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ENG 2601-003: Backgrounds in Western Literature

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English 2601: Backgrounds of Western Literature

Instructor: Dr. David Radavich
 Office: 3185 ~~319~~ Coleman Hall
 Telephone: 581-6971 (Office) or 508-8437 (Cell)
 Office Hours: 2:00-4:00 p.m. TR and by appointment

Required Texts:

Mack, ed., *Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces*, Vol. I, 7th Edition

PURPOSE. In this class, you will read some of the greatest literary masterpieces, monuments of Western civilization that continue to influence readers and thinkers down to our own day. Not only are these Greek, Roman, and European literary works tremendously influential historically, they are also very enjoyable in their own right. These are imaginative constructions that ask the fundamental questions: What is the good life? How can one live honorably? What happens to us after we die? Why is there war? What is the nature of love? of the soul? The books we will read this semester any well-educated person, in whatever field, can feel proud to have read. And by reading these masterpieces, you will be challenged to ponder these questions, to read carefully, analyze critically, and formulate your own values and responses.

COURSE ORGANIZATION. The course will be organized roughly chronologically, beginning with the Greeks, followed by the Romans, and ending with European masterpieces of the later Renaissance.

ASSIGNMENTS. The focus will be on reading a wide selection of works, over which response quizzes will be given, designed to provoke your thinking. Two papers will be required: A short essay of 3-4 pages typed double-spaced, and a longer one of 6-8 pages typed double-spaced. In addition, you will be asked to write a short prospectus for Essay 2. There will be a midterm and a final exam.

GRADING. The assignments are arranged in generally increasing order of importance. The first paper counts 10%, the midterm exam 15%, the prospectus 5%, the second paper 20%, and the final exam 25%. Participation, including quizzes and the oral report, make up the remaining 25% of the course. "Participation" means thoughtful and effective comments in class, as well as improvement and class involvement during the semester.

LATE WORK. Assignments turned in late will be penalized one-third grade PER CALENDAR DAY late. If you know in advance that you will encounter difficulties in meeting a particular deadline, talk to me beforehand. Missed in-class assignments cannot be made up; that is the reward for coming to class regularly.

PLAGIARISM. According to University policy,

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 course.

ATTENDANCE POLICY. You will be allowed the equivalent of one week of absence (although regular attendance will be helpful). Thereafter, the course participation grade will be lowered ONE grade for each week missed. Students absent more than four weeks of class will automatically receive an F in the course; genuine medical emergencies will be dealt with on an individual basis.

CONFERENCES. I encourage you to come talk with me any time during the semester if you have questions regarding assignments, the readings, your progress in the course, grading standards, paper topics, or anything else on your mind. I strongly encourage you to try out your paper ideas on me beforehand, so that you can get useful feedback and maximize your efforts.

English 2601 Assignments

- Aug. 25 - Introduction
27 - Homer, *Iliad*, Intro., 104-131
- Sept. 1 - *Iliad*, 131-161
3 - *Iliad*, 161-189
- Sept. 8 - *Odyssey*, 209-242
10 - *Odyssey*, 242-273
- Sept. 15 - *Odyssey*, 303-347
17 - *Odyssey*, 401-442
- Sept. 22 - **Paper #1 due**
24 - Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*
- Sept. 29 - More *Agamemnon*
Oct. 1 - Sophocles, *Antigone*
- Oct. 6 - More *Antigone*
8 - Euripides, *Medea*
- Oct. 13 - Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*
15 - MIDTERM EXAM
- Oct. 20 - Vergil, *Aeneid*, 814-846
22 - *Aeneid*, 846-886
- Oct. 27 - Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 895-922
29 - Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, 922-943
- Nov. 3 - Dante, *Inferno*, Ctos. I-XI
5 - **Prospectus Due**
- Nov. 10 - *Inferno*, Ctos. XII-XXII
12 - *Inferno*, Ctos. XXIII-XXXIII
- Nov. 17 - Boccaccio, *Decameron*, 1429-1458
19 - Rabelais, *Gargantua and Pantagruel*, 1881-1906
- Nov. 24 & 26 - No class; Thanksgiving Break

Dec. 1 - **Paper #2 Due**
3 - Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, 1964-1989

Dec. 8 - Cervantes, *Don Quixote*, 1989-2020
10 - Review and Evaluation

Final Exam

Euripides, Intro., *Medea*, 740-755