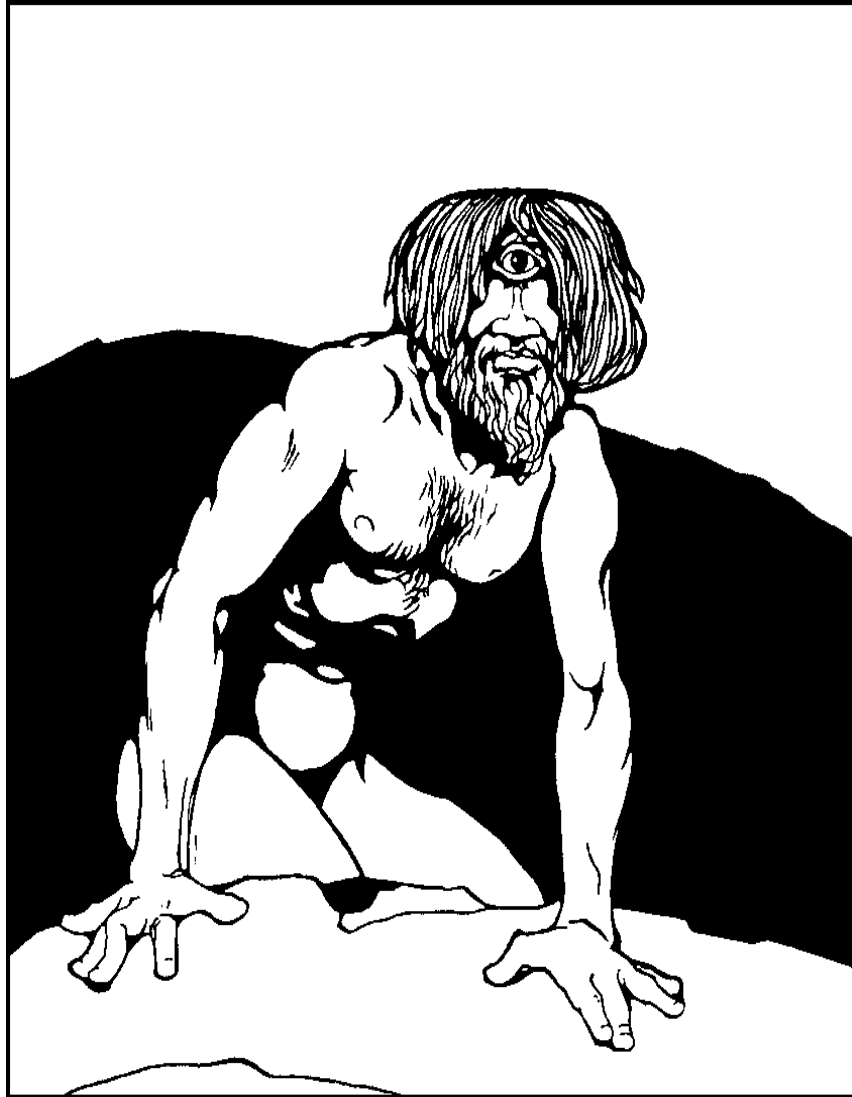
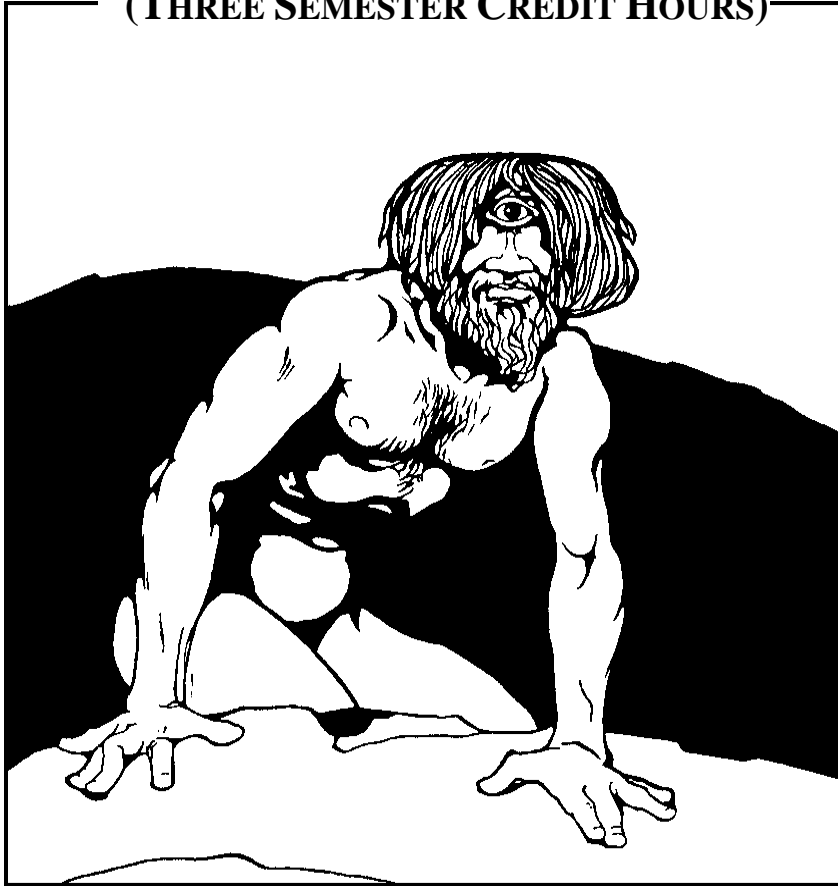


**ENGLISH 2332.06**  
**WORLD LITERATURE I: BEFORE THE**  
**SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**



**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**  
**FALL 2017**

**ENGLISH 2332.06**  
**WORLD LITERATURE I: BEFORE THE**  
**SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**  
**FALL 2017**  
**(THREE SEMESTER CREDIT HOURS)**



**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**  
**CAMPUS OFFICE: EVANS 204**  
**TELEPHONE: 936-294-1412**  
**E-MAIL: ENG\_PWC@SHSU.EDU**

**CLASS DAYS AND TIMES:**  
**MW 3:00 P.M. TO 4:20 P.M.**

**LOCATION: EVANS 318**

**OFFICE HOURS: MWF NOON TO 2:00 P.M.**  
**AND BY APPOINTMENT**



**A REAL BOOK IS NOT ONE THAT WE READ,  
BUT ONE THAT READS *US*.**

**W.H. AUDEN**

**LITERATURE IS NEWS THAT STAYS NEWS.**

**EZRA POUND**



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**ENGLISH 2332.06**  
**WORLD LITERATURE I: BEFORE THE SEVENTEENTH CENTURY**  
**FALL 2017**

**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**

**COURSE DESCRIPTION**

In reading literature from ancient, classical, medieval, and Renaissance authors in this course, you will become familiar with the ideas, beliefs, and creative productions of cultures from antiquity to the seventeenth century. You will recognize not only the differences between these cultures and your own but also the similarities.

Because the course requires a substantial amount of reading, discussion, and writing about literature and culture, you will improve your critical skills: analysis, evaluation, synthesis of materials, and argumentation. You will become familiar with the critical approaches and vocabulary appropriate to the study of literature and will be expected to use these approaches and language in making arguments about the works.

Like any literature class, this course works best as a collaboration between professor and student: I will provide contexts and structure for the class; you will create the class with collaborative discussion about the works and ideas.

In order to establish your credibility as literary critics, you will acquire a number of useful critical terms in this class—the “lingo” that we use in making arguments about literature intelligently and economically.

I will assess your understanding of the works and ideas—and your ability to make cogent critical arguments about them—with writing assignments and examinations featuring essays. You will also present a crossdisciplinary project that requires oral and visual presentations.

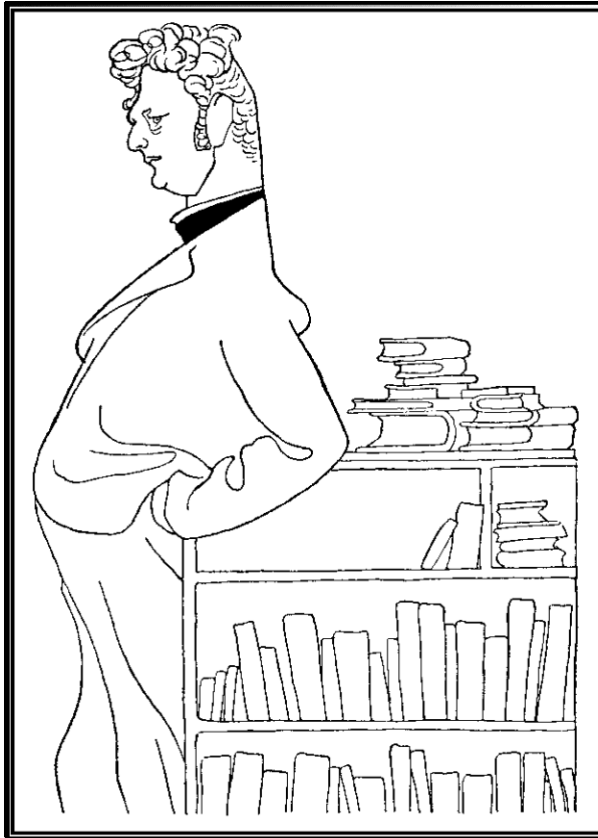
Prerequisites: Successful completion of ENGL 1301 and ENGL 1302 (or approved equivalents)

Course value: Three semester credit hours.

## **COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The course aims

- to help you discover the universal themes and common concerns of literature from antiquity to the Renaissance
- to make you aware of the different philosophical insights and values of various regional, national, and global communities among ancient, classical, medieval, and Renaissance cultures
- to give you a more cosmopolitan outlook, both aesthetically and philosophically, and an awareness of the contributions of ancient, classical, medieval, and Renaissance cultures to our world
- to develop your critical and analytical skills in written and oral discussion and argumentative analysis of literature and cultural contexts
- to develop your facility for using a precise scholarly vocabulary necessary to articulate your insights about culture and literature in a community of readers



## **POLICIES AND REQUIREMENTS**

**DR. PAUL W. CHILD**  
**EVANS 204**

**EXTENSION 4-1412**

**ENG\_PWC@SHSU.EDU**

**OFFICE HOURS: MWF 12:00 P.M. TO 2:00 P.M. AND BY APPOINTMENT**

### **I. CLASS MEETING TIME AND LOCATION**

MW      3:00 p.m. to 4:20 p.m.      Evans 318

### **II. REQUIRED TEXT**

Wilkie and Hurt, eds. *Literature of the Western World*. 5<sup>th</sup> ed. Vol. 1 Prentice Hall. ISBN: 0-13-018666-X (paper).

You must purchase or otherwise procure the text for this class. Get your book right away, before the bookstores return unsold copies to their distributors.

To assure me that you have, in fact, procured the book for this class, I ask that you show it to me on or before Wednesday, September 6, on which day you will have completed the first reading assignment from that text.

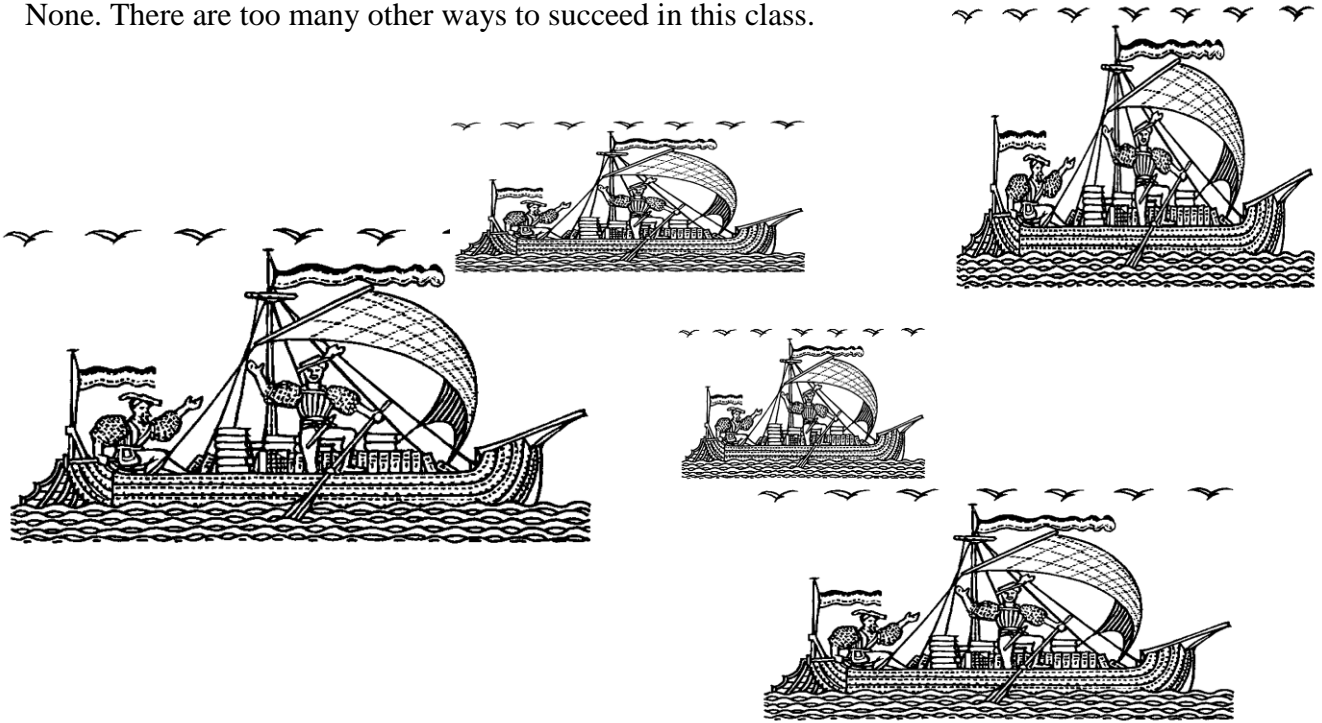
You must bring the book to class every day.

### III. COURSE REQUIREMENTS (WITH APPROXIMATE RELATIVE VALUES) ♣

1. Reading Response Journal: 35% collectively
2. Reading Quizzes: 10% collectively
3. Unit Examination One: 15%
4. Unit Examination Two: 15%
5. Unit Examination Three: 15%
6. Crossdisciplinary Project: 10%

### IV. OPPORTUNITIES FOR EXTRA CREDIT

None. There are too many other ways to succeed in this class.



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\* To receive credit for the course, you must submit/complete all of these major requirements.



## V. ATTENDANCE POLICY (NON-NEGOTIABLE)

Since you have decided to take this class at this time, I presume that you *want* to be here. Accordingly, I expect that you attend class *every* day. Life being what it is, however, you are allowed *four* absences (two weeks of class!). After the fourth absence, your final grade begins dropping one increment for each subsequent absence. So, for example, if you have an *A*, your grade drops to a *B* with the fifth absence; that *B* drops to a *C* with the sixth absence; that *C* drops to a *D* with the seventh absence; and that *D* drops to an *F* with the eighth absence.

Except in the case of a university-excused absence (for which I should receive formal documentation), I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. Please—no doctor's notes, hospital vouchers, death certificates, court summons, or long tales of woe!

An extended illness does not excuse you from this policy; my rationale is that if you are too ill to attend all classes, you should withdraw from your courses and try them again when you can attend without distraction or dis-ease.

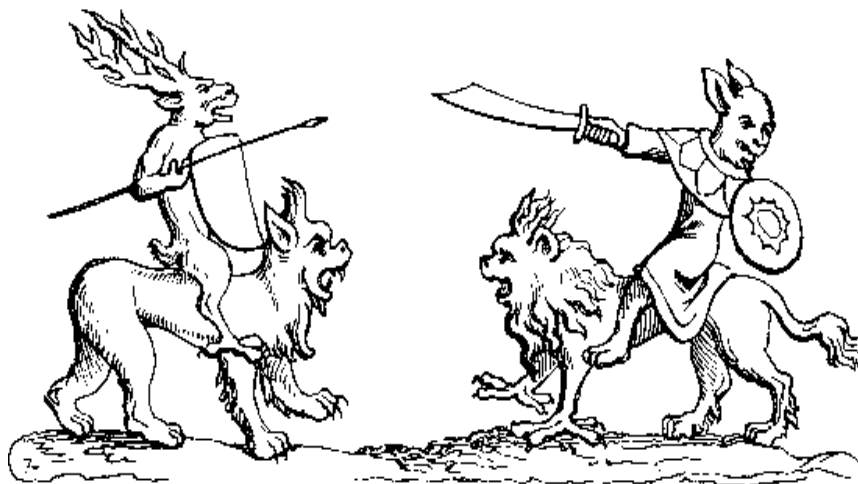
If you have a time-consuming job, demanding pet, "personal problems," or any other extracurricular distractions that will prevent your attending class regularly and submitting all assignments on time, please take another class and try this one again in a later term.

## VI. LATE ARRIVAL, EARLY DEPARTURE

Arriving late is both disruptive and impractical. So for the protection of your fellow students (and myself), I count every two instances of tardiness as one absence. You are tardy if you arrive after I begin making announcements or lecturing.

Do not leave class early unless you provide me with a formal note *before class begins* explaining the reason for leaving. If you stay less than half the class, of course, you are absent for the day.

Class will begin as close to 3:00 p.m. and end as close to 4:20 p.m. as possible on Mondays and Wednesdays. Please do not begin putting away books and gathering materials to leave class until the session has ended.



## **VII. MAKE-UP POLICY**

An absence, even one of those rare ones excused by the University, does not excuse you from taking an examination or from submitting a written assignment on time.

If you miss a reading quiz because of an absence or tardiness, you must make up the quiz before the next class of ours that you attend. I hold office hours on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, from noon to 2:00 p.m. You will need to come in during one of those times before the next class. The responsibility for making up the quiz is yours. If you fail to do so before we begin discussing the materials in class, you will receive a “0” for that quiz. Sound reasonable enough?

You should try always to avoid missing an examination date, of course. In the rare case that you must miss such a day, however, give me substantial notice; I’d rather not hear about your absence after the fact. We will arrange for you to make up the examination before the next class period of attendance.

If you are absent on the day on which a journal assignment is due, you must get the response to me in *physical* form on the due date (except in the most unusual circumstances, I do not accept materials in electronic form). Give it to me sometime before the due date, or send it by way of a trusted friend.

## **VIII. READING QUIZZES**

To assure me that you have made an honest attempt to read the assigned materials—in this *literature* class—I will give you a quiz for every substantial reading assignment.

You will find a sample reading quiz on pages 20-21 below.

## **IX. EXAMINATIONS**

I will assess your grasp of readings, your engagement in discussions, and your diligence in taking class notes with three unit examinations. None of these will be comprehensive, although you *will* be responsible for all literary terms that you progressively acquire throughout the semester.

I will hand out a review sheet for each of the examinations.

For the structure of the examinations and sample questions, see pages 22-24 below.

## **X. GRADING**

We will follow a standard ten-point grading scale in the class:

A	90-100
B	80-89
C	70-79
D	60-69
F	0-59

At about the midterm, I will make up a spread sheet with your averages so that you know where you stand in the class to that point. While I would never encourage anyone to drop a class, except in a case in which excessive absences make your passing impossible, the spread sheet average will help you make a better-informed decision about your possibilities for success in the course.

I will post grades confidentially on line no later than noon on Monday, December 11, the deadline set by the Office of the Registrar.

## **XI. ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

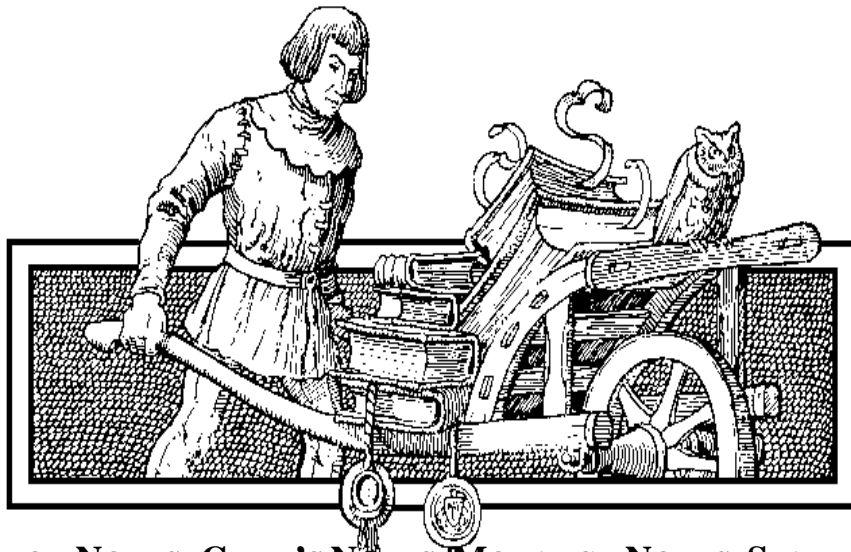
For definitions, I refer you first to the Sam Houston State University policy statement about academic dishonesty in Paragraph 5.3 of the “Code of Student Conduct and Discipline” in the official *Student Guidelines*. Please read through the short description very carefully.

*Plagiarism* (a word that comes from the Latin term for plundering) is literary theft, the intentional or sometimes merely careless stealing of someone else’s words or ideas and the passing them off as one’s own without giving due credit to the original author. Plagiarism not only defeats the very purpose of the educational process—to make an independent thinker and writer of you—but also constitutes academic fraud.

Unintentional plagiarism is plagiarism nonetheless.

Written assignments will not require research. To avoid the temptation to plagiarize, do not ever consult outside sources for the assignments in this class. Any assignment convicted of plagiarism will fail; in serious and clearly deliberate cases, the student will fail the course and face the appropriate dean for further disciplinary action. *Don’t do it.*

Any student convicted of cheating on an examination will fail the exam and will be subject to university disciplinary action: *Don’t do it.*



## **XII. NOTE ON NOTES: CLIFF'S NOTES, MONARCH NOTES, SPARKNOTES, AND OTHER SUCH DIGEST GUIDES TO LITERATURE**

Usually such resources provide useful plot and character summaries, cultural backgrounds, and some critical commentary. You may find them helpful for establishing contexts and understanding the texts, which are not always easy..

Do not, however, read such digest guides as *substitutes* for the primary works themselves; a work of literature is not a paraphrase or summary. In order to pass any quiz or examination, you will have to read the original works.

Of course, to avoid plagiarism, you should never draw language or ideas from these guides in writing assignments. (I own copies of all these and can almost always spot plagiarism.)

And please—as a matter of respect to your professor, your fellow students, and the venerable Homer, Chaucer, Cervantes, Shakespeare, et alia—do not ever bring such a guide into the classroom. Agreed?

