Objectives: The Classical Tradition lays the foundation for the rest of the Core Curriculum in English through a writing-intensive introduction to some of the enduring classics of the Western tradition. We will study the principal literary genres of narrative poetry represented by The Iliad, dramatic poetry with The Oresteia, and lyric poetry, with an emphasis on modern poems inspired by the classical tradition. While engaged in these literary selections we will also grow familiar with the basic mythology that informs much of Western art and culture from the classical period of Greece to our own times.

This course also offers an introduction to the methods, techniques, and skills of academic writing. Instruction and practice in rhetoric and composition will figure prominently in the class, and the direct assessment of writing will constitute a major percentage of the final grade. Students will engage primary texts to develop interpretive arguments, formulate substantial thesis propositions, and, using exemplary modes of academic prose, compose coherent, critical essays. Although this course will focus on reading and writing about literature, students will acquire skills in analytic and interpretive writing with relevance to all of the disciplines in the university curriculum.

Requirements for credit: To receive credit for this course, students must attend class regularly, read critically all of the assignments, participate effectively in classroom discussions, take frequent quizzes, and complete all writing assignments on time. Unexcused absences and habitual tardiness will result in a reduction of the final grade at the instructor’s discretion.

Students will compose three formal essays of four to six pages, write five short “practicum papers of two pages, and sit for three examinations given during the semester. Frequent quizzes will be given on reading assignments. NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES will be given. (See “Grading” on next page).

Written work is due at the beginning of class on the day specified by the instructor. Work submitted late without prior approval will be penalized with a reduction of a letter grade for every class period after the due date.
The university’s policies on academic dishonesty (plagiarism) will be strictly enforced, and students are expected to familiarize themselves with the relevant sections of the Undergraduate Catalogue and The Student Handbook.

Any student with a disability requiring accommodations in this course is encouraged to contact Counseling and Disability Services in Crooker Center. (713) 525 6953. Please take the time to discuss your particular accommodation with me in private.

**Grading:** For the satisfactory achievement of these requirements, letter grades will be awarded and will constitute percentages of the final grade as follows:

- Quizzes/Participation = 10%
- Practicum papers = 20%
- Essay 1 = 10%
- Essay 2 = 10%
- Essay 3 = 10%
- Mythology Exam = 10%
- Mid-term exam = 10%
- Final Exam = 20%

**Texts:**

The Classical Tradition: English 1341 / Spring 2018 / Schedule of Readings and Assignments

(Please note well that all dates below are subject to change)

January


24 W Iliad 1 & 2 discussed. Use of MLA format for all written assignments as found in LBCH. Writing prompt for Practicum on “East and West” given.

29 M Iliad 3 & 4. Practicum 1 “East and West” due.

31 Tu Iliad 5 & 6. Prompt given for Practicum 2 “On Homer’s Artistry”.

February

5 M Iliad 7 & 8.

7 W Iliad 9 & 10.


14 W Iliad 13 & 14.

19 M Iliad 15 & 16 Read Chapter 2 The Office of Assertion.

21 W Iliad 17 & 18.

26 M Iliad 19 & 20 . Read Chapter 3 The Office of Assertion.

28 W Iliad 21 & 22. Mythology Exam
March

5 M  *Iliad* 21 through 24.  **Essay 1 “The Iliad as a Poem of Force”**

7 W  Essay 1 due.  **Mid-term Exam.** Please have copy of Aeschylus’s *Oresteia* for next class.

**SPRING BREAK / March 12 –16**

19 M  **Greek Tragedy and Aeschylus’s Oresteia.** “The Tragic Vision” by c. M. Bowra (handout).

21 W  Begin reading of *The Agamemnon*.

26 M  In-class reading of *Agamemnon*. Receive prompt for **Practicum 3 on Agamemnon and The Libation Bearers**.

28 W  In-class reading of *The Libation Bearers*. Read Chapter 4 of *The Office of Assertion*.

**Easter Holiday / 29 March--1April**

April

2 M  In-class reading of *The Libation Bearers*.

4 W  **Practicum on Agamemnon and the Libation Bearers due.** Begin reading of *The Eumenides*. Read Chapter Five of *The Office of Assertion*.

9 M  In-class reading of *The Eumenides*. Receive prompt for **Essay 2 on The Oresteia**.

11 W  Complete discussion of *The Oresteia*. Writing Workshop for Essay 2.  Read Chapter Six of *The Office of Assertion*.

16 M  **Essay 2 due.** Handout from “Of Gods and Mortals: Modern Poems on Classical Myths”. This will be our text for Lyric poetry. Preparing for **Essay 3 “The Poetic Explication”**.

18 W  **Gods and Mortals: Modern Poems on Classical Myths.** This handout completes our study of classical literature with readings of modern lyric poetry based on classical mythology. **Essay 3** will be written in-class. This essay will be based on the format of a Poetry Explication (see handout).
23 M  Practicing poetry analysis.

25 W  Practicing poetry analysis.

May

30 M  Practicum 5 Group Poetry Presentation.

2 W  Essay 3: In-class writing: poetry explication.

Final Exams

1341-A Final Exam  Wednesday, 9 May  12:00 to 2:30

1341-B Final Exam  Monday, 14 May  3:00 to 5:30