

WORLD MASTERPIECES OF THE WESTERN TRADITION

Prof. Uri S. Cohen

Fall Semester

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Office Hours: by appointment

Short description:

The course will introduce the students to the major literary masterpieces of the Western world and a sustained practice of close reading in them. The course will provide encounters with the major classics of the Western tradition from Greece to Rome through the Middle Ages and up to the Renaissance.

Assessment:

For students on the Liberal Arts program:

Mid Term: Take-home exam (15%)

Final requirement: Take-home exam (85%)

International and OSP students:

Mid Term: Take-home exam (15%)

Extra assignment: Short paper (20%)

Final requirement: Take-home exam (65%)

Attendance:

Attendance is mandatory. Students are permitted a maximum of three absences without penalty. Any additional absences will affect the final grade and may result in failure of the course.

Academic conduct:

Plagiarism is taken extremely seriously. Any instance of academic misconduct which includes: submitting someone else's work as your own; failure to accurately cite sources; taking words from another source without using quotation marks; submission of work for which you have previously received credit; working in a group for individual assignments; using unauthorized materials in an exam and sharing your work with other students, will result in failure of the assignment and will likely lead to further disciplinary measures.

Additional requirements:

Students are required to participate actively in class and to read the course materials regularly.

Required Reading: This is an estimated Syllabus; we will finalize it during the semester, allowing the course to take its own unique shape according to the specific dynamics created in class.

Week 1-2: On War: Iliad / Homer

- Books: 1, 3, 6, 10, 18, 22, 24

Week 3-4: On Man: Odyssey / Homer

- Books: 1, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 19, 22, 23, 24

Week 5-6: On the stage: Oresteia

- Oresteia / Aeschylus: Agamemnon, The Libation Bearers, The Eumenides
- Oedipus Rex / Sophocles

Week 7-8: On God: Old and New Testament

- Genesis; Selection
- Book of Judges: Chapters 13 -16 – Story of Samson
- Book of Samuel 1: Chapters 17-18 – David & Goliath, chapters 18-23 – David & Jonathan
- Book of Samuel 2: Chapters 11-24 – Batseba, Absalom, Amnon and Tamar.
- Gospel of Matthew

Week 9: On Rome: Aeneid / Virgil

- Aeneid: books 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12

Week 10: On Christianity: Divine Comedy / Dante

- Divine Comedy: Inferno: Canto 1-5, 9-10, 13, 15, 24-27, 33-34.

Week 11: On Prose: The Decameron / Giovanni Boccaccio

- Intro, Day 1: opening, tales 1-3
- Day 3: opening, tale 1
- Day 4: opening, tale 1, 5
- Day 5: tale 4, 10, final words
- Day 8: tale 7
- Day 10: tale 10, final words
- Ending by Author

Week 12: On (early) Modernity: Hamlet / Shakespeare