

San José State University
Department of English and Comparative Literature
English 125, Homer to Dante, Fall 2020

Course and Contact Information

Instructor:	Dr. Linda C. Mitchell
Office Location:	FOB 117
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Email:	linda.mitchell@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Monday/Wednesday, 12:30-1:30
Class Days/Time:	Mondays/Wednesdays, 10:30-11:45
Classroom:	Synchronous on Zoom
Prerequisites:	Upper-division standing

Course Description:

This course offers an introduction to some of the major literary works of the first 2,000 years of Western Culture—works of great genius and superb craft. They are as much a part of our heritage as that which we receive from our parents. Our goal this semester is to take possession of that heritage—like heirs who have come of age—by understanding how these works are connected to each other and to us via a series of parallel and contrasting patterns of ideas and experiences that form a path of human continuity across time and place. Students will engage and explore the texts from a variety of contexts and viewpoints: textual, literary, political, social, and cultural; become familiar with a range of critical approaches to the texts; and demonstrate a working knowledge of the texts’ influences within the Western literary tradition.

Required Work Hours for the Course

Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. Integrated into the syllabus are 1) increased course content and/or collateral readings and 2) higher-level critical thinking exercises.

University’s Credit Hour Requirement:

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica.

Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

Department of English and Comparative Literature Student Learning Objectives (SLOs): Students will demonstrate the ability to

1. read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric;
2. show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature;
3. write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;
4. develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;
5. articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

Course Requirements:

Daily reading responses (one full page, double spaced, one-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 pt.), engaged-class participation, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

Required Texts:

- *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, Vols. A, B, & C, 4th edition only because of translations
- Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*, trans. Fagles. Penguin Publishers.
- Course Reader from Maple Press
- Edith Hamilton’s *Greek Mythology*, any edition. You may choose another author of a comparable book on Greek mythology. You need to be familiar with Greek myths to understand the reading assignments. Hamilton’s book will be used for reference.

Class Policies:

Friday Emails

I send out an email each Friday that reviews work for the coming week. Read the Friday emails because you are responsible for the information.

Reading:

Assignments (including all introductory information) are to be read before the class session for which they are assigned. Close, careful reading takes time, so plan accordingly. Be prepared to discuss the readings in class.

If you need a grade verification for one of your programs, please tell me 24 hours in advance.

Reader Responses: Guidelines and Policies. 25%

- You have twenty-one response papers, but I count only twenty.
- I assign twenty-one responses papers, so that you have option of taking a bye on a day when you do not get the paper written, are not feeling well, or are out of town. Plan carefully on how you will use the bye. For extenuating circumstances,

talk to me in advance. Do not email response paper to me or the GA without an agreement in advance.

- Response papers are due at the **beginning** of class. Turn in your response paper to Canvas BEFORE class begins.
- You must attend the class in order to turn in the response paper.
- You cannot submit a paper and skip class.
- Reader responses are one page. They must be typed and double-spaced. Use Times New Roman, 12 pt., and standard margins.
- Write a paper title. “Response Paper #2” is not a title.
- Write the response number.
- Reader responses must demonstrate a critical engagement with the language and content of the assigned texts—no summaries.
- Response papers must have standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- No late work will be accepted unless you (1) make arrangements with me in advance, or (2) provide written verification that circumstances completely beyond your control prevented you from getting the work in on time, e.g., an organized mandatory SJSU event, a signed and stamped doctor's slip verifying an illness, a court order, a documented hospital emergency, a natural disaster, or proof of attendance at a funeral.
- These are not excused absences: having to work, going on vacation, or studying for another exam or writing a paper for another class.
- Always keep a copy of everything you turn in. I do not accept work via email unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

Midterm Exam and Final Exam 2 x 25% = 50% or 500 points

Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

Participation, 20% or 200 points

- Breakdown of the 20%: 15% will be oral comments in class. 5% graffiti comments.
- The average for a passing participation grade for example is 1.5 oral responses per class and 1.0 graffiti comment (discussion board on canvas) per class.
- Possible responses: present a thread of your argument during the discussion, propose a new idea that has occurred to you during class, or elaborate on a classmate's comment.
- **Please Note:** Your presence alone does not qualify as participation; you need to talk.

One-Unit Enhancement: Specified Assigned Work, 5% or 50 points

- A well-constructed essay question submitted for the midterm exam. 5 points
- A well-constructed essay question submitted for the final exam. 5 points
- Performance in the *Antigone* trial. 15 points
- Performance in *Lysistrata*. 5 points
- People's Court for Medea. 5 points
- Attendance at the three guest lectures in class. (3 x 5) 15 points

Grading: Your written work will be evaluated according to the following criteria.

Qualities of “A” Writing

Content: complies with all parts of the assignment; displays original, provocative thought in one or more of the following ways:

- finds a general significance in the specific instance,
- identifies and resolves a contradiction,
- disproves or qualifies a common misconception,
- achieves a fresh insight into a frequently discussed topic,
- places the known in a novel context,
- supports an arguable assertion;
- develops its thought by explanation, example, illustration, or analysis, as appropriate;
- displays flawless logic;
- has the voice of a real person speaking to a real audience;
- is interesting and detailed.

Organization: has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has an effective and appropriate overall pattern of organization; has unified, coherent paragraphs organized around recognizable topic sentences that are verbally or logically related to the thesis; has effective and appropriate transitions between paragraphs; has an effective introduction and conclusion.

Style: frequently chooses grammatical options that mirror the content portrayed; shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; frequently and appropriately uses emphatic sentence patterns such as long cumulative and periodic sentences, various strong parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs to control rhythm, pace, and emphasis.

Conventions: has NO diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; demonstrates a sophisticated knowledge of English grammar, syntax, punctuation, and usage.

Qualities of “B” Writing

Content: complies with all parts of the assignment; displays original, provocative thought in one or more of the ways listed above; attempts to develop its thoughts in the ways listed above; contains no overt logical fallacies; has the voice of a real person; is detailed.

Organization: has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has an overall pattern of organization; has unified, coherent paragraphs organized around recognizable topic sentences related to the thesis; has appropriate transitions between paragraphs; has an introduction and conclusion.

Style: shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; frequently and appropriately uses emphatic sentence patterns such as long cumulative and periodic sentences, various strong parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs.

Conventions: has no more than ONE diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling error; the error does not prevent comprehension; does not repeat an error marked on a previous paper; demonstrates a sound knowledge of English grammar, syntax, punctuation, and usage.

Qualities of “C” Writing

Content: complies with the main parts of the assignment; finds significance beyond the subjective response;

goes beyond mere description of the topic and response (analysis, generalization, etc.); is detailed.

Organization: has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has coherent paragraphs organized around topic sentences, most of which relate to the thesis; has a recognizable beginning, middle, and end.

Style: shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; occasionally uses emphatic sentence patterns such as cumulative and periodic sentences, parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs.

Conventions: has no more than TWO diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; errors do not prevent comprehension; does not repeat an error marked on a previous paper; demonstrates the ability to write correct simple, compound, and complex sentences.

Qualities of “D” Writing

Content: complies with the main parts of the assignment; makes a definite statement about the topic; attempts to support that statement.

Organization: has a recognizable thesis; attempts to support that thesis; has paragraphs organized around topic sentences; has enough coherence to be recognized as a unit.

Style: varies sentence types frequently enough to avoid monotony; attempts the occasional stylistic emphasis of an important point.

Conventions: has no more than THREE diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; errors do not prevent comprehension; does not repeat errors marked on a previous paper; demonstrates a basic understanding of the conventions of written English.

Your class participation will be assessed as follows:

A = Regular, pertinent questions and comments; fully engaged

B = Occasional, pertinent questions and responses; good listening

C = Infrequent, tangential questions or comments; attentiveness questionable

D = Rare interaction; disengaged from discussion; not prepared for class

F = Regularly absent, physically or mentally

Grading overview

You can earn up to 1,000 points in this course.

Activities	Percentage	Points
Reader’s Responses, 21, daily	25%	250
Exam 1 (SLO 1-3, 5)	25%	250
Exam 2 (SLO 1-3, 5)	25%	250
Class participation (SLO 1-2-3, 5)	20%	200
One-unit enhancement (SLO 1-2-3,5)	5%	50

Grading scale

930-1,000 points = A (93%-100%)

900-929 points = A- (90%-92.9%)

870-899 points = B+ (87%-89.9%)

830-869 points = B (83%-86.9%)

800-829 points = B- (80%-82.9%)

770-799 points = C+ (77%-79.9%)

730-769 points = C (73%-76.9%)

700-729 points = C- (70%-72.9%)
670-699 points = D+ (67%-69.9%)

Departmental Grading Policy

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Courses graded according to the A,B,C,NoCredit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for NoCredit, shall replace D or F. In A,B,C,NoCredit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdraw) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point averages. In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

University Policies

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>

SJSU Writing Center

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.



Library Liaison: Peggy Cabrera, peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu. Fourth floor of MLK Library.

English 125, Homer to Dante, Fall 2020

Course Schedule

Assigned Readings are to be completed before the class period designated. Schedule is subject to change by instructor with reasonable notice given in class or by class email.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
Week 0 W 8/19	Course Introduction and Overview: The Hero's Journey, Themes, and Historical Context. An example of a good reader response paper
Week 2 M 8/24	<i>Gilgamesh</i> , 93-145. Reader Response #1 due

