Course Description and Objectives:

This course promises to be both rewarding and challenging so long as you are willing to invest a great part of yourself in the imperative and enjoyable tasks of reading and writing. Throughout the semester we will read a selection of texts representative of the Classical Western tradition as we engage in a fulfilling quest to understand active and interpretive reading, critical thinking and analysis, and rhetorical construct. This course combines its emphasis on these elements of reading with a writing intensive introduction to the fundamentals of academic discourse and protocol. We will consider the composition and rhetorical constructs we encounter in our readings as we learn to utilize the application of rhetorical theory in our own writing. Students will learn the skills required to write clear and well-organized persuasive, argumentative, and expository essays as they use our primary texts to develop explications, formulate interpretive analyses, create annotated bibliographies, and engage in dialogue with published academic arguments through summary/response as it is utilized in rhetorical theory.

Such skills in analytic thinking, reading, and writing will prepare you for the work you will be assigned in the many different disciples studied at UST. These skills will also aid you in the process of understanding that writing is a way of posing questions, of joining ongoing literate discussions, and of deepening your understanding of your own responses, values, interests, and personal development.

Required Text:


Course Requirements:

- Essay #1: 15%
- Essay #2: 15%
- Essay #3: 15%
- Focus Question freewrites: 20%
- Class participation & professionalism: 20%
- Final exam: 15%
Grading:

Your final grade will be determined according to the following scale:

- A = 94-100%
- B = 84-86%
- C = 74-76%
- D = 60-64%
- A- = 90-93%
- B- = 80-83%
- C- = 70-73%
- F = 59% and under
- B+ = 87-89%
- C+ = 77-79%
- D+ = 65-69%

Other Grading Issues:

- I will not correct mechanical errors you make in your papers.
  - Instead, I will place an “x” next to each place in the paper where you have made a mechanical error.
  - A paper with, on average, more than three mechanical errors per page will receive an X grade on the paper.
  - In this case, your paper’s earned letter grade will be covered with a penciled “X” until you correct each mechanical error I’ve indicated with an “x” and meet with me to discuss the ways in which you have corrected each error.
  - After our discussion, I will change your paper grade to whatever grade was previously covered by the “X.”
  - Failure to correct these grades or to meet with me to discuss these corrections will result in a final grade of an “F” for that specific paper.

- Papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date. After that, they’re late.
  - You are allowed one (only) “computer excuse” (printing problems, computer lockup, disk problems, etc.) for final drafts, so long as I get the paper by the time I go home that day. It is your job, in this case, to ensure that you place the paper in my hands before I leave campus that day. I never take responsibility for papers that are not placed directly in my hands.
  - The final paper grade will be lowered a grade (e.g. from A- to B+) if you miss a peer review session OR if you do not have a draft for a peer review session.
  - Final paper grades are lowered a grade (e.g. from B to B-) for each class day that either a rough or final draft is handed in late.
  - It is important, if you expect your paper will be late due to a family emergency or illness, to discuss the matter with me before the paper is late. Otherwise, the paper is most likely subject to all late penalties.

Class Participation and Attendance Policy:

This course will be successful only if everyone participates enthusiastically and regularly. Being present in class is imperative because your comments in class are valuable and constructive; they are therefore necessary if this course is to reach its full potential. Please regularly participate and enjoy speaking in class and asking questions. The more you participate, the more we all will benefit from this course. Students absent more than three times this semester may find their final course grade lowered one grade (e.g. from C to C-) for each additional absence.
Academic Dishonesty:

I expect to find no instances of plagiarism throughout the semester; plagiarism is a serious offense and will not be tolerated under any circumstances. I abide by the statement about dishonesty as illustrated on pp 77-9 of the 2014-2016 edition of the Undergraduate Catalog.

More Details on Course Requirements:

♦ ESSAY ASSIGNMENTS & FINAL EXAM: I will always provide thorough, detailed handouts for each of our written assignments and for the final exam. Be certain to read all course handouts carefully and to thoroughly contemplate their recommendations. If you still have questions or if something needs clarifying, please feel free to ask.

