Texts: Gilgamesh—(handout); The Homeric “Hymn to Demeter” trans. Helene Foley; (handout); Hamlet, Shakespeare; Sir Gawain and the Green Knight—The Pearl Poet (handout); The Importance of Being Earnest and Other Plays—Oscar Wilde; Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead—Tom Stoppard; selections from various poets and short story writers (handouts if time allows); selected poems (handouts); The Office of Assertion, Scott Crider; selected short stories by Flannery O’Connor and others (if time allows).

Course Description: This course is a compression of the first three classes of the English sequence in the core curriculum at UST. Those courses cover literary material from the Ancient and Classical Greek and Roman tradition, the Medieval and Renaissance periods, and the Modern period and include examples of fiction, poetry, drama, and the essay. This course is specifically for transfer students with 6–9 hours of English credit transferring into UST. This class will be heavier on the classical period (you’ll never get it again in your life, probably, and it’s the basis for so much in Western culture), and lighter in the Modern. We are living in the post-modern literary time period, heavily influenced by the Modern.

Course Objectives: Through a study of significant works from each of the major periods of literary history outlined above and a sprinkling of literary output from other cultures, students will increase their understanding and appreciation of Western and non-Western traditions in poetry, drama, and prose from its ancient or classical roots to contemporary literary models. In response to great literary masterpieces encountered throughout the course, students will develop the critical reading and writing skills necessary for an educated grasp of literary forms and will review the skills necessary for an educated grasp of all stages of the writing process.

Requirements: Students will be required to complete reading assignments, take several pop quizzes (with short essays often included), take two long objective & short essay exams (one at midterm, one at conclusion of Hamlet), and write two formal (typed) literary essays, one as part of a midterm grade (3–4 pages), and one short literary research paper on Hamlet (with 3 outside sources, none of which can be from the internet) as a final paper. Extra credit will be given for one page responses to approved or assigned plays you watch during semester or scenes from the films we watch in class. Students with issues with writing essays must meet with me starting at the 3rd & 4th week of classes to review a draft of first essay to be revised for the midterm. Students also must attend one poetry/fiction reading, including the student reading. Never hand in any work enclosed in a plastic folder or a plastic "envelope" organizer. Late essays will not be accepted unless you have contacted me in advance with a medical excuse (or something like that) and can provide proof of it. Exceptions might be made, but I reserve the right to refrain from making written comments on late papers. Late papers will always be docked points.

Never turn in your only copy of a paper to me. If you turn in a late paper under my door or into my mailbox, I am never responsible for it. Until you witness it in my
hands, I do not have it, technically, and will not accept responsibility for it. Under these circumstances, it is to your advantage to put your paper or late paper in my hands if there’s doubt about whether I’ll get it on time. Kristen Scott at front desk can accept a paper for me, but it must bear her signature and time stamp.

Plagiarism is a serious offense. If you plagiarize on a paper and are caught, your paper will receive an automatic F on the first offense; you will also have a meeting with me and will be asked to sign a report of academic dishonesty. I will then report the incident to your advisor, and the registrar (where a file is started on you). If a second incident occurs you both fail the course and will face formal charges before the Academic Council—a committee of faculty members representing each School/Discipline area. This committee will examine examples of your plagiarism in order to determine your standing at the University. UST takes plagiarism seriously, especially of late. I know of no student who has recently beat a charge of plagiarism at UST.

Grades: The average grade for my classes is a B-. All students start out with a hypothetical grade of B-/C+ and work their way up or down. No one starts with a hypothetical A. C or C+ is an acceptable grade. Never whine to me about your grades; work to earn better grades. Never email me in a panic on Sunday nights for instructions or to let me know you won’t be handing in a paper on time. Monday-Friday are business days, not Sat. or Sunday for this class.

Grade breakdown:  
Att./Part. 20% (includes conference with me, answers to questions in class and event att.)

quiz scores: 20% (5 pts for the highest of 4/7 quiz grades)

Journal: 40% for essays (20 mid; 20 final)

Exams: 20% (10 for obj midterm, 10 for last long quiz—quotes from Shakespeare penultimate week)

Total: 100%

Your letter grade can always be computed by taking the number of points earned on a test, quiz, or essay grade and dividing it by the total points it could have earned. For example if you receive 14 out of a possible 20 points, you divide 20 into 14 and get 7. A 7 equals 70%. 70% out of 100% equals a C-.

Since a full 20% of your grade is earned through participation efforts, it is to your advantage to consider how you will impress me in the classroom. You earn high participation grades by showing me you are prepared for class—answer questions I ask and/or ask sincere, appropriate and informed questions yourself (that act requires a careful reading of assignments). Good attendance is, of course, necessary for the best possible grade, but silence in class will not work to advantage. Bright, alert expressions, nodding heads etc. also help. If you're bored to tears, fake it. I'll never know the difference. In fact, if you hate literature, just fake liking it during the course of the semester, and you'll be better off than you would be if you just actively hated it for four months.

Letter grades mean:
A: Outstanding work: beautifully written, well-developed, insightful work; a delight to read, full of lively, relevant discussion with that glimmer of polish an excellent stylist brings to a well-crafted essay.

A-: Wonderful work but lacking that highest degree of grace, elegance, and efficiency of expression noted above.

B+: Very very good--thoughtful, well-developed, sensitive writing, with an admirable degree of honesty, clarity, and organization.

B: Very good--thoughtful and careful work, coherently and clearly organized.

B-: Good effort that perhaps needs more development but is clearly written.

C+: Acceptable, competent writing, shows promise.

C: Acceptable writing, regular discussion and development.

C-: Still acceptable, but barely so.

D+, D: unacceptable to various degrees of disappointment.

F: Unacceptable on all counts

I—I only give Incompletes when there is a medical emergency. Your advisor and at least one parent must contact me. If you disappear without a word or miss more than nine class meetings, your grade is an F. If you stop attending class, remember to drop it formally through the registrar. No faculty member in his/her right mind is insulted if you drop his/her class—it’s no big deal to us—at all.

Never call my office and expect a call back. You must hunt me down during office hours. One of the privileges of a Ph.D. is that students make the effort to see me; I only make efforts to reach seniors whose senior thesis I am advising or student editors of the literary magazine. Student emails are also problematic—if you have a question or a problem, come to my office and talk to me.

Civility Code: A level of civility is expected in my class that is based on the following list of precepts.

1. All participants in the class must be treated with respect.
2. When I am talking to the class, conversations between students are not permitted at any time, nor is muttering or emitting random words or phrases when I’m speaking or when another student has the floor. When working in groups, please be kind and considerate to each other.
3. Cell phones must be turned off upon entrance to class. No talking on cell phones or text messaging during class; no cell phones on desks or tables or in your laps!; they must be turned off, put away and out of sight during class time. You will willingly surrender your cell phones to me for the duration of class if you are unable to comply. I may “call you” on this issue in class in front of other students as soon as I see your failure to comply and your attendance/participation grade drops from 20 points to 10 pts on first infraction.
4. No use of laptops without a learning disability note from counseling and testing that requires for psychological or physiological reasons that you use a laptop. If that note is forthcoming, students must sit up front near me so that screen is partially or easily visible to me.
5. By remaining in this class, you indicate your agreement to the terms above and below: you have been forewarned about civility expectations, my plagiarism policy and possible changes in schedule.

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Generally the class will be broken into two parts: 1st part: (to mid-semester or just before)—The Classical World 2nd part—Middle Ages/Renaissance/Modern—Hamlet in text and film, and the Joss Whedon film Much Ado About Nothing film if time allows

Last and shortest part—Modern World—although I do cover some of it during 1st two class meetings.

Daily class assignments will follow: (subject to change) Always read introductory material to period and writer in text or in Handouts.

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wk1 Jan. 20 —review syllabus, look at Rilke’s “Archaic Torso of Apollo,”—
explication read various poems in class, including Chinese women poets, discuss the explication, and assign Chapt. 1 of Crider’s The Office of Assertion; Assign entire Gilgamesh

Wk 2 Jan. 22: discuss Gilgamesh and lyric poetry. Students ask questions about Chapt. 1 of Crider’s The Office of Assertion

Jan. 27: finish Gilgamesh and discussing various lyric poets. Read chapt 2 of Crider. For next class: read the Homeric Hymn to Demeter.

Wk 3 Feb. 1: discuss the Homeric Hymn to Demeter (handout) and discuss.
Feb 3. Finish discussing the Homeric Hymn to Demeter; finish reading The Office of Assertion; Read Book 1 of the Iliad

Wk 4 Feb 8: read to discuss in class Bks 6, 9 of The Iliad.
Feb.10: read to discuss in class Book 16, 18 of The Iliad.

Wk 5 Feb. 15 NO CLASS
Feb 17: Bk 22 of The Iliad;

Wk 6 Feb. 22: read to discuss in class Sophocles’ Oedipus the King
Feb. 24: read to discuss in class Antigone

Wk 7: Feb 29: midterm obj exam; introduce Hamlet
March 2—Act I scenes i-iii (1-3) of Hamlet

Wk 8: March. 7—2 midterm essays due (revision of explication of a poem and one literary essay from prompts on the classical tradition). Act I scenes iii-v (3-5) of Hamlet
March 9 : Hamlet, Act II in its entirety

Wk 9: March 14: Hamlet, Act III, scenes i-ii
March 16 : Hamlet, Act III, scenes iii-iv
March 21-25 Holy Week and SPRING BREAK

Wk 10 March. 28: Hamlet, Act IV, scenes i-v
March 30: Hamlet, Act IV, scenes v-vii

Wk 11 April 4: Hamlet, Act V, scenes i-ii
April 6. Review Hamlet

Wk 12. April 11—long quiz on Hamlet;
April 13—Much Ado About Nothing—Joss Whedon’s film

Wk 13: April 18: Wilde’s The Importance of Being Earnest—Acts I-II
April 20—Finish Wilde’s play

Wk 14: April 25: Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead--
April 27: *Rosencrantz and Guildenstern Are Dead*
Wk 15: May 2: Final essays due, wrap up and possible last film