## **XIII. CLASSROOM COMPORIMENT**

Please observe the customary classroom courtesies. I will merely paraphrase the University's policy statement here: Students will avoid any classroom conduct that intentionally or unintentionally disrupts the learning process and thus impedes the missions of the University.

The use of cell phones and laptops is forbidden in this classroom. Turn your cell phone *off* (not merely to “vibrate”). Use a notebook and a pen to take notes.

You should not eat in class; use tobacco products; make derogatory remarks about fellow students or the class (your professor has a remarkably good sense for hearing whispers); read newspapers or do work for other classes; sleep (ouch); talk with fellow students (or to yourself!) at inappropriate times; wear inappropriate clothing; or engage in any other form of distraction.

If you engage in disruptive or otherwise inappropriate behavior in the classroom, I will ask that you leave the room. Continued behavior of this sort will result in dismissal from the class and referral to the Dean of Students for disciplinary action.

## **XIV. ADDENDA**

**Students with Disabilities:** Sam Houston State University responsibly observes the Americans with Disabilities Act. If you have a disability that may adversely affect your work in this class, please register with the SHSU Counseling Center and talk with your professor about how he can best help you. All disclosures of disabilities will be kept strictly confidential. No accommodation can be made until you register with the Counseling Center, however. Contact the Chair of the Committee for Continuing Assistance for Disabled Students and Director of the Counseling Center, Lee Drain Annex, by calling (936) 294-1720.

**Observance of Religious Holy Days:** 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 or 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) early in the term.

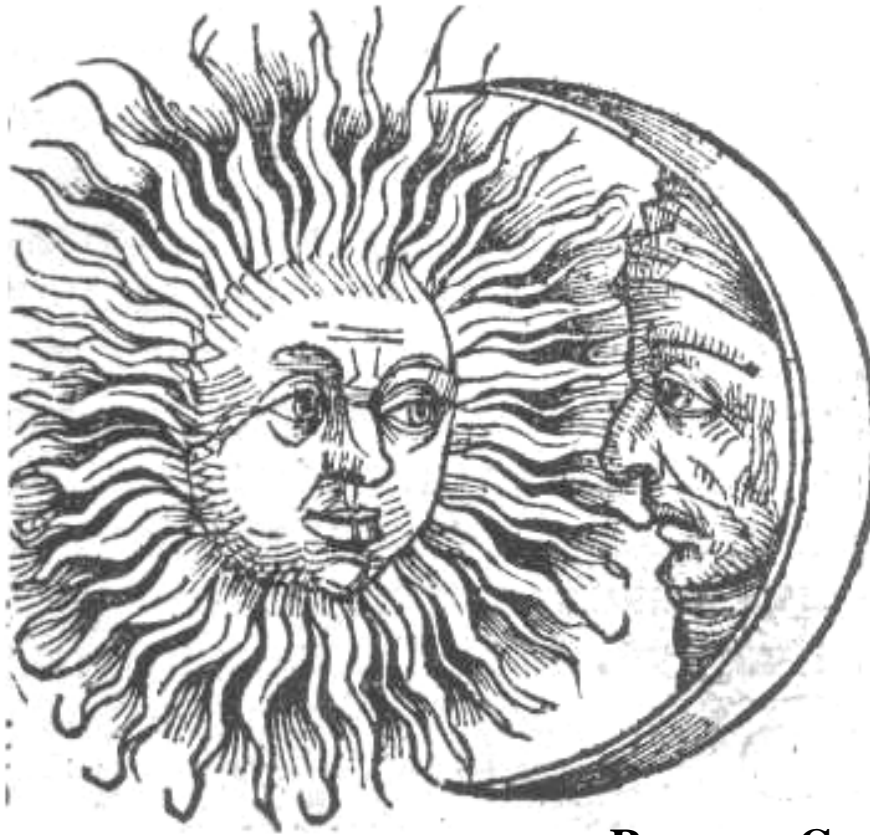
**Visitors in the Classroom:** I always welcome visitors in the classroom—a chance for *you* to show off. But the visitors must not disrupt the classroom with their attendance.

**Instructor Evaluation:** The University asks that you complete a course/ instructor evaluation form toward the end of the term. So if you bide your time patiently, you will have the opportunity to turn the tables on your professor by evaluating *him*.

**E-Mail Policy:** I am always happy to answer questions or address concerns by e-mail (eng\_pwc@shsu.edu). But in e-mailing, please address me (“Dear Professor Child”), and identify yourself clearly. (Thank you.)

**Concealed Handgun Carry Policy:** As of August 1, 2016, in accordance with Texas Government Code Section 411.2031, a licensed, trained individual twenty-one years of age or older is permitted to carry a concealed handgun into this classroom; the individual is not required to disclose that he or she is carrying the concealed handgun. Instructor’s additional policy: Students who carry concealed weapons into this classroom are not *allowed* to disclose—that is, to show or to announce to other students in the classroom that they are carrying a concealed handgun—except in the event of an active shooting situation. Disclosure for any other reason constitutes “open carry,” which is forbidden on campuses of public universities in the State of Texas.

**And Finally:** I reserve the right to make minor changes in the syllabus.



## REVISED CLASS CALENDAR<sup>1</sup>

Unless indicated otherwise, we meet for class on all of the days listed below, including those for which there is no assigned reading or writing. Complete the writing assignment and reading assignment in Wilkie and Hurt (“WH”) for the indicated date. Although not assigned officially, the introductions to the works are helpful for establishing historical contexts and approaches to reading.

The designation “RRJ” refers to writing assignment pages in the reading response journal booklet. Please note that to account for the disruption of the storm, we are dropping journal entry 9 from the original calendar; you will also need to change dates in the reading response journal booklet to correspond with dates on this revised calendar.

The first couple of class days are devoted to introductions and to discussing various approaches to reading. Because there are no reading assignments for these days, look at the calendar and read ahead.

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<sup>1</sup> Rev. Sept. 6, 2017. This revised calendar replaces pages 13-18 of the original course booklet.

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 4**  
No Class: Labor Day Recess

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 6**  
Introduction: Approaches to Reading

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 11**  
Reading Assignment: Overview of the Reading Response Journal  
(RRJ 1-28)

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 13**  
Deadline for Procuring Class Text  
Reading Assignment: *Odyssey* 1-6 (WH 273-350)

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18**  
Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #1 (RRJ 30)

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 20**  
Reading Assignment: *Odyssey* 7-12 (WH 350-433)



**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**

Reading Assignment: *Odyssey* 13-16 (WH 433-489)

**WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

Reading Assignment: *Odyssey* 17-20 (WH 489-546)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #2 (RRJ 31)

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 2**

Reading Assignment: *Odyssey* 21-24 (WH 546-94)

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 4**

Reading Assignment: Aesop's Fables (WH 597-611)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #3 (RRJ 32)

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 9**

Unit Examination One

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 11**

Reading Assignment: Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* (WH 743-91)

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 16**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #4 (RRJ 33)

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 18**

Reading Assignment: Sophocles, *Antigone* (WH 791-839)

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 23**

Reading Assignment: Euripides, *Medea* (WH 844-77)

Reading Assignment: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata* (WH 914-66)

**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 25**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #5 (RRJ 34)

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 30**

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Parts 1 and 2 (WH 1613-40)

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 1**

Reading Assignment: *Sir Gawain and the Green Knight* Parts 3 and 4 (WH 1640-70)

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 6**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #6 (RRJ 35)

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 8**

Reading Assignment: Cervantes, from *Don Quixote* (WH 1990-2030)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #7 (RRJ 36-37)



**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 13**

Unit Examination Two

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 15**

Reading Assignment: Shakespeare, Sonnet 18: “Shall I compare thee to a summer’s day?” (WH 2246), Sonnet 73: “That time of year thou mayst in me behold” (WH 2247)

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 20**

Reading Assignment: Donne, “A Valediction: Forbidding Mourning” (WH 2255-56), Holy Sonnet 14: “Batter my heart, three-person’d God” (WH 2258-59)

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal Entry #8 (RRJ 38)

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 22**

No Class: Thanksgiving Recess

**MONDAY, NOVEMBER 27**

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 29**

Final Class Day

Crossdisciplinary Project Presentations

**MONDAY, DECEMBER 4: 5:00 P.M. DEADLINE**

Writing Assignment: Reading Response Journal 10 (RRJ 40)

Writing Assignment: Submit Bound Journal (RRJ 41)

**WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 6: 5:00 P.M. TO 7:00 P.M.**

Unit Examination Three



## THE CROSSDISCIPLINARY PROJECT

In taking a crossdisciplinary approach to a subject, we try to understand it better or see it in a new way by applying methods from one academic discipline to another. For example, in diagnosing a patient's illness, a doctor might not simply rely upon her scientific methods but also apply the methods of a literary critic by listening to the kind of language that the patient uses in reporting his symptoms and looking for a plot in the patient's narrative. Or an epidemiologist might consider political and economic issues in trying to understand and control the outbreak of a global pandemic.

Your mission in this crossdisciplinary project is to interpret a work of literature in a new way by applying the methods and approaches of another discipline. How, for example, can our interests in the "hard sciences," mathematics, performing and visual arts, psychology, history, and so forth—and the *methods* we employ in these other disciplines—lead to fresh *interpretations* of the literature?

Here are some possibilities, taken from past student presentations:

Research dramatic costumery in Sophocles' or Shakespeare's day; make a costume and explain its functions to the class.

Choreograph or set a poem to music; perform it for the class.

Give a visual presentation of some work of literature—a drawing, painting, tapestry, or film, for example.

Interpret a work or character according to some modern theory of psychology or sociology.

Explain the scientific background of a piece of literature.

Conduct a statistical computer analysis of the style of a poem or passage of prose.

Translate a work of literature originally written in English into another language.

Prepare a lesson plan for teaching a work of literature to elementary or secondary students.

Create a home page or a social media page for an author or a work of literature.

I have set aside several days at the end of the semester for presenting your various projects to the class. The presentation may take any number of forms: a simple report of your findings, a dramatic or musical presentation, a scientific experiment (?). The formal presentation will last ten minutes (no fewer, no more). During the presentation, you must explain clearly *how* the project interprets the literature. Consider, especially, the challenges that you confronted in interpreting the work using the new method.

The project requires that you present your project orally and that you bring in visual materials that make your information and conclusions and findings concrete.

Rehearse your presentation thoroughly, and dress appropriately for standing in front of an audience.

I will evaluate the project (10% of your final grade) according to the following criteria: originality, depth and understanding of interpretative process, labor involved in preparation, and presentation.

The best project by popular acclaim wins a prize. See Reading Response Journal assignment #10 in the RRJ booklet.

Rules:

1. Work with literature from the class anthology, and make sure that the project relates specifically to the literature.
2. Discuss the project with me before beginning work on it.
3. Be creative.
4. Be impressive.
5. Have fun.



## SAMPLE READING QUIZ

The following fifteen-point reading quiz, on Sophocles' plays *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*, appears exactly as students in a previous term received it:

English 2332, Dr. Child  
Reading Quiz, *Oedipus the King* and *Antigone*

Name:

Take no more than ten minutes in completing the following reading quiz:

I. Using the bank of personages below, match the characters with their descriptions. Some characters may be used more than once; some may not be used at all. (1 point each)

A. Oedipus	E. Teiresias	I. Laius
B. Jocasta	F. Ismene	J. Haemon
C. Apollo	G. Antigone	K. Polynices
D. Creon	H. Eurydice	L. Zeus

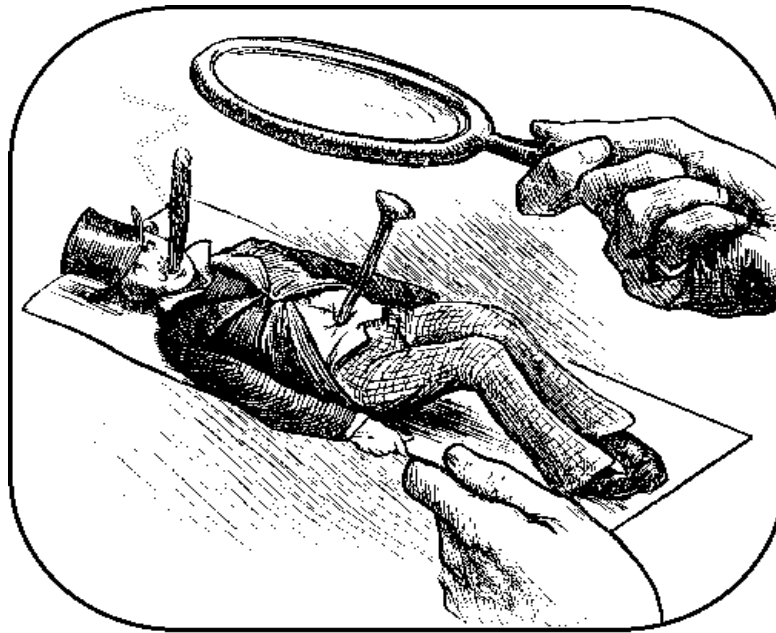
1. \_\_\_\_ As King of Thebes, he takes upon himself the responsibility of finding out the criminal who is responsible for the plague in the city.
2. \_\_\_\_ The fiancé of Antigone, he commits suicide after finding her dead in the cave.
3. \_\_\_\_ The queen of Thebes
4. \_\_\_\_ The blind prophet who accuses Oedipus of regicide (murder of a king)
5. \_\_\_\_ The older daughter of Oedipus, she defies Creon's orders and confronts him boldly.
6. \_\_\_\_ This man, whose name means "regent" (one who governs in place of another), becomes ruler of Thebes after Oedipus has blinded himself.
7. \_\_\_\_ The younger daughter of Oedipus, who cautions her sister to compromise her principles for the sake of safety
8. \_\_\_\_ The god at whose shrine Oedipus hears a terrifying prophecy about his future sins.
9. \_\_\_\_ The former king of Thebes who is murdered by his own son.

**II. Answer each of the following critical questions in a short paragraph. Give a moment's thought before responding to each. (3 points each)**

**There are no "right" answers here, only *more* or *less* convincing arguments: I want to see how well you know the texts that you read and how well you are able to draw conclusions about what you have read. Obviously the best arguments will demonstrate waterproof reasoning, precise use of language, clear and purposeful organization, specific illustrations from the text, and correct grammar and sentence constructions.**

1. Dramatic irony occurs when a character says or thinks one thing, while the audience and author know the truth; there is a discrepancy, then, between, the character's mistaken belief and the truth. Give two examples of dramatic irony in *Oedipus the King*.

2. According to Greek custom, as you know, a body must be properly buried (or at least memorialized) if the dead individual is to find passage into the land of the dead. Shortly after *Antigone* opens, we hear that the body of the traitorous brother has been buried by some mysterious means. So the job has been done, even if the soldiers brush the dust off the body. Why, then, does Antigone go back and bury the body *again*, if doing so is unnecessary?



EXAMINATION FORMAT

Each of the unit examinations comprises three parts: a multiple choice section; a section that asks that you identify and make comment upon quotations from the works under examination; and an analogies section, in which you make an argument about similarities between characters or episodes in the works (sometimes making connections between separate works).

Examples of the three sections in a typical examination follow (the number of questions in each section may be different, depending upon the amount of time available to you):

### PART 1: MULTIPLE CHOICE

Instructions: Choose the *best* answer for each of the following. If you happen to find a question that you think has more than a single answer, make a brief argument in the margin about why you selected the answer that you did. (In other words, please make your argument now, rather than after the fact.)

1. \_\_\_\_ Which of the following does not appear in the *Odyssey*?
  - a) a coming-of-age narrative
  - b) a *deus ex machina* ending
  - c) an *ab ovo* beginning
  - d) dramatic irony
  - e) an *in medias res* beginning

An *ab ovo* beginning to a narrative, you will find, occurs when the narrator tells the story from the very beginning (*ab ovo* means literally “from the egg”). Epic poems like the *Odyssey* invariably begin *in medias res* (that is, “in the middle of things”) so that the reader is pulled immediately into the narrative situation.

In this case, then, the correct answer is “C” because it does not fit with the others.

## PART 2: IDENTIFICATION OF PASSAGES

Instructions: Demonstrate your familiarity with the works by choosing two of the following passages for response. Begin by identifying the author and work from which the passage comes. (Because some characters appear or are mentioned in more than one work, do not presume that I know which author and work you are thinking of.) Then establish a context for the passage by telling who the characters are and what the situation or episode is. Finally—and most importantly—make a brief argument about the importance of the passage to the work as a whole. As appropriate, indicate any important literary devices at work in the lines and make an argument about how they create or reinforce meaning. If you write on more than three, I will evaluate only the first three that I find.

### PASSAGE:

So you are determined, son of Laertes, favourite of Zeus, ingenious Odysseus, to leave at once for home and your beloved Ithaca? Even so I wish you happiness. Yet had you any inkling of the full measure of misery you are bound to endure before you reach your native land, you would stay and share this home with me, and take on immortality, however much you long to see that wife of yours, who is never out of your thoughts.

### RESPONSE:

The passage comes from Book 5 of the *Odyssey*, attributed to Homer. In this scene, the goddess Calypso questions Odysseus' resolve to return to his homeland in Ithaca. After Hermes' visit to her, she has reluctantly allowed him to leave her after detaining him for about seven years. She asks her why he would wish to return to a world of adversity and mortality, declining even the great gift of immortality that she has offered.

Odysseus' desire to return to the world of heroic struggle and hardship confirms his essential humanity: Although the goddess offers him the opportunity for a life of ease and immortality, he would no longer be either heroic or human if he were to accept. His decision to leave Calypso reinforces his identity, which is embedded in his very name: "at odds with." If he were to accept the gift of immortality, he would no longer suffer or cause trouble. But he would be denying his identity also. Here the names of both Calypso and Odysseus become important thematically: Calypso's name comes from the Greek for "to engulf." By conferring immortality upon the man at odds with the world, she would effectively engulf his humanity and his heroic identity.

This response not only demonstrates the student's familiarity with the work itself but also demonstrates that she or he understands the significance of the passage to the whole work. The response is admirable for its economy and its grasp of the larger contexts.

### **PART 3: ANALOGIES**

Instructions: Choose five of the following pairs and, using complete sentences, succinctly describe what each pair has in common thematically. Some personages will appear as characters in the specified work while others are mentioned in the same work. Make sure that you treat the character only as he or she appears or is mentioned in the specified work. If you choose more than five, I will evaluate only the first five that I find.

**PAIR:**

From the *Odyssey*: (a) Calypso and (b) Circe

**RESPONSE:**

Both are seductive supernatural females in the *Odyssey* who seek to detain Odysseus through their sexual charms and prevent him from making his way home. By threatening to keep Odysseus from fulfilling his heroic mission, both imperil his very identity. Despite their apparent charms, then, both are very dangerous to the protagonist.





## THE GREEK AND ROMAN GODS AND GODDESSES

Mythology (a word that comes from the Greek *mythos*, or story) is an important context for our reading of an ancient work like the *Odyssey* or *Aeneid*. Comprehensively, mythology includes stories about human and divine characters.

The Greeks and Romans were polytheistic, their gods and goddesses representing a broad range of functions. They all have their own idiosyncrasies, self-interests, petty squabbles and jealousies, and love intrigues. In other words, they are anthropomorphic (seen in the image of man). As a commentator once observed, the Greek and Roman divinities are basically oversized and immortal humans.

The Olympian gods, so-called because they were thought to live on Mt. Olympus, in the far north of Greece, are the chief actors in the literature of ancient Greece and, more narrowly, classical Greece, the age beginning about 500 BC. (The Romans adapted many of these divinities to their own interests and purposes.) Chief among the Olympians was Zeus, who ruled the heavens. His brothers Poseidon (god of the sea and earth) and Hades (god of the afterworld) ruled the other realms of creation.

The table below may help to keep some of the important divinities straight as you read through the *Odyssey* and sections from the Roman *Aeneid* (I've listed only those most important or those named specifically in the works):

<b>GREEK DIVINITY</b>	<b>ROMAN DIVINITY</b>	<b>FUNCTION OR INTEREST</b>
Zeus	Jupiter or Jove	King of the Olympian gods, ruler of the heavens; variously called the “son of Chronos” and “lord of the thunder”
Poseidon	Neptune	God of the Oceans; called the earth-shaker”
Hades	Pluto or Dis Pater	God of the underworld, lord of the dead
Hera	Juno	Wife of Zeus, queen mother of the gods
Athena or Pallas Athena	Minerva or Pallas	Goddess of wisdom and strategy; fittingly, Odysseus, the great military strategist, is her pet.
Aphrodite	Venus	Goddess of beauty and love
Hephaestus	Vulcan	God of the forge; the artisan god who makes beautiful armor for human heroes
Hermes	Mercury	The messenger god
Apollo or Phoebus	Apollo	Considered the most Greek of all gods because of his well-roundedness, he is god of truth, reason, light, archery, purification, both disease and healing, and music.
Ares	Mars	God of war
Persephone	Proserpine	Bride of Hades

## GUIDELINES FOR RECOMMENDATION LETTERS

I am always happy to write recommendation letters for qualified students who are applying for employment, scholarships and grants, or further schooling. A few guidelines, however:

1. I cannot fairly write a recommendation for you without proper acquaintance. In order for me to write a letter, you must have completed a course with me and earned a grade of at least a *B* or have been acquainted with me in some other capacity at the University for at least a full semester.
2. Please make the request formally, letting me know very clearly what you are applying for (a particular scholarship or a particular field of study at a particular institution). Provide the names and addresses of the contact(s) to whom I should send the letter; for online recommendations, be sure to forward a link to the recommendation service.
3. You must give me at least a couple of weeks and preferably more time to complete the letter. Often I am working under pressures of class or professional deadlines, so it is not possible for me to get letters out at the last minute. Plan your applications well in advance.
4. I can write a very good letter based on your performance in my class or my observation of you in some other capacity. But the more that I know about your other accomplishments and interests, the better the letter. Please send me a current curriculum vitae (note the spelling of that document) or, at least, a list of such accomplishments and interests, especially those that suit you well for the job, scholarship, or educational program for which you are applying.
5. If the institution or organization to which you are applying requires a cover sheet, please get that to me in due time. As a matter of form, sign the waiver that insures confidentiality. If I agree to write you a letter, it will be a good one, and I will e-mail you a copy of the letter. So you need not worry about my sabotaging your application with a damaging or less-than-enthusiastic recommendation. However, if you do not sign the confidentiality waiver, those on the receiving end might think that your referees have been less than honest.
6. If the institution requires a “hard copy” of the recommendation, please provide a pre-addressed envelope with postage.