

Humanities Core: Great Books, Big Ideas

EUROPE I: ANTIQUITY

CLASSICS 37 / DLCL 11 / HUMCORE 11

WAY-A-II

Autumn 2019

M/W/F 13:30-14:50

What did ancient Greek and Roman people hope for, and what did they fear? In light of these questions, we'll decode some of the texts they left behind, analyzing them in historical context and in light of the ethical issues of their times. We'll also explore the relevance of ancient concepts to our own era: What can we learn from ancient answers to recurrent human problems? What are the limits of universalism? How have concepts such as tradition, canon, Western civilization, and the Mediterranean been used – with what benefits and pitfalls? On the basis of analysis and discussion, we'll evolve a sense of what the humanities are, as well as their actual and possible connections with our lives today.

Instructors

Primary Instructor: Grant Parker (he/him pronouns)
Email: grparker@stanford.edu
Office: Building 110, Room 105 (Department of Classics)
Office Hours: Wed. 15:00-16:00 and Thu. 11:00-12:00 and by appointment

Teaching assistant: Thomas Leibundgut (he/him pronouns)
Email: talug@stanford.edu
Office: Building 110, Room 217
Office Hours: Wed. and Fri. 15:00-16:00 and by appointment

You are encouraged to visit both instructors' office hours at least once in the quarter. These are chances for you to discuss course material, raise relevant questions or concerns you might have, or talk about any other matters related to ancient societies and the study thereof.

Course Goals and Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- a) Read Greek and Roman texts critically with reference to the worlds that produced them
- b) Identify issues preoccupying ancient people and analyze their relevance to modern lives
- c) Evaluate what the humanities are, and what purposes they might serve

Keywords

Origins – mythology – gender – war – city-state – empire – democracy – justice – virtue – happiness – selfhood – tradition – universalism – Mediterranean

Weekly schedule in detail

Questions and readings of the week (for M/W sessions, since Fridays are for all tracks combined). Readings are on Canvas (<https://canvas.stanford.edu/courses/106400>: marked below as ^C) or in Knox's *Norton Book of Classical Literature* (NBCL):

1. INVENTING ORIGINS (9/23 – 9/27): Why do origins matter? What makes people the product of their supposed origins? What is mythology and what purposes does it serve? What are the uses and pitfalls of key concepts such as tradition, canon, classical and Western civilization? Readings: **Hesiod, *Theogony*** and ***Works and Days*** (extracts NBCL 187-201^C).
 - Friday: ***Epic of Gilgamesh***^C (Prof. Vered Shemtov)
2. INVENTING HEROES (9/30 – 10/4): Why do societies need heroes? What does our celebration of heroes tell about the nature and values of our society? How do the logics of competition and collaboration work? What is the gender of heroes? What was the historical impact of the Trojan War? **Homer, *Iliad*** and ***Odyssey*** (extracts in NBCL 63-187).
 - Friday: **Sappho**^C (Prof. Grant Parker)
3. MAKING HISTORY, MAKING WAR (10/7 – 10/11): What stimulates societies to keep records of events? What kinds of material do societies choose to commemorate, and why? What media do they use? What is the relation between warfare, national identity and memory? What kinds of human groupings are formed around war? To what degree did the Persian War and the Peloponnesian War shape Greek history in the 5th century BCE? Selections from **Herodotus, *Histories*** (NBCL 267-99) and **Thucydides, *Peloponnesian War*** (NBCL 334-56).
 - Friday: ***Confucian Analects***^C (Prof. Ron Egan)
4. DEFINING POWER AND GENDER (10/14 – 10/18): How does a *polis* (city-state) work in relation to the lives of its citizens and non-citizens? What happens when divine law and human law clash? What were the social roles of ancient Greek women, in practice and theory? What political and religious roles did Athenian tragedy play? **Sophocles, *Antigone***^C.
 - Friday: ***Song of Songs***^C (Prof. Charlotte Fonrobert)
5. MAKING LOVE, NOT WAR (10/21 – 10/25): How does humor enable social critique? How does comedy imagine utopia? How does it deal with lived realities? What happens if women are in charge? What was the public (political and religious) role of Athenian comedy? **Aristophanes, *Lysistrata***^C.
 - **Wednesday, 10/23: midterm test**
 - Friday: ***Alexander Romance***^C (Prof. Grant Parker)
6. GETTING ON TOGETHER (10/28 – 11/1): How does human community work, and how might it be perfected? What is love? And what is its relation to the soul, madness, rhetoric and the creative arts? Why was Socrates so influential and so feared as a teacher and spiritual leader? **Plato, *Phaedrus***^C (entire) and **Aristotle, *Politics and Nicomachean Ethics***^C (selections).
 - Friday: **Laozi**^C (Prof. Ron Egan)