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
W 8/26	<i>Iliad</i> , Books 1, 6, 8, 9, pp. 232-271. Reader Response #2 due Read the introduction in Norton, pp. 216-220.
Week 3 M 8/31	<i>Iliad</i> , Books 16, 18, 22, 24, pp. 272-324. Compare Achilles' shield in Homer to the shield in Auden's poem (CR). Bring your CR. FYI: You are not required to write on the shield for the Reader Response #3 due
W 9/2	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 1-8, pp. 324-414. Reader Response #4 due Read introduction to <i>The Odyssey</i> , pp. 220-223.
Week 4 M 9/7	HOLIDAY
W 9/9	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 9-16, pp. 415-511. Reader Response #5 due
Week 5 M 9/14	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 17-24, pp. 511-602. Reader Response #6 due Read "Ulysses" by Tennyson (CR).
W 9/16	Introduction to Greek Tragedy. Guest speaker Professor Emerita Dr. Bonnie Cox. Use her lecture notes on the midterm and final exams. Prepare for today by reading pages 624-29 in the Norton text for intro to Greek Drama
Week 6 M 9/21	<i>The Oresteia. Agamemnon</i> . Read in Penguin edition or in Norton. Fagels translations. Reader Response #7 due For a good introduction to <i>Agamemnon</i> , read pages 630-34 in Norton.
W 9/23	<i>The Oresteia. The Eumenides</i> (Penguin edition). Fagels translation required. Reader Response #8 due Bring course reader today. We will assign roles Antigone's court trial.
Week 7 M 9/28	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> , pp. 687-724. Reader Response #9 due Bring course reader today.
W 9/30	<i>Antigone</i> , pp. 725-55. Reader Response #10 due. Listen to all the options for RR #10. Bring course reader so you can follow the stasis theory during the court trial.
Week 8 M 10/5	<i>Medea</i> , pp. 759-90. Reader Response #11 due RR #11: Arguments pro- and anti-Medea. Typed, single spaced on chart. People's court pp. 793-827. Performance credit.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
W 10/7	
Week 9 M 10/12	<i>Aeneid</i> , 1, 2, 4, pp. 926-89. Reader Response #12 due Review themes for midterm question.
W 10/14	<i>Aeneid</i> , 6, 8, 12, pp. 989-1025. Reader Response #13 due Reminder of midterm questions due on Wednesday. Note for preparing Reader Response #14 on Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> . Option #1 Write the usual response paper. Option #2 Rewrite a scene from Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> . Option #3 Read part of a letter from Ovid's <i>The Heroides</i> . Email your suggested midterm question by tonight at 9 P.M.
Week 10 M 10/19	1) Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> : Book I, all; Book II, all; Book V, all; Book IX, Book X, pp. 1029-1068. 2) Ovid's <i>The Heroides</i> : letters from Penelope, Dido, Jason, and Medea. http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Heroideshome.htm Reader Response #14 due.
W 10/21	Review for exam 1. Each group presents main points for its assigned essay question. Double participation points today for your oral presentation of your group's question. 4 minutes per group answer and 3 minutes open comments = 7 minutes Review time schedule to follow during the exam.
Week 11 M 10/26	Exam 1: bring large exam booklet
W 10/28	From Roman Empire to Christian Europe: Polytheism to Monotheism Guest speaker: Professor Emerita Bonnie Cox
Week 12 M 11/2	<i>The Bible</i> . Reader Response #15 due Volume A. Old Testament: Genesis; Exodus; Job; Psalms 23, 137. Read pages 152-215. Volume B. New Testament: Luke 2, Matthew 5-7, Luke 15, Matthew 13, 227-28, John 1, pp. 18-34.
W 11/4	<i>The Song of Roland</i> , #1-#150, pp. 223-53. Response #16 due See suggestions for reader responses in the course reader. There are also ideas in the weekly notes I made on Roland. You can take this paper in so many different ways. Be specific and support whatever direction you take. If you talk about propaganda, you might want to do it for RR #17 when you have read the entire work.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines					
Week 13 M 11/9	<i>The Song of Roland</i> , #151-#291, pp. 253-286. Reader Response #17 due					
W 11/11	HOLIDAY					
Week 14 M 11/16	Introduction to Dante. Guest speaker: Professor Emerita Bonnie Cox					
W 11/18	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos I-XI, XII-XVIII, pp. 394-472. Reader Response #18 due Compare Odysseus's commentary during his visit to the land of the dead in book IX of <i>The Odyssey</i> to Odysseus's sad commentary from a circle of hell in Canto XXVI of Dante's <i>Inferno</i> (see handout). Compare the living Odysseus to the shade Odysseus.					
Week 15 M 11/23	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos XIX-XXXIV, pp. 472-548. Reader Response #19 due What do you consider to be your vice, which circle of hell, and what punishment? (Not necessarily your paper topic) Submit by email final exam review questions by 6pm tonight.					
W 11/25	No Instruction					
Week 16 M 11/30	<i>Purgatorio</i> , Cantos I-II, IX, XXI-XXII, XXIV, XXVII, XXX, XXXII, XXXIII, Reader Response #20 due *Reveal the results of the Dante quiz for which circle of hell you are in. http://www.4degrez.com/misc/dante-inferno-test.my					
W 12/2	Reader Response #21 Due. Topic TBA Work in break out rooms (zoom) to prepare your review questions.					
M 12/7	Review for exam 2. Same procedure as the review for the midterm.					
Final Exam	The final exam will cover all the works on the syllabus and all the class discussions. <table border="1" data-bbox="451 1417 1128 1507"> <tr> <td data-bbox="451 1417 678 1507">For MW classes 1030</td> <td data-bbox="678 1417 966 1507">MONDAY, DEC. 14</td> <td data-bbox="966 1417 1128 1507">0945-1200</td> </tr> </table>			For MW classes 1030	MONDAY, DEC. 14	0945-1200
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