

PURPOSE OF ENGLISH 265 (Readings in Literature of the Western World)

The purpose of this course is to read and examine some of the literary works from western culture that have survived the last 2000-3000 years and that have in different ways served to articulate various dimensions of this culture.

This is not to say that western culture is superior or inferior to any other, but simply to acknowledge our citizenship within it. In any examination of the varied cultures on this planet, we must begin at some point. The rationale in this course is that by gaining some insight, however thin, into our lives and culture, we equip ourselves to recognize and appreciate those beyond us. This is especially propitious as we no longer live within the neat configuration of what has traditionally been called "western culture." Culture is global.

The direction of this course will be guided, then, by the Socratic notion that to know ourselves as individuals and as citizens within a narrow community is a first step toward an acknowledgment and at least a cursory understanding of those "others" who live outside our skins as well as outside our notion of "western culture."

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Through a sequence of reading and writing assignments you will learn to strengthen your (1) analytical reading, (2) critical thinking skills, (3) composing process, and (4) expository writing skills.

ATTENDANCE POLICY (see *SHSU Undergraduate Catalogue, 2006-2008*, page 74)

Roll will be checked each class period as required by University policy.

The University allows you to miss one week of a long semester, i.e., two class periods on a TTh schedule. I will give you a week and a day, three class periods, no questions asked and no explanations given. Beginning with the fourth absence, however, I will neither read nor mark your work until you and I have had a conference about this matter. I will not initiate a conference concerning absences. To do so is your choice and your responsibility.

Two points to consider: First, writing papers and taking quizzes with passing scores is only part of what goes on in this course. I expect you to read and write within the context of what occurs during class and to participate in the classroom exercises and discussions. This cannot be done if you do not attend. Second, your failure to attend hurts the class and generates unnecessary work for me. I do not subtract points when you miss class, but your absences, by the same standard, should not penalize your fellow students and me, your instructor.

Suggestion: keep track of your absences.

CONFERENCES

I encourage you to come to me with any course problem you may have. My office hours are listed in the syllabus, but I am here at many other hours. Knock on the door, and if I can see you, I will be glad to do so. I also encourage you to make appointments. We will find a common time to meet regardless of conflicts. Email me, or call my office number (top of page 1) and leave a name, phone number, and calling time. I will return your call, local or long distance.

I also encourage you to come to me if you do not understand any markings on your papers or how to improve your writing on a particular assignment. If you believe I have misjudged a paper, challenge me. You will have a rubric, given out in class, with which to judge my judgment. If you can show me my mistake and it is an important enough one to change the grade, I will do so. If I reread the paper and it is even worse than I thought it was on the first reading, I will not lower the grade. The grade will remain the same or go up so you cannot lose if you challenge me. I am tough, however, so arrive armed with a specific point by point argument. Don't simply show up and ask me to reread the paper and tell you what I think. You already know what I think. Your job is to change my thinking.

RELIGIOUS HOLY DAYS (from the Office of the Provost/VPAA, Fall 2004)

Student Absences on Religious Holy Days Policy Section 51.911 (b) of the Texas Education Code requires that an institution of higher education excuse a student from attending classes or other required activities, including examinations, for the observance of a religious holy day, including travel for that purpose. A student whose absence is excused under this subsection may not be penalized for that absence and shall be allowed to take an examination or complete an assignment from which the student is excused within a reasonable time after the absence. University

policy 861001 provides the procedures to be followed by the student and instructor. A student desiring to absent himself/herself from a scheduled class in order to observe (a) religious holy day(s) shall present to each instructor involved a written statement concerning the religious holy day(s). This request must be made in the first fifteen days of the semester or the first seven days of a summer session in which the absence(s) will occur. The instructor will complete a form notifying the student of a reasonable time frame in which the missed assignments and/or examinations are to be completed.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (from the Office of the Provost/VPAA, Fall 2004)

SHSU adheres to all applicable federal, state, and local laws, regulations, and guidelines with respect to providing reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities. If you have a disability that may affect adversely your work in this class, then I encourage you to register with the SHSU Counseling Center and to talk with me about how I can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. NOTE: no accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center. Please contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, or by calling (936) 294-1720.

GRADING SYSTEM

All grades are based on a 100 point scale: 100-90=A, 89-80=B, etc. Except for one 10 minute quiz (see below), all work must be completed and turned in on time, or you fail the course by default.

Scan-tron answer sheets: You will need a scan-tron 882 form for all 10 minute quizzes, the Mid-term Hour Quiz, and the Final Exam. I expect you to arrive for these quizzes with one in hand. Do not fold or wrinkle the scan-tron forms.

10 minute quizzes: Dates and subject matter for the 10 minute quizzes are in the syllabus. You will take eight 10 minute quizzes this semester, the lowest of which I will drop. Thus, your 10 minute quiz average will be calculated by dividing by seven. Any missed quiz will be scored as a zero. I do not give make-up quizzes. If you miss one, I will drop that zero. If you miss two quizzes, one zero will become part of your average.

Hour quiz: You will take an hour quiz at mid-term. The mid-term hour quiz will be scan-tron. NO MAKE-UP IS SCHEDULED. This exam, however, will be given before drop day so if you miss the exam, you will need to drop the course.

Final Exam: The final exam is scheduled in the syllabus and will be administered at the time scheduled by the University. Giving the exam earlier or at a different time is unfair to those students whose schedules are dependent upon the University's schedule so PLEASE DO NOT ASK FOR SUCH. The final exam will cover the entire semester, from *The Iliad* to *Hamlet*.

Papers #1 & #2: This is a writing enhanced course so 50% of your course grade will come from these two assignments. Due dates are scheduled in the syllabus, and late work will be penalized five (5) points for each day (not class period) late. After the fifth (5th) day a late paper will receive an unread *F*, scored as a zero. Any paper submitted after 6 May will not be accepted. This will be considered a default, resulting in a course grade of *F*.

As stated above, prior to Paper #1 you will receive—with an in-class explanation—a rubric detailing my grading standards and indicating the excellence I expect from you in an expository writing assignment.

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is defined as using someone else's work or language to gain credit for yourself. It is a form of theft, an act of cheating. I expect you to do your own work. Work tainted by cheating will receive an *F*. The rules of documentation we will follow this semester will be discussed in class prior to the first paper assignment.

Your final course grade will be calculated as follows:

10 minute quiz average	}	
Hour Quiz	}	50% = these 3 scores divided by 3
Final Exam	}	
Paper #1	}	
Paper #2	}	50% = these 2 scores divided by 2

SYLLABUS AND TEXTS

Bring this syllabus and the text currently under study to class each period. If you lose the syllabus, ask for another. I have extras. Any changes made in the syllabus later in the semester (this almost always happens for various reasons) will be done in class so you can mark your copy. I expect you to bring the text currently under study so we can examine specific passages. You cannot make these examinations if you do not have a text.

KEEP TRACK OF YOUR LIFE

As the semester progresses, fill these in so you will know where you stand before the Final Exam.

10 Minute Quizzes: record your scores

Iliad I-XII _____ *Iliad XIII-XXIV* _____ *The Odyssey* _____

Agamemnon _____ *The Choephoroi* _____ *The Eumenides* _____

King Oedipus _____ *Hamlet* _____

Mid-term Hour Quiz _____

Paper #1 _____

Paper #2 _____

Using the percentages for course grade calculation given above and these semester scores, you should be able to (1) calculate your average going into the final exam and (2) calculate what you must make on the final exam to raise or lower your final course average.

Dates of Absences