


Undergraduate Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Core Category: VPA-Critical Effective Fall 2009

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council  
 New Course  Course Change  
 Effective Fall \_\_\_\_

RECEIVED OCT 06 2008

- Department: MCL College: CLASS
- Faculty Contact Person: Casey Due-Hackney Telephone: 3-3240 Email: Casey.Due@mail.uh.edu
- Course Information on New/Revised course:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
CLAS / 3381 / From Homer to Hollywood: Ancient Greek Themes in Modern Cinema
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)  
CLAS / 3381 / FROM HOMER TO HOLLYWOOD
  - SCH: 3.00 Level: JR CIP Code: 1612000001 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0
- Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
- Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course?  Yes  No  
 If Yes, please complete:
  - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:  
\_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_ / \_\_\_\_
  - Course ID: \_\_\_\_ Effective Date (currently active row): \_\_\_\_
- Authorized Degree Program(s): BA CLASSICS
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department?  Yes  No
  - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments?  Yes  No
  - Can the course be repeated for credit?  Yes  No (if yes, include in course description)
- Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)
- If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title  
CLAS / 3381 / From Homer to Hollywood: Ancient Greek Themes in Modern Cinema
  - Course ID: 297150 Effective Date (currently active row): 20053
- Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)  
 Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304. Description (30 words max.): Examination of the way modern cinema adapts themes from Greek literature and uses them to explore modern conflict.
- Dean's Signature:  Date: 10/02/08  
 Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: Modern and Classical Languages

Person making request: Casey Due-Hackney Telephone: 3-3240

Dean's signature: Date:

I. General Information:

Course number and title: Classics 3381: From Homer to Hollywood: Ancient Greek Themes in Modern Cinema

Complete catalog description (NOT required if attached to CBM 003 form):

Category of Core for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
Communication: Writing Intensive Experiences in the Disciplines
Mathematics
Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
Natural Sciences
Humanities
[X] Visual/Performing Arts Critical
Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
Social/Behavioral Sciences
U.S. History
American Government

II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):

Call 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses" or visit the website at www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see Guidelines). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course?

CLASS USE

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.

*From Homer to Hollywood: Greek Themes in Modern Cinema* integrates literature and film as an introduction to ancient Greek performance traditions and culture. With one or two exceptions, these films do not adapt particular works of Greek literature, but make use of important themes developed in antiquity, shed light on complex structures embedded in the literature, or otherwise translate and allude in meaningful ways to the texts that we will discuss in connection with the films. Students are asked to read several works of Greek epic and tragedy, watch films and discuss them in class, and write essays over the course of the semester; in so doing they learn to analyze imagery, trace metaphors and themes, and interpret crucial scenes and passages in the context of a work (be it literature or film) as a whole. A significant emphasis is placed on the performance context of ancient epic and tragedy and the visualization that such performances evoked for an ancient audience. In some ways, film can be seen as a visualization (on the part of a film's creators) of a performed text.

The course meets the exemplary educational objectives in the following ways. It demonstrates awareness of the scope and variety of works in the arts by exposing students to the artistic traditions of modern cinema. The course encourages the students to understand these works as expressions of individual and human values within our own global culture, and understand how they connect in meaningful ways with the artistic and performative expressions of another culture, that of ancient Greece. Finally, the course will help develop an awareness of the historical, sociological, cultural, and aesthetic context in which modern films are produced, as we search for the meaning conveyed by these visualizations of performed text.

- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.

When I last offered this course in 2007, I assigned short essays throughout the semester (6 total) that asked the students to directly confront the relationship between specific films and one or more works of literature. In this way I was able to monitor throughout the semester the students ability to analyze visual imagery and themes and apply these skills in sophisticated ways to Greek literature (and its performance). The required weekly on-line discussion also allowed me to clarify concepts and refine subsequent lectures. The final exam was where everything paid off, and the students made a dazzling display of their new skills. I plan to use similar evaluation techniques in the future, since they worked well last time.

- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course?

Please see B, above.



FROM HOMER TO HOLLYWOOD:  
ARCHAIC AND CLASSICAL GREEK THEMES IN MODERN CINEMA

University of Houston

Professor: Casey Dué Hackney (e-mail: Casey.Due@mail.uh.edu). Office hours: 11am-1pm Thursdays or by appointment, Agnes Arnold Hall room 454. MCL Dept. phone number: (713) 743-3007, but e-mail is always preferable.

Course WebCT Page: This course is being taught as a hybrid (this concept will be discussed further on the first day of class), and important components of the course are delivered through WebCT. You should log in to the WebCT site regularly to participate in on-line discussions, watch film clips, and check for email and announcements. To get full credit, every week you must post at least once to that week's on-line discussion.

Prerequisites: There are no prerequisites for this course. If you have never taken a Classics course, however, or if you have never read any Greek literature before, you will need to put in extra effort in order to succeed in this class. In the early weeks, it will be essential for you to devote a significant amount of time to reading (and rereading!) the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*. This course is best suited to those with some experience in Classics or reading Classical literature.

Required Reading:

The *Iliad* of Homer, in any translation. I recommended the translation of Stanley Lombardo (1997, ISBN: 0872203522), available at the UH bookstore. A free electronic translation is available here.

The *Odyssey* of Homer, in any translation. I recommended the translation of Stanley Lombardo (2000, ISBN: 0872204847), available at the UH bookstore. A free electronic translation is available here.

The *Histories* of Herodotus, in any translation. I recommended the translation of Aubrey de Selincourt (ISBN: 0140449086), available at the UH bookstore.

The *Agamemnon* of Aeschylus, in any translation. A free electronic translation is available here. The translation of Christopher Collard (ISBN: 0192832816) is available at the UH bookstore.

The *Iphigeneia at Aulis* of Euripides, in any translation. Note, however, that the ancient manuscripts present us with two different endings, and translators sometimes choose one or the other, and sometimes include both. We will discuss both endings. A free electronic translation (containing only the first ending) is available here. The translation of W.S. Merwin and G. Dimock (ISBN: 0195077091) is available at the UH bookstore.

The *Trojan Women* of Euripides, in any translation. The translation of James Morwood (ISBN: 019283987X) is available at the UH bookstore.

The *Lysistrata* of Aristophanes, in any translation. I recommend that of Jeffrey Henderson (ISBN: 0941051587), available at the UH bookstore. (Warning: Humor is extremely hard to translate. The translation you choose will make a big difference in whether or not you enjoy this play. Avoid old/archaic or overly British translations – or anyone that translates the dirty parts into Latin!)

Components of Course Grade: Short Essays 25%; Participation in Class Discussion 25%; Weekly Participation in Web Discussion 25%; Final Exam 25%

\*Attendance Policy: Because of the nature of this course, which meets only once a week and depends heavily on class discussion, attendance is absolutely required. One unexcused absence will result in the loss of a letter grade. I reserve the right to drop you from the course after 2 absences.\*

Schedule of Readings, Lectures, and Discussions

\* NOTE: All reading assignments must be completed in advance of the day to which they are assigned.

Week 1: Introduction to the course and the Homeric *Iliad*

Week 2: *Iliad* (cont.); Epic Poetry in Performance  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Iliad* books 1, 6, 9; Watch *Double Life of Veronique*

Week 3: *Iliad* (cont.)  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Iliad* books 16, 18, 22, 24; Watch *Blade Runner*

Week 4: Introduction to the *Odyssey*  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Odyssey* 1-8; Watch *Cars*

Week 5: *Odyssey* (cont.)  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Odyssey* 9-16; Watch *O Brother Where Art Thou?*

Week 6: *Odyssey* concluded  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Odyssey* 17-24; Watch *Chunhