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:
Attendance is mandatory. A portion of the grade is based on class participation and in-class writing—both of which require keeping up with the reading and being in class. Repeated lateness and excessive absences will result in a grade of 0 for the in-class portion of your grade. If illness or personal emergency keeps you from class, let me know; when you return, ask about hand-outs and reading assignments you may have missed.

Class participation is expected. Come with comments, questions, observations, specific page references in the reading you'd like to talk about or understand better.

The use of cell phones is prohibited during class time. Please refrain from talking on, texting, or looking at your phone. If I see you doing any of these actions during class time, I will ask you to leave.

Late work is unacceptable except under prearranged circumstances. Informal homework and in-class assignments will be accepted only at the appropriate class. In the case of serious illness or personal emergency, talk to me, and I’ll see that you’re not penalized. NO assignment will be accepted more than a week after the due date. If you run into problems keeping up with the reading or writing a paper please come see me! Even a brief conversation can help you get interested in a paper or make sense of the reading.
English Department Statement Concerning 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 the immediate assignment of a grade of F for the assigned essay and 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.

In other words, if the paper has your name on it, you should be the author and originator of any ideas in it that aren't explicitly linked to a source. If you're using a source, make that clear. Don't present someone else's work or language as your own. This includes the internet. If you want to use information you acquired online, you need to name the website you got it from. If you're using the website's language, put quotation marks around the words.

**Requirements:**
3 exams 40% (10/10/20)
2 essays 30% (10, 20)
b brief at-home and in-class writing assignments 20%
Participation 10%

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. You must complete both essay assignments and exams to pass the class.

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.

**Tentative Syllabus**
I. Ancient World: The Greeks
Tu Aug21: Intro to course
   Th30: *Iliad* Bks XXII, XXIV, pp. 173-205.

Th6: *Odyssey*, Bks 5-8


Th20: Sappho.


II. Ancient World: The Romans

Tu9: Virgil, Bks 2, 4.

III. The Middle Ages
Tu16: Marie (separate volume, Ferrante and Hanning): “Guigemar,” “Bisclavret,” “Eliduc.”
Th18: Dante (in Norton), *Inferno*, cantos 1-5

Tu23: Dante, cantos 6-12.
Th25: Dante, cantos 13-25 (groups present).

Tu30: Dante, cantos 26-34 (groups present).
ThNov1: Exam: Rome and Middle Ages. Hand in mock epic #2.

IV. The Renaissance
Tu6: Petrarch.

Th15: Boccaccio (separate volume, Musa and Bondanella), pp. 69-106; 133-47.

Thanksgiving Break

Tu27: Cervantes, pp. 2226-2256. Hand in Shakespearean or Petrarchan sonnet.
Th29: Cervantes, pp. 2257-2298.

TuDec4: Cervantes, pp. 2298-2349
Th6. Hand in revised version essay #2.

There will be a cumulative final exam Monday, Dec 10, 12:30-2:30.
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?
Focus on a minor character and discuss why he/she’s there

**Setting:** How is the setting described? Is there a contrast set up between two settings?

**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?

**Plot:** What conflicts do you see? (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?

**Symbolism and imagery:** Is there an object or moment that works symbolically, or a pattern of imagery or a key word that recurs?

**Context, theme:** What historical events would it be helpful to know about?
Look up one allusion and explain its significance.
To what extent does the ending tie up loose ends?
Is there an authorial mouthpiece? If so, what are his/her values?
Is the ending “happy?” For whom? Who gets left out?
Are there problems in the way gender, race, sexuality, or class?
To what extent does the work as a whole reinforce values you share or don’t share?

For poems: FIRST: read in terms of punctuation, not line breaks. Read once to yourself, then read out loud.
Get an overall sense of who speaker is, situation, and message. Then look up words you don’t know. Take into account ALL the word’s listed meanings before deciding how it works in context. For your posting, I suggest you focus on a single poem and examine ONE of the following:

**Speaker:** Who is the speaker? To whom is the speaker speaking (if anyone in particular)? In what situation or context? Any hints about what’s happened immediately before the poem’s opening? Does the speaker’s tone or ideas change during the course of the poem?

**Tone:** What is the speaker’s attitude toward the audience and topic (tone)? Any irony or sarcasm? Is there a gap between what the speaker is saying and what you sense the poet wants to get across?

**Structure:** Does the poem fall into parts? How do they build on or contrast with each other? What binaries do you notice? Is it open or closed form? How does structure relate to the poem’s meaning?

**Sound:** Note use of sound, rhythm, rhyme as they relate to the poem’s meaning.

**Diction, imagery, figurative language:** Any repeated words? Words particularly rich in meanings or connotations? Clusters of related images (lots of disease references for example, or military)?
What lines do you find particularly dense or confusing?

**Theme:** What does the poem as a whole seem to be saying?
Achilles' baneful wrath resound, O Goddess, that impos'd
Infinite sorrows on the Greeks and many brave souls los'd
From beasts heroic; sent them far to that invisible cave
That no light comforts; and their limbs to dogs and vultures gave:
To all which Jove's will gave effect; from whom first strife begun
Betzixt Atrides, king of men, and Thetis' godlike son.

--George Chapman, 1598, 1611

The wrath of Peleus' son, the direful spring
Of all the Grecian woes, O Goddess sing!
That wrath which hurled to Pluto's gloomy reign
The souls of mighty chiefs untimely slain,
Whose limbs, unburied on the naked shore,
Devouring dogs and hungry vultures tore;
Such was the sovereign doom, and such the will of Jove!

--Alexander Pope, 1718

Sing, goddess, the anger of Peleus' son Achilleus
and its devastation, which put pains thousandfold upon the Achaians,
hurled in their multitudes to the house of Hades strong souls
of heroes, but gave their bodies to be the delicate feasting
of dogs, of all birds, and the will of Zeus was accomplished
since that time when first there stood in division of conflict
Atreus' son the lord of men and brilliant Achilleus.

--Richmond Lattimore, 1951

Rage--Goddess, sing the rage of Peleus' son Achilles,
murderous, doomed, that cost the Achaeans countless losses,
hurling down to the House of Death so many sturdy souls,
great fighters' souls, but made their bodies carrion, feasts for
the dogs and birds,
and the will of Zeus was moving toward its end.
Begin, Muse, when the first two broke and clashed,
Agamemnon lord of men and brilliant Achilles.
Major Gods
The elements

Chaos

Nox = Erebus

Love

Ether

Hemera (day)

Ouranos = Gaia (earth)

Titans

Zeus = Mnemosyne, Crohos = Rhha

Themis = Iapetus, Tethys = Oceanus, Codus = Phoebe

Olympians

Hestia, Hades, Poseidon, Zeus = Hera

Epimetheus, Prometheus

Diomedes, Zeus, Aphrodite

Ares, Hebe, Hephaestus, Demeter, Zeus = Aphrodite

Eros, Persephone

Greeks

Akhaians (Akhaia) = synonyms

Argives (Argos)

Danaans

(among allies: Myrmidons)

Gk commander-in-chief: Agamemnon (= Clytemnestra; son Orestes, daughters Iphigenia, Electra)

Agamemnon's brother: Menelaus (= Helen), from Sparta

allies: Odysseus (= Penelope, son Telemachus), from Ithaka

Achilles, leader of Myrmidons

Nestor, old + wise

Trojan king: Priam (= Hecuba)

Helen + Clytemnestra, daughters of Leda = Zeus

 Gods (12 main)

Zeus (king, heaven, thunder) = Hera

his brother: 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, materniy)

Demeter (harvest, fertility)

Trojans (Ilion)

Zeus (king, heaven, thunder) = Hera

his daughter: Athena (born from his forehead, fully armed, without a mother. owl.

handicrafts, intelligence, war/peace. virgin)

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