7. SEEKING HAPPINESS (11/4 – 11/8): What is the optimal relation of public and personal well-being? How does Epicureanism answer human needs for happiness, and how does it compare with other philosophical schools such as Stoicism? How do atoms allow humans to comprehend the origin of the universe and its destiny? Why did such questions gain new urgency in Rome of the 1st century BCE? **Lucretius, *On the nature of things*** and **Catullus** (NBCL 595-614).
 - **Wednesday, 11/6: textual analysis due**
 - Friday: **Talmud**^c (Prof. Charlotte Fonrobert)

8. CREATING EMPIRE (11/11 – 11/15): How are we to make sense – historically and mythically – of Rome’s ascendancy? What price needed to be paid? How are we to understand evidence of the experiences of imperialism? Which features of Virgil’s epic poem have given it universalist resonance in subsequent histories? **Virgil, *Aeneid*** (NBCL 639-702).
 - Friday: **Virgil, *Eclogues***^c (Prof. Grant Parker)

9. MAINTAINING EMPIRE (11/18 – 11/22): How is empire to be maintained? How does it even function, and for that matter, why did the Roman Empire last as long as it did? How do subjects respond to imperial power? What is the impact of dynastic rule? What alternatives exist? **Tacitus, *Agricola***^c, with a selection from *Annals* 1^c.
 - Friday: ***Songs of Chu***^c (Prof. Ron Egan)

10. SEEKING THE DIVINE (12/2 – 12/6): How are we to understand religious conversion? What subjectivities are involved? What accounts for the attraction of Christianity in the later Roman Empire, and what were its rivals? What was new about it in the early centuries CE and what was consistent with tradition? **Augustine, *Confessions*** (NBCL 833-52).

Overview

Week no.	Mon.	Wed.	Fri. (plenary sessions)
1: Inventing origins	9/23 Introducing key concepts: tradition, canon, connection	9/25 Hesiod	9/27 <i>Gilgamesh</i> (Shemtov)
2: Inventing heroes	9/30 Homer, <i>Iliad</i>	10/2 Homer, <i>Odyssey</i>	10/4 Sappho (Parker)
3: Making history, making war	10/7 Herodotus	10/9 Thucydides	10/11 <i>Confucian Analects</i> (Egan)
4: Defining power and gender	10/14 Sophocles	10/16 Sophocles	10/18 <i>Song of Songs</i> (Fonrobert)
5: Making love, not war	10/21 Aristophanes	10/23 Aristophanes and midterm test	10/25 <i>Alexander Romance</i> (Parker)
6: Getting on together	10/28 Plato	10/30 Aristotle	11/1 Laozi (Egan)

7: Seeking happiness	11/4 Lucretius	11/6 Catullus Textual analysis due	11/8 Talmud (Fonrobert)
8: Creating empire	11/11 Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i>	11/13 Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i>	11/15 Virgil, <i>Eclogues</i> (Parker)
9: Maintaining empire	11/18 Tacitus	11/20 Tacitus	11/22 <i>Songs of Chu</i> (Egan)
10: Seeking the divine	12/2 Augustine	12/4 Final discussion	NO CLASS
Exam week		12/11 Exam due by 18:30 via Canvas	

Class format

- Lectures providing context and background to individual texts
- Analysis of texts and discussion of themes
- Viewing and reading of selected extracts

Reading and ongoing assignments

- Around 30-40 pages per session, to be completed in advance
- Post three questions of interpretation by Sunday 11:59, starting Week 2 (see information below about course website)

Please note that this is a reading-intensive course: the bulk of your work will be to read texts ahead of class: without doing so, you will not be able to follow lectures or take part in discussions.

Major assignments

- Midterm test (10/23): identify and analyze three out of four selected passages from the syllabus. Closed book, in class.
- Textual analysis (due 11/6 at 23:59): provide a brief critical analysis of an assigned passage. Submit via Canvas.
- Final examination (due 12/11 at 18:30): compare two prescribed extracts in relation to a given topic. Take-home, open book, submit via Canvas.

