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Fall 9-1-2000

LS 151.81: Introduction to Western Humanities - Honors

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Introduction to Western Humanities
Liberal Studies 151, section 81

Lorina Quartarone
425 Liberal Arts
243-5637 (office); 251-0325 (home)

Autumn 2000
TR 12:40-2:00
DHC 120

Office Hours:
MTF 11:10-12:00, TW 9:30-10:00, MW 1:00-2:00
and by appointment

Plenary Lectures:
R 11:10-noon, ULH
or R 7:10-8:00, SS 352

Required texts:

Homer. *The Odyssey*. R. Fagles (translator). Viking Press.
Sappho. Mary Barnard (transl.). U of California Press.
New Oxford Annotated Bible. Oxford U Press.
~~The~~ *Book of Job*. S. Mitchell (transl.). *Amperleumial*
Greek Tragedy (vol. 1). Grene & Lattimore (transl.). U of Chicago Press.
Plato. *Five Dialogues of Plato*. Grube (transl.). Hackett.
St. Augustine. *Confessions*. Warner (transl.). Mentor.
"Faculty Pack."

Course Objectives: to explore the formation and transformation of some western world views. These views include but are not limited to the following: ways of understanding nature, society, the self and the transcendent; the concepts of good, evil, and justice; the responsibilities and development of the individual; the tacit or explicit expectations associated with gender roles; the establishment of identity, whether individual or cultural; et alia). The emphases of the course are engaging in close readings of the primary texts, interpreting, discussing, and writing about those texts.

Please make note of the following important dates:

**Monday, ⁵~~20~~ September

**Monday, ¹¹~~12~~ October

Tuesday, 7 November

Friday, 10 November

Wednesday-Friday, 22-24 November

^{add}
Last day to drop by Dial-Bear (w/refund)

^{add}
Last day to drop by petition (w/o refund)

Election Day Holiday -- no classes

Veteran's Day Holiday -- no classes

Thanksgiving Break -- no classes

<u>Course Components:</u>	Daily Questions	30%
	Class Participation	15%
	Paper 1	15%
	Paper 2	20%
	Final Exercises:	
	-Ladder & Statement	5%
	-Final Essay OR	
	Final Oral	15%

Daily Questions: Please purchase a package of 4 x 6 note cards; you will answer the DQs on these. Write your response **on one side only**, and hand it in at the beginning of the class hour. I will accept these cards from the hand of the author only -- if you are absent, that's unfortunate. I will not accept late DQs, nor will there be any "make-ups." They will be graded on a scale of 0 to 10 points. I will drop the three lowest grades at the semester's end. The cumulative score of these is a significant element in determining your final grade; I consider your performance on the Daily Questions to be indicative of the consistency of your activity in this course.

DQ's on the Plenary Lectures: In addition to the DQ's pertaining to the reading assignments (which are specified on the syllabus), you will also write about each Plenary Lecture (occurring each Thursday) by responding to the general question "In what specific manners or elements does this lecture enhance your understanding of the pertinent text(s)?" You should be sure to include from two to four elements in your response, linking the details provided in the lecture to the appropriate reading. Thus, on Fridays you will submit two separate DQ cards, one concerning the Plenary Lecture and one responding to the DQ in the syllabus for that day's reading assignment.

Papers: You will compose two papers for this course, due by 5 October and 16 November, respectively. I have indicated paper ideas and specifications in this document. For details on what I expect from you in your essays, please read my Paper Guidelines (attached). I will also consider your Personal Writing Objectives (which you may adjust at any time during the course of the semester) when I grade your papers. If at any time you receive a grade of 'C-' or lower on a paper, I require that you make an appointment with me to review either that paper or a rough draft of your next paper assignment.

Notes & Notebooks: While I insist that you do NOT take notes during class (since this generally hinders class discussion), I do advise that you keep a course binder in which

you keep all of your papers, DQs, handouts, and any notes which you may jot down just at the end of the class session (when I will try to leave a few moments for reflection upon the day's discussion). You will find this notebook enormously helpful when you compose the final essay, and for reviewing readings during the semester.

Attendance: Attendance is crucial. It is important for you to be present at each class meeting in order to hand in DQs and other written assignments as well as to participate in the discussion. Three unexcused absences will result in the reduction of your final grade by 1/3; each unexcused absence thereafter will produce the same result. You may obtain an "excused" absence by informing me BEFORE the class meeting that you will be absent. You may do this either in person (after class, office hours, etc.) or by calling my office phone -- if I am not in, please leave a specific message.

