

IDH2930 (29573) SECTION 2326: THE ODYSSEY

University of Florida
Honors Program
(Un)Common Read
Spring 2023

Instructor: Professor Michael D. Breidenbach, Ph.D.
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Telephone: Email preferred
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Website: www.michaelbreidenbach.com
Office Hours: Online via Zoom, Mondays, 9 am–12 pm, or by appointment

Class Schedule: Fridays, Period 4 (10:40–11:30 am)
Online Zoom Seminars: https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/472114/external_tools/166364

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Homer's *Odyssey* is one of the most famous epics in world literature. This course will read the epic through three lenses. First, it will illuminate the historical context of *The Odyssey*: its contested authorship, the rhapsodic tradition, and the geography, language, and mythology of ancient Greece. Second, the course will offer an opportunity for close readings of the text, focusing on several of the main themes in the work, including the hero's journey, moral maturation, divine intervention, hospitality to strangers, and the interplay between justice and mercy. Third, the course will encourage students to consider *The Odyssey*'s reception history and the imaginative parallels between *The Odyssey* and our contemporary age, including film, and perhaps one's own life.

Prerequisites: None

Credit Hours: 1

Canvas Page: <https://ufl.instructure.com/courses/472114/>

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Understand the historical context and literary structure Homer's epic
2. Identify major themes in *The Odyssey* that have influenced later epics
3. Demonstrate cultural literacy of Western literature and how it continues to shape identities and thought today

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATIONS

- Discussion Leader: 20%
- Artifact Assignment: 20%
- Participation: 20%
- Final Paper: 40%

Students will be assigned a final grade based on the results of:

Reading

The course readings will be one book. Critical analysis of this book is essential for the course. You are expected to read the readings for the class assigned and bring the book with you to the seminar discussion.

Discussion Leader

You will be responsible to begin a class discussion on the readings for one class during the semester. As a discussion leader, you will be responsible for formulating three to five questions concerning the reading for that class and posting them to the Canvas Discussion page by 12 pm the day before the class (that is, Thursday at noon). You will also lead an informal discussion of about 10 minutes in the beginning of class in which you summarize *and analyze* the reading for that class. If you use other sources beyond the assigned reading for your discussion, you don't need to cite additional sources during the discussion or via email.

Artifact Assignment

On Canvas, you will publicly post a 500-to 1,000-word analysis of one artifact relating to *The Odyssey*.

Requirements:

- 500 to 1,000 words
- The professor will offer a list of artifacts to choose from, and you are welcome to research your own artifact to analyze with the professor's prior approval. The artifacts will include vocal and musical representations of the text of *The Odyssey*; ancient pottery; and modern adaptations in film, opera, and music.

Grading Rubric:

- A rubric for this assignment will be included with the artifact suggestions

Format:

- In your post, please write the title of analysis and the name of artifact; post the image of the artifact or a link to the artifact; and write your analysis
- Use footnotes to cite sources (rather than endnotes or in-text parenthetical citations) using the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- No bibliography is necessary

Submission:

- You are strongly encouraged to take your analysis to the Writing Studio before submitting it
- Submit your post on the Canvas Discussion page

Late Submissions:

- All late assignments will be penalized by 5% per day
- Posts will not be accepted if they are more than 5 days late, or if it is past the final grade submission deadline, whichever comes first
- Extensions will not normally be given, and they must be requested 24 hours before the due date
- No extensions will be given after the post is due

Plagiarism:

- To prevent plagiarism and cheating, avoid working on the essays with fellow classmates at all stages of the brainstorming, writing, and editing process, and please cite all the sources that you quote and paraphrase
- All posts may be electronically scanned for plagiarism
- Plagiarism, in whole or in part, is unacceptable and will be severely punished

Participation

Participation in class discussion is crucial for the success of the course, your learning, and your participation grade. Students should be ready to ask and to answer questions, discuss the readings, and engage with their professors and fellow students. The following may be considered a guide of what each participation grade represents:

- A student who receives an **A** for participation typically comes to every class with questions about the readings in mind. An **A** discussant engages others about ideas, respects the opinions of others, and consistently elevates the level of discussion.
- A student who receives a **B** for participation typically does not always come to class with questions about the readings in mind. A **B** discussant waits passively for others to raise interesting issues. Some discussants in this category, while courteous and articulate, do not adequately listen to other participants or relate their comments to the direction of the conversation.
- A student who receives a **C** for discussion in seminars attends regularly but typically is an infrequent or unwilling participant in discussion.
- A student who fails to attend seminars regularly and adequately prepared for discussion risks the grade of **D** or **F**.

(from the Department of History, Princeton University)

Final Paper

The final paper will assess your ability to make and support an interpretative argument using relevant materials.

Requirements:

- 1 final paper of 5 to 6 full pages in length

- Professor will suggest topics for the final paper, but you are also welcome to propose your own topic, to be approved by the professor

Grading Rubric:

- Essay rubric will be included with the final paper topics

Format:

- 12-point Times New Roman font
- The heading should contain your name, the class title, the professor's name, and the date. The heading should be at the top left of the first page and be single spaced.
- Double spaced with no extra space between paragraphs
- One-inch margins
- Page numbers at the bottom
- Use footnotes to cite sources (rather than endnotes or in-text parenthetical citations) using the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*
- No bibliography is necessary

Submission:

- You are strongly encouraged to take your paper to the Writing Studio before submitting it
- The paper's format must be a Word document or a PDF
- Submit paper on Canvas

Late Submissions:

- All late assignments will be penalized by 5% per day
- Papers will not be accepted if they are more than 5 days late, or if it is past the final grade submission deadline, whichever comes first
- Extensions will not normally be given, and they must be requested 24 hours before the due date
- No extensions will be given after the paper is due

Plagiarism:

- To prevent plagiarism and cheating, avoid working on the essays with fellow classmates at all stages of the brainstorming, writing, and editing process, and please cite all the sources that you quote and paraphrase
- All papers are electronically scanned for plagiarism
- Plagiarism, in whole or in part, is unacceptable and will be severely punished

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. Robert Fagles (New York: Penguin, 1999)
ISBN: 9780140268867

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter Grade	Grade Percentage	Grade Point
A	93-100	4.0
A-	90-92	3.67
B+	87-89	3.33
B	83-86	3.00
B-	80-82	2.67
C+	77-79	2.33
C	73-76	2.00
C-	70-72	1.67
D+	67-69	1.33
D	63-66	1.00
D-	60-62	0.67
E	0-59	0

For UF grading policies, see <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>.

OFFICE HOURS

I am your advocate to achieve your academic, career, and personal goals. You are welcome to get in touch with me in two ways:

- You are very welcome to meet with me during office hours on Mondays, 9 am–12 pm, or by appointment. Office hours are strongly encouraged if you have questions or problems with the course, as well as if you are looking for advice concerning your academic and career goals. The most effective way to meet is to email me your questions, thoughts, or reasons for meeting before you come to office hours, but this is not necessary. If you have another class during my regular office hours, please email me to set up an alternative time to meet.
- You may also email me with questions you have at any time, and I will respond to emails as soon as possible. Please remember that email is a professional form of communication in which standards for grammar and formality should be observed.

ATTENDANCE AND MISSING ASSIGNMENTS

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Students are required to attend each class meeting, discuss materials when required, and complete assignments in a timely fashion. It is the responsibility of the student to inform the instructor of any absences and to obtain notes from the classes missed. **More than 2 unexcused absences** will result 10% off your final participation grade, and each additional absence will result in the loss of an additional 10% off your final participation grade.

TECHNOLOGY

Please check your email at least daily to ensure you receive updates on the course and any correspondence. Also check Canvas, the online platform for the course, for updates and to check your grade and attendance records.

The use of cell phones, laptops, or tablets—other than the use of the device required to participate in the online sessions—is not permitted and should be turned off unless otherwise noted. The misuse of cell phones, laptops, or tablets during class, except for emergency purposes or by prior approval, will forfeit your participation grade.

For technical questions, including the use of Canvas, visit the Computing Help Desk website (<https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>) or call 352-392-4357.

ACADEMIC HONOR CODE

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: ‘On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.’” Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code specify behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>. Your written assignments will be submitted through the Turnitin, a plagiarism detection service. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the professor.

ACCOMMODATIONS

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the Disability Resource Center here: <https://disability.ufl.edu/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs as early as possible in the semester.

CONFIDENTIALITY AND IN-CLASS RECORDING

Professors cannot accept assignments as e-mail attachments or discuss grades over email since student records are confidential. UF views each student, not their parent(s) or guardian(s), as the primary contact for all communication. For more information, see <https://registrar.ufl.edu/ferpa/>.

