33; 44-46; 51-58.

F25: review

There will be a cumulative final exam during exam week.

Response questions: focus on a SINGLE question or choose your own issue:

- **Characterization**: What is the main character like (physically, mentally, gestures, speech, values)? What parallels or contrasts do you see between two characters?
- **Setting, exposition**: How is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings? Significance of title?
- **Plot**: Focus on a single conflict (within a character? Between characters? Between a character and the environment?)
  - How does a character change during the course of the work?
  - Is there a crucial moment or turning point when someone makes a big mistake or does something right?
- **Narrative method**: What is the narrator’s relation to the action? Why is he/she telling the story? How is his/her values shaping what he/she notices?
- **Symbol/imagery/style**: Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?
- **Context and theme**: What historical events would it be helpful to know about?
  - Is there an authorial mouthpiece? How do you know? What’s she/he saying?
  - Look up one allusion and explain its significance.
  - To what extent does the ending tie up loose ends?
  - Is the ending “happy?” For whom? Who gets left out?
  - How does the work depict gender, race, sexuality, or class?
  - To what extent does the work as a whole reinforce values you share or don’t share?
Translations of the Odyssey

**Stanley Lombardo**

Speak, Memory—

Of the cunning hero,
The wanderer, blown off course time and again
After new plundered Troy's sacred heights.

Speak

Of all the cities he saw, the minds he grasped,
The suffering deep in his heart at sea
As he struggled to survive and bring his men home
But could not save them, hard as he tried—
The fools—destroyed by their own recklessness . . .

**Allen Mandelbaum (1990)**

Muse; tell me of the man of many wiles,
the man who wandered many paths of exile
after he sacked Troy's sacred citadel.
He saw the cities—mapped the minds—of many;
and on the sea, his spirit suffered every
adversity—to keep his life intact,
to bring his comrades back.

**Albert Cook (1967)** Tell me, Muse, about the man of many turns, who many
Ways wandered when he had sacked Troy's holy citadel;
He saw the cities of many men, and he knew their thought;
On the ocean he suffered many pains within his heart,
**Striving for his life and his companions' return.**

**Robert Fitzgerald (1961)**

Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story
of that man skilled in all ways of contending,
the wanderer, harried for years on end,
after he plundered the stronghold
on the proud height of Troy.

He saw the townlands

and learned the minds of many distant men,
and weathered many bitter nights and days
in his deep heart at sea, while he fought only
to save his life, to bring his shipmates home.

**George Chapman (1616)**

The Man, O Muse, informe that many a way
Wound with his wisedome to his wished stay;
That wanderd wondrous farre when He the towne
Of sacred Troy had sackt and shiverd downe.
The cities of a world of nations,
With all their manners, minds and fashions,
He saw and knew; at Sea felt many woes,
Much care sustaine, to save from overthrowes
Himselfe and friends in their retreate for home.
Major Gods

The elements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chaos</th>
<th>Love</th>
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<tr>
<td>Nox = Erebus</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ether</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hemera (day)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Ouranos (heaven)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Gaea (earth)</td>
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</tbody>
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The Titans
- Zeus = Mnemosyne
- Crohos = Rhsea
- Themis = Iapetus
- Thetis = Oceanus
- Codus = Phoebe
- Atlas
- Mela = Zeus
- Apollo
- Artemis

The Olympians

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Hestia</th>
<th>Hades</th>
<th>Poseidon</th>
<th>Zeus = Hera</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Epimetheus</td>
<td>Prometheus</td>
<td>Dionys</td>
<td>Zeus</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ares</td>
<td>Hebe</td>
<td>Hephaestus</td>
<td>Demeter</td>
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Greeks
- Akhaians (Akhaia)
- Argives (Argos)
- Danaans (among allies: Myrmidons)

Greek commander-in-chief: Agamemnon (=Clitemnesta; son Crestes, daughters Iphigenia, Electra)
- Agamemnon’s brother: Menelaus (=Helen), from Sparta

Allies:
- Odysseus (=Penelope, son Telemachus), from Ithaka
- Achilleus, leader of Myrmidons
- Nestor, old and wise

Helen + Clitemnestra, daughters of Leda = Zeus
- Trojan king: Priam (=Hecuba)
- His sons: Hector (=Andromache)
- Paris (elopes with Helen)
- Deiphobus

Trojans (Iliion)

Gods (12 main)
- Zeus (king, heaven, thunder) = Hera
  - His brothers: Poseidon (sea) and Hades (underworld)
  - His daughter: Athena (born from his forehead, fully armed, without a mother, owl, handicrafts, intelligence, war/peace, virgin)
  - Sons: Hephaestus (lame, blacksmith, = Aphrodite); Ares (war)
    - Hermes (messenger); Apollo (sun, music, prophecy)
  - Daughters: Artemis (moon, virgin, huntress; Aphrodite (?)) (beauty, love)
  - Sisters: Hestia (hearth), Hera (marriage, maternity), Demeter (harvest, fertility)