Final Exercises: 1) The "Ladder" will be explained in class. Your statement will involve a comparison of the differences and/or consistencies between your initial ladder (completed the first week of classes) and your final ladder (completed the last week of classes). Please type this statement -- 1-2 typewritten, double-spaced pages should suffice. 2) Final Essay: I will distribute the questions for the final essay (which will obviously be a take-home essay) about a week before it will be due (the last day of class). The final essay will involve pursuing a particular theme or issue which we have addressed in the readings, and you will discuss that theme or issue with respect to at least 3 of the texts read this semester. 3) Final Oral: In lieu of the final essay, you may opt to take an oral final, which we shall schedule during the last two weeks of classes. The oral MUST be taken prior to the end of the scheduled final exam time, either monday or tuesday of finals week. We shall meet in my office for 1/2 hour. In preparation for the oral, you will submit to me two themes or issues which you wish to discuss; your focus will be the manners in which different works and authors which we have read approach or treat these issues. Your written submission should specify the works, authors and themes you will handle during the oral. The first submission (due 8 December) will specify; the second (15 December) will be an edited/final version, responding to my comments on the first submission.

***Remember that quality and attention to detail are key aspects of your all written and oral work for this course.*

Schedule of Readings

LS 151
Autumn 2000

- 5 Sept T Preliminaries: Review of Syllabus & overview of Course. Completion of "Quartarone's Ladder" and "Personal Writing Objectives."
- 7 Sept R Lecture: "The Edenic Myth: Beginnings." Prof. Pack.
- 7 Sept R Genesis chapters 1-3. "Epic of Creation", FP ("Fac-Pac") 4-11. Excerpts from Hesiod's Theogony, FP 13-20.
▶ Each of these creation stories involves a conflict between genders. Which account do you find most generous to the female gender? Why (be specific)? Which account do you find least generous to the female? Why? Remember to cite the text(s) in your response.

▶▶ Hand in "Ladder" and "Personal Writing Objectives".
- 12 Sept T Homer, FP 15-18 "Iliad Summary"; Odyssey: Books 1-5.
▶ In what specific manner(s) does Homer prepare the reader for the introduction of Odysseus (in Book 5) in the preceding books? Cite the text in support of your response.
- 14 Sept R Lecture: "The Odyssey." Prof. Quartarone.
- 14 Sept R Homer, Odyssey 6-8.
▶ How does Homer characterize gender? Select either the male or female, and discuss how Homer presents the essence of gender in these books through his presentations of certain figures. Remember to cite the text to support your response.
- 19 Sept T Homer, Odyssey 9-14.
▶ What does Odysseus appear to have learned in these books? Use the text to support your response.
- 21 Sept R Lecture: "Greek Art." Prof. Todd.
- 21 Sept R Homer, Odyssey 15-18.
▶ What is wrong at Odysseus' house? Remember to cite the text in support of your response.

- 26 Sept T Homer. *Odyssey* 19-24.
 ▶ What are the implications of Athena's interventions in these last books? Cite specific details which support your response.
- 28 Sept R Read: *FP* 29-53. Lecture: "Women in Antiquity." Prof. Gillison.
- 28 Sept R *Genesis* chapters 4-22.
 ▶ How do you characterize the God of these chapters? In what specific ways is this God similar to/different from the God of the first three chapters (which you may find it fruitful to re-read)? Remember to cite the text in your response.
- 3 Oct T *Genesis* chapters 23-50.
 ▶ Consider the shape of the book of Genesis as a whole. What would you say is the author's/authors' or editor's/editors' primary focus? In other words, what is the book's overarching concern? Remember to cite the text to support your response.
- 5 Oct R Lecture: "Greek Lyrics." Prof. Welch and Prof. Dunsmore.
- 5 Oct R Sappho (all). *FP* 55-62 "Archilochus, Hipponax and Solon".
 ▶ In poem 40 (Sappho), what are the relationships between the poet/narrator, Atthis and Anactoria? Remember to cite the text in your response.
- ▶▶**Paper 1 due.** Please see details -- topics and guidelines -- at the end of this syllabus. Remember to refer only to the *Odyssey*, **do not** employ or refer to outside sources: this is an interpretive exercise, not a research paper.
- 10 Oct T *Exodus* 1-24, 31-34.
 ▶ How is the God of Exodus characterized differently from the God of Genesis? Remember to cite the text....
- 12 Oct R Lecture: "Torah." Prof. Kreisberg
- 12 Oct R *Ruth*: *FP* 65-69, "Lilith".
 ▶ How do these two readings compare in their representations of women?
- 17 Oct T *Jonah*: *Ezekiel*, 1-32.

► The Book of ²Exekiel is full of imagery. Select the image which you find the most compelling and provide an exposition for it.