Students are allowed to record video or audio of class lectures. However, the purposes for which these recordings may be used are strictly controlled. The only allowable purposes are (1) for personal educational use, (2) in connection with a complaint to the university, or (3) as evidence in, or in preparation for, a criminal or civil proceeding. All other purposes are prohibited. Specifically, students may not publish recorded lectures without the written consent of the instructor.

A “class lecture” is an educational presentation intended to inform or teach enrolled students about a particular subject, including any instructor-led discussions that form part of the presentation, and delivered by any instructor hired or appointed by the University, or by a guest instructor, as part of a University of Florida course. A class lecture does not include lab sessions, student presentations, clinical presentations such as patient history, academic exercises involving solely student participation, assessments (quizzes, tests, exams), field trips, private conversations between students in the class or between a student and the faculty or guest lecturer during a class session.

Publication without permission of the instructor is prohibited. To “publish” means to share, transmit, circulate, distribute, or provide access to a recording, regardless of format or medium, to another person (or persons), including but not limited to another student within the same class section. Additionally, a recording, or transcript of a recording, is considered published if it is posted on or uploaded to, in whole or in part, any media platform, including but not limited to social media, book, magazine, newspaper, leaflet, or third party note/tutoring services. A student who publishes a recording without written consent may be subject to a civil cause of action instituted by a person injured by the publication and/or discipline under UF Regulation 4.040 Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code.

ONLINE COURSE EVALUATION

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

ACADEMIC RESOURCES

UF Computing Help Desk: IT and e-learning technical support. <https://helpdesk.ufl.edu/>, 352-392-4357, helpdesk@ufl.edu.

Career Connections Center: Career assistance and counseling services. <https://career.ufl.edu/>, Reitz Union Suite 1300, 352-392-1601.

Library: <https://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>.

Teaching Center: General study skills and tutoring. <https://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>, Broward Hall, 352-392-2010.

Writing Studio: Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <https://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>, 2215 Turlington Hall, 352-846-1138.

Student Complaints On-Campus: Visit the Student Honor Code and Student Conduct Code webpage for more information. <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-%20code-student-conduct-code/>.

On-Line Students Complaints: View the Distance Learning Student Complaint Process. <https://distance.ufl.edu/getting-help/student-complaint-process/>.

AMENDMENTS

The professor reserves the right to change or modify this course and the syllabus subject to appropriate and timely notice to the students enrolled in this class.

SCHEDULE

All assignments, whether reading or writing, are due on the day they appear in the syllabus.

Week 1		
1/13	Introductions and Course Overview	
Week 2		
1/20	Introduction to <i>The Odyssey</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bernard Knox, "Introduction," in <i>The Odyssey</i>, pages 3–64 (skim) 	
Week 3		
1/27	Athena Inspires the Prince; Telemachus Sets Sail <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 1 and 2 	
Week 4		
2/3	King Nestor Remembers; The King and Queen of Sparta <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 3 and 4 	
Week 5		
2/10	Odysseus—Nymph and Shipwreck; the Princess and the Stranger <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Book 5 and 6 	<i>Artifact assignment assigned</i>
Week 6		
2/17	Phaeacia’s Halls and Gardens; A Day for Songs and Contests <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 7 and 8 	
Week 7		
2/24	In the One-Eyed Giant’s Cave; The Bewitching Queen of Aea <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 9 and 10 	
Week 8		
2/27	Artifact Assignment Due Monday, February 27, at 11:59 pm on Canvas	ARTIFACT ASSIGNMENT DUE AT 11:59 PM
3/3	The Kingdom of the Dead; The Cattle of the Sun <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 11 and 12 	
Week 9		
3/10	Ithaca at Last; The Loyal Swineherd <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 13 and 14 	
Week 10		
3/17	Spring Break: No Class	
Week 11		
3/24	The Prince Sets Sail for Home; Father and Son <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Books 15 and 16 	

Week 12		
3/31	Stanger at the Gates; The Beggar-King of Ithaca • Books 17 and 18	<i>Final paper assigned</i>
Week 13		
4/7	Penelope and Her Guests; Portents Gather • Books 19 and 20	
Week 14		
4/14	Odysseus Strings His Bow; Slaughter in the Hall • Books 21 and 22	
Week 15		
4/21	The Great Rooted Bed; Peace • Books 23 and 24	
Week 16		
4/28	Reading Day: No Class	
Week 17		
5/2	Final Paper Due Tuesday, May 2, at 11:59 pm on Canvas	FINAL PAPER DUE AT 11:59 PM