

Brief Course Outline

Course Title:

Backgrounds & Foundations

Course Number and Section:

ENGLISH

2695E 550

Instructor Name(s):

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Instructor Email(s):

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Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course introduces students to some of the more famous texts, myths, and models from the early Judeo-Christian and classical Greek, Roman, Middle Eastern, and Asian literary and cultural traditions. Authors and texts to be studied include selections from Homer's *The Odyssey*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Euripides's *Medea*, Virgil's *The Aeneid*, Dante's *Inferno*, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, *The One Thousand and One Nights*, *The Tale of Genji*, *The Old and New Testament*. In addition, we will also consider select instances of later writers who turn to these foundational texts as inspiration for their own literary, philosophical, or theoretical works including adaptations.

Learning Outcomes:

- Develop an understanding of narrative structures and vocabularies present in the different traditions and genres covered in the course
- Understand and explain intertextual relationships
- Gain an understanding of the oral and textual traditions connected to the various works on the course
- Place individual texts in their socio-historical and geographical contexts
- Communicate ideas effectively through readings, reflections, classroom discussion, blogging, creative composition, and persuasive essays
- Research and engage with scholarly/critical texts
- Write logically and persuasively in fluent, standard English using the appropriate conventions for scholarly-critical writing
- Construct strong thesis statements and structured arguments in persuasive essays which incorporate evidence, from both primary and secondary texts, in support of arguments
- Evaluate the relevance, reliability, and usefulness of research sources, including those obtained through the Internet

- Incorporate evidence, from both primary, secondary, and critical theory texts in essay writing to support arguments that logically and persuasively present complex and debatable arguments
- Integrate outside research materials (not generated by AI) and references to the original text through use of summary, quotation, and paraphrase using correct MLA documentation

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Homer, *The Odyssey*. Translated and Edited by Emily Wilson. Norton Critical Edition.

Euripides, *Medea*. Translated by Sheila Murnaghan. Norton Critical Edition.

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*. Translated and Edited by Charles Martin. Norton Critical Edition.

Dante, *Inferno*. Translated by Michael Palma. Norton Critical Edition.

(The 4 texts above are included in a course pack available in the Western Bookstore)

Genesis. Translated with Commentary by Robert Alter. Penguin.

Virgil, *The Aeneid*. Translated and Edited by Sarah Ruden. Revised Edition. Yale UP.

Additional texts and critical materials will be distributed to students throughout the term via OWL Brightspace, Course Readings, and the library catalogue.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Adaptation Assignment	11/11/2024	15
Midterm	12/04/2024	10
Research Proposal and Annotated Bibliography	02/05/2025	5
Research Essay	03/05/2025	25
In-class writing tasks, including Participation & Discussion	04/07/2025	20
Final Exam	TBD	25

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Saturday, August 3, 2024