- 19 Oct R Lecture: "Prophets." Prof. Kreisberg.
19 Oct R Aeschylus, Agamemnon.
► Why does Agamemnon remove his sandals (945)? What is the relationship between this moment and the moment ten years earlier narrated at lines 205-226?
- 24 Oct T Aeschylus, Prometheus Bound.
► Compare Prometheus' understanding of suffering with that of Job.
- 26 Oct R Lecture: "Islam and Koran." Prof. Kia.
26 Oct R Sophocles, Oedipus.
► How, specifically, does employ irony in this play?
- 31 Oct T Sophocles, Antigone.
► Is Antigone truly concerned with what is right, or is she more concerned about her own reputation?
- 2 Nov R Read: FP 71-79. Lecture: "Job." Prof. Clark.
2 Nov R Job (Mitchell translation).
► How does Job's understanding of his suffering alter from the start of the book to the end?
- 7 Nov T HOLIDAY
- 9 Nov R Lecture: "Greek Drama." Prof. Bigley.
9 Nov R Euripides, Hippolytus.
► It has been said that one of the chief characteristics of a Greek tragic figure is that s/he creates the circumstances of her/his own downfall (whether cognizantly or not). Does Euripides appear to compose this tragedy in agreement with such a dictum, or not?
- 14 Nov T Selections from "The Pre-Socratics", FP 83-96.
► What particular mode of investigation do these philosophers employ? Does any one stand out as different? If so, how, specifically, does he stand apart? If not, what particularly makes them all so similar?
- 16 Nov R Lecture: "Pre-Socratics and Lucretius." Prof. Quartarone.

16 Nov R Selections from Lucretius, FP 97-139.
▶ How, specifically, does Lucretius differ from his predecessors, the Pre-Socratics?

▶▶**Paper 2 (on the Hebrew Bible or Greek Tragedy) due.** Please see details at the end of this syllabus.

21 Nov T Plato's *Apology* (23-44).
▶ If you were a juror at Socrates' trial, would you vote for acquittal or conviction? Use the text to explain your response.

THANKSGIVING BREAK (22 - 24 November)

28 Nov T Plato, FP 159-61, "Plato's Cave.": *Euthyphro* (in *Five Dialogues of Plato*.
▶ In his conversation with Socrates, Euthyphro offers several definitions of piety (5e, 7a, 12e, 14b). What sort of progression can you detect in his responses?

30 Nov R Lecture: "Plato." Prof. Perrin.

30 Nov R Plato's *Phaedo* (93-155).
▶ How, specifically, is Plato's account of what happens to the soul after death in concord or conflict with earlier Greek texts (e.g., *Odyssey*, *Antigone*, et al.) and their representation of mortality?

5 Dec T *Luke*.
▶ How is Luke's depiction of Jesus similar to Plato's portrayal of Socrates?

7 Dec R Lecture: "The Gospels." Prof. Bigley.

7 Dec R *John 1-21; Thomas, FP 173-180.*
▶ What effect does John's use of ordinary words (e.g., bread, water, word, door) in a metaphorical sense have in this text?

▶▶**Paper 2 (if on later Greek thought) due.** Please see details at the end of this syllabus. ▶▶ Questions for Oral final (1st draft) due.

12 Dec T Augustine, *Confessions*, books 1-4.
▶ How does the death of his unnamed friend (book 4) affect Augustine? What realizations emerge as a result of this event?

14 Dec

R

Lecture: "The Confessions." Prof. Fandozzi.

14 Dec

R

Augustine, *Confessions* books 5-7; Synthesis and Evaluation.

▶ How are notions about speech and silence central to these books?
How is this significant?

▶▶ "Ladder" and statement due. ▶▶ Final Essay/Final set of Oral questions due.

Essay Assignments

PAPER 1. 4-5 pages. (due 5 Oct R).

Of the many major themes of the *Odyssey* [e.g., journey, homecoming, universal/moral order, understanding the natural/physical world, societal order, good and evil, revenge, like-mindedness, encounters with other cultures, wisdom, justice, the mortal relationship to the divine/transcendent, identity/self-discovery), hospitality, community, et alia], which do you consider of crucial importance to understanding the poem? Use the text to support a well-constructed argument for that theme which you decide to pursue. {**Nota bene:** the theme you select for this essay will be the theme you pursue in later readings in the course, so be sure to choose one which is meaningful and important to you.}

PAPER 2. 6-8 pages. (due 16 Nov R).

This essay will be a composite project. In it, you will re-write your first essay (on the preceding topic) and continue the discussion of your chosen theme with respect to either the Hebrew Bible (focussing ONE work/book/character) OR Greek Tragedy (again, focus on ONE work/play/character). Take special pains to ensure that the two portions of your essay are well integrated and consistent.

FINAL ESSAY. 4-5 pages. Select ONE of the following essay topics (due 14 Dec R). Remember to employ the appropriate texts to support your argument!!

1. Do you agree or disagree that St. Augustine manages to create a synthesis of the Greek, Hebrew and Christian components of the Western tradition?
2. Which culture (Greek, Hebrew or Christian) do you find most (and/or least) misogynistic? Which do you find most generous to women?
3. How is the necessity of conflict in human life expressed in the works which we have read? Select at least one work from each tradition and discuss how conflict is an essential element of the human condition.
4. How do representatives of each of the traditions studied struggle define justice? Selecting one author (or book) from each tradition, present a detailed analysis of that author's understanding of justice and what constitutes it.
5. How does each of the major traditions define its cultural identity? Focus on a specific work from each culture and analyze its presentation of its own peculiar identity, then compare the identities of the traditions: how are they similar, and how are they different?