♦ INVENTION WORK & ROUGH DRAFTS: Upon handing in each final draft, you will also need to submit all preliminary work, including notes, prewriting, rough drafts, and peer response documents. Writing is a process, and I like to see the steps you took while engaging in this process. I will not grade collections that do not include the preceding documents. These final drafts are considered late until your compilation is complete.

♦ FOCUS QUESTION FREEWRITES: At the end of each class day, I will give you a question aimed at helping you focus your reading as you prepare for our following class. For each day’s reading assignment, after you finish your reading but before you come to class, you are to freewrite your answer to this question. Each freewrite should be roughly two-thirds to one page long. A strong entry will make reference to textual evidence, much as would a formal paper that does literary analysis. I will collect your Focus Question freewrites each class day before class begins. I do not accept FQF after class has started. Late penalties are the same for FQF as they are for papers. No credit will be given for focus question freewrites handed in more than two weeks late, except in the instance of those done for extra credit.

Important Due Dates:

* Monday 21 September: First draft of Essay #1 due.
* Monday 28 September: FINAL draft of Essay #1 due.

* Monday 19 October: First draft of Essay #2 due.
* Monday 26 October: FINAL draft of Essay #2 due.

* Wednesday 11 November: First draft of Essay #3 due.
* Monday 23 November: FINAL draft of Essay #3 due.

* Wednesday 16 December, 11 am – 1:30 pm: FINAL EXAM
There are many things you can do to help yourself succeed in this course:

♦  Reading at the college level is much different than reading simply for pleasure. It is, in my opinion, so much more fun to read literature and academic scholarship in the manner that this course will emphasize. I encourage you to read actively. That is, don’t simply absorb what the text says. Engage in a constant discussion with the text, always questioning as you read while also focusing on evidence, synthesizing, constructing arguments, taking notes, and being aware of your rational and emotional responses.

♦  Terminology belittling someone on the basis of race or sexual orientation is inappropriate. It is therefore necessary in your papers and in the classroom to avoid sexist, racist, or homophobic language. Such statements simplistically label people in terms of one of the many categories into which they may fall as if that were their exclusive identity; these statements, therefore, foster close-mindedness and over-generalize in a way that is misleading and disparaging.

♦  I want you to get the most out of this course that you possibly can. It is amazing how necessary it is in life to possess strong reading, writing, listening, and analytic skills. In addition, being able to express ourselves in writing allows us to transcend time, to record certain strong emotions in a expressive way, and to construct and write impressive arguments and intelligent research papers. Perhaps most importantly, the type of reading, writing, and thinking we will do in this course teaches us about organization and our own thought processes. I will periodically hold conferences where we can discuss assigned papers and the process of reading, writing, interpreting, analyzing, and constructing arguments. If you would like to meet in addition to these designated conferences, or if you’re having any problems or difficulties with the course, I emphatically invite you to make an appointment with me or to stop by during office hours.
Composition & Literature I: The Classical Tradition
Schedule of Readings

*PLEASE BRING YOUR TEXT TO CLASS EACH DAY*

Monday 24 August: Introduction: The Classical Tradition & the Writing Process

Wednesday 26 August: Reading Actively and Rhetorically
Have read for class:
- “Reading Actively” (pp. 59-63 of LBCH)
- Homer, “The Envoys Plead with Achilles” – the three speeches addressed to Achilles in The Iliad, Book IX (in Norton, pp. 153-55, lines 267-371)

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Monday 31 August: Discovery of Arguments
Have read for class:
- Pp. 27-84 from Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Wednesday 2 September: The Importance of Argument
Have read for class:
- “The Rage of Achilles” – The Iliad, Book I

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Monday 7 September: Labor Day – no classes (Happy autumn!)

Wednesday 9 September: Beginning Work with The Odyssey
Have read for class:
- Book I – II, pp 225-246
- “Introduction: The Nature of Rhetoric” (pp. 3-10 in A New History of Classical Rhetoric)

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Monday 14 September: The Odyssey (cont’d)
Have read for class:
- Books III – IV, pp. 246-78
- “The Relevance and Importance of Rhetoric for our Times” (pp. 24-6 in CRMS)

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Wednesday 16 September: The Writing Process – Invention, Disposition, and Delivery
Have read for class:
- From LBCH:
Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Monday 21 September:  **DUE: First Draft of Essay #1 – Peer Review Session**

Wednesday 23 September:  **Revision Day – Paragraph Construction**

*Bring a copy of your first draft (whatever stage you’re at) to class today.*

Have read for class:
- From *LBCH*:
  - “Paragraphs,” pp. 40-45
  - “Developing Paragraphs,” pp. 48-53
  - “Writing Introductory and Concluding Paragraphs,” pp. 53-57

Monday 28 September:  **The Odyssey (cont’d) & DUE: FINAL Draft of Essay #1**

Have read for class:
- Books V – VI, pp. 278-297

Wednesday 30 September:  **The Odyssey (cont’d)**

Have read for class:
- Books VII – VIII, pp. 297-319

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Monday 5 October:  **The Odyssey (cont’d)**

Have read for class:
- Books IX – X, pp. 319-347

Focus question: _______________________________________________________________________

Wednesday 7 October:  **Reflection and Projection (introduction to Essay #2)**

Have read for class:
- From *LBCH*:
  - “Working with Sources,” pp. 325-344
  - Make a note of the section entitled “MLA Documentation and Format.”

You will refer to this section as you compose Essay #2

**Monday October 12th**:  Class excused.

**Best wishes for a beautiful mid-semester break.**

Wednesday 14 October:  **The Odyssey (cont’d)**

Have read for class:
- Books XI – XII
Focus question: ____________________________________________________

**Monday 19 October:**  *DUE: First Draft of Essay #2 – Peer Review Session*

**Wednesday 21 October:** Paragraph Development, Organizational Structures, and Incorporating Work with Sources (R. W/A.G.)

*Bring a copy (whatever stage you’re at) to class with you today*
Have read for class:
- From *LBCH*:
  - “Critical Thinking,” pp. 57-63
  - “Working with Sources,” pp. 325-344 (review)

*In lieu of a focus question due today, review and incorporate into your draft the work we did on Wednesday 23 September with paragraph structure.*

**Monday 26 October:** *The Odyssey* (cont’d) &  *DUE: FINAL Draft of Essay #2*

Have read for class:
- Books XIII – XIV

**Wednesday 28 October:** *The Odyssey* (cont’d)

Have read for class:
- Books XV – XVIII

Focus question: ____________________________________________________

**Monday 2 November:** *The Odyssey* (cont’d)

Have read for class:
- Books XIX – XXI

Focus question: ____________________________________________________

**Wednesday 4 November:** *The conclusion of The Odyssey*

Have read for class:
- Books XXII – XXIV

Focus question: ____________________________________________________

**Monday 9 November:** *The Nature of Choice*

Have read for class:
- The first ½ of *Antigone*, beginning on p. 658

Focus question: ____________________________________________________

**Wednesday 11 November:** *DUE: First Draft of Essay #3 – Peer Review Session*

**Monday 16 November**

Have read for class:
- The second ½ of *Antigone*, through to p. 693
Wednesday 18 November: Concluding work with *Antigone*

*No new reading assignment today*

Monday 23 November: *DUE: FINAL Draft of Essay #3*

Wed 25 November: class cancelled – Best wishes for a peaceful and reflective Thanksgiving holiday

Monday 30 November: Choice, Character, and Immortality

Have read for class:

- Part 1 of *Gilgamesh*, pp. 10-17

Focus question: ____________________________

Wednesday 2 December: Conclusions & Beginnings

Have read for class:

- through the conclusion of *Gilgamesh*

Focus question: ____________________________

Monday 7 December: Assignment TBA

Focus question: ____________________________

**FINAL EXAM: Wednesday 16 December, 11 am – 1:30 pm**