Course Website on Canvas

<https://canvas.stanford.edu/courses/106400>

Course material and announcements will be posted on Canvas. Your weekly questions on the readings should be posted to the Discussions tab. Your textual analysis and final exam should be submitted via the Canvas Assignments tab.

Textbook

Bernard Knox (ed.), *The Norton Book of Classical Literature*. W. W. Norton, 1993. ISBN 978-0393034264. List price \$39.95. Copies (including second-hand) will be available via the Bookstore.

Additional readings will be posted on Canvas.

Guidelines for contextual reading of ancient texts

The following questions may be useful when reading an ancient text for the first time:

1. Where, when and under what circumstances did the text come into being?
2. How much do we know about the author and the original circumstances of composition, and how much is inferred or speculative?
3. What impact did the author intend to make with the text in question? How successful was s/he in this, according to our knowledge (or best estimations)?
4. What values and assumptions are implied in the text?

Reference works

If you read something that requires explanation, the following three sources are reliable places to which you might turn:

Michael Gagarin and Elaine Fantham (eds.), *The Oxford Encyclopedia of Ancient Greece and Rome*. 2010. Online edition.

Simon Hornblower et al. (eds.), *The Oxford Classical Dictionary*. 3rd edition 2012. Earlier online editions are also useful.

J. W. Roberts, *The Oxford Dictionary of the Classical World*. Online edition. More limited in scope than the *OCD*, but well suited to the texts we will read.

Please note that while Wikipedia and other online sources contain excellent and copious data, they are not quality-controlled for academic use. They are good places to start rather than end your investigations on any important or complex topic. Feel free to address any such questions to the instructors and/or to the reference librarians of Stanford University Libraries: see <https://searchworks.stanford.edu>

Course Grade Calculation

Participation/Attendance	10 %
Textual analysis	20 %
Midterm test	30 %
Final exam	40 %
TOTAL	100 %

Course Policies

Late Homework Policy

If your textual analysis is late, you will be penalized according to the following system:

- 1 day late: Lose 10% of the maximum allowable marks

- 2 days late: Lose 20% of the maximum allowable marks
- 3+ days late: Lose 30% of the maximum allowable marks

It is my experience that allowing late homework only causes students to get more behind. Note that if you are away from Stanford you can email your homework to your TA or to me by prior arrangement.

Incomplete Grades

A grade of I (Incomplete) may be granted in cases in which a student has requested an 'I' before the last class and satisfactorily completed a substantial part of the coursework. Such requests are considered on a case-by-case basis; the deadline for submission of work may be less than the maximum period of one year allowed by the Registrar.

Revision of Final Grades

End-quarter grades may be revised only under extraordinary circumstances, when the revision is due to a computational error or when submitted work was unintentionally overlooked. A grade cannot be changed due to a revised assessment or on the basis of new work submitted (e.g., a new exam or additional work completed after the end of the quarter).

Exam Policies

There are no make-ups for the midterm or final exam, so you must plan to attend on the scheduled day. Let me know immediately if a university-sanctioned event makes it impossible for you to be present at the midterm. Note the university policy on examinations: 'In submitting official study lists, students commit to all course requirements including the examination procedures chosen and announced by the course instructor.'

Administrative Deadlines for Students

Students may add courses or units to their study lists through the end of the third week of classes (this quarter, 10/11). Courses or units may be dropped by students up until the Final Study List Deadline without any record of the course remaining on the student's transcript. You may **withdraw** from a course after the drop deadline through the end of the eighth week of each quarter (this quarter, 11/15). In this case, a grade notation of 'W' (withdraw) is automatically recorded on your transcript for that course. Students are responsible for checking their study list on **Axess** to confirm that the correct grading basis is selected for any courses which offer a choice. No grading basis changes are permitted after the deadline, regardless of the grade or notation recorded in the course.

Course expectations

What you can expect from us

We are here to guide your learning and will challenge you to actively engage in the learning process through class activities, assignments, and more. We will strive for an inclusive and collaborative classroom and welcome any suggestions for improvement. We will do our best to give you the tools, feedback, and support to succeed: please let us know if we can do anything more. Learning is a never-ending process, and we hope to motivate students to seek out more information on topics and texts we don't have time to cover. We highly encourage everyone to visit us in office hours or to set

up a meeting, even if you don't feel that you have questions. We want to get to know you and support you in this learning experience.

What we expect from you

We expect you to take an active role in your learning by coming to class prepared and being ready to share your ideas and collaborate with your classmates. Each member of this class will have different ideas and perspectives that can enrich the experience for everyone else, so please be respectful and thoughtful in your interactions. To get the most out of the class, you should be prepared to share your ideas, ask questions, listen actively and collaborate effectively during small group work. Never hesitate to email us, stop by our offices, or set up a meeting. This class is designed to challenge you while giving everyone a chance to succeed with effort.

Respect for Diversity statement

We intend that this course fully serve students from all backgrounds and perspectives; that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class; and that the diversity that students bring to this class become a resource, strength, and benefit. It is our intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity, which may include (without being limited to): gender, sexuality, disability, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religion, and political affiliation. Your suggestions as to how we can reach this goal are encouraged and appreciated. Please let us know directly how you think we can improve the effectiveness of the course for you personally or for other students or student groups. In addition, if any session conflicts with your religious observance, please let us know in advance so that arrangements can be made.

All people have the right to be addressed and referred to in accordance with their personal identity. In this class, we will have the chance to indicate the name that we prefer to be called and, if we choose, to identify pronouns with which we would like to be addressed. We will do our best to address and refer to all students accordingly and encourage classmates to do the same.

Content Warnings

Subject matter touched upon in this course will include violence, racism, misogyny, and hateful language. If you anticipate that such content will cause you acute distress, please confer with me before enrolling. Please note that it is not possible to provide warnings concerning each individual reading, lecture or discussion.

University Policies

The Honor Code

It is expected that instructors and students will follow Stanford's Honor Code in all matters relating to this course. You are encouraged to meet and exchange ideas with your classmates while studying and working on homework assignments, but you are individually responsible for your own work and for understanding the material. You are not permitted to copy or otherwise reference another student's work. If you have any questions regarding this policy, feel free to contact me.

Compromising your academic integrity may lead to serious consequences, including (but not limited to) one or more of the following: failure of the assignment, failure of the course, disciplinary probation, suspension from the university, or dismissal from the university. Students are responsible for understanding the University's Honor Code policy and must make proper use of citations of

sources for writing papers, creating, presenting, and performing their work, taking examinations, and doing research. <https://communitystandards.stanford.edu/policies-and-guidance/honor-code>

Academic Accommodation

Students who may need an academic accommodation based on the impact of a disability must initiate the request with the Office of Accessible Education (OAE). Professional staff will evaluate the request with required documentation, recommend reasonable accommodations, and prepare an Accommodation Letter for faculty dated in the current quarter in which the request is being made. Students should contact the OAE as soon as possible, since timely notice is needed to coordinate accommodations. The OAE is located at 563 Salvatierra Walk (or <http://oae.stanford.edu/>).

Further Resources

Accessibility

Stanford University and its instructors are committed to ensuring that all courses are financially accessible to all students. If you are an undergraduate who needs assistance with the cost of course textbooks, supplies, materials and/or fees, you are welcome to approach me directly. If you would prefer not to approach me directly, the Diversity and First-Generation Office's Opportunity Fund is designed to financially assist undergraduate students who are experiencing a temporary financial challenge from a hardship or who are seeking funds for an opportunity related to their academic, professional, and/or social development. Go to <https://diversityandfirstgen.stanford.edu/resources> or contact Joseph Brown, the Associate Director of the Diversity and First-Gen Office (jlbrown@stanford.edu; Old Union Room 207). Dr. Brown is available to connect you with resources and support while ensuring your privacy.

Learning Resources and Support Services

If you find the material in this course challenging, there are many sources of assistance on campus. Start with your instructor and TAs during office hours. Beyond that, consider contacting your Academic Advising Director (AAD), the Center for Teaching and Learning, or, if you are a student athlete, the Athletic Academic Resource Center (AARC). The Hume Center for Writing and Speaking supports the written and oral communication of all Stanford students. In free one-on-one sessions, trained tutors help students get started on assignments; understand academic conventions in their fields; address and overcome writer's block and speech anxiety; learn strategies for revising, editing, and proofreading; and refine their written and oral delivery. To see hours and locations or to schedule an appointment with a tutor, visit the Hume Center website at <http://hume.stanford.edu>. The Hume Center also assists those for whom English is not a native language.

Course Schedule Change Policy

Please note: This schedule is subject to change with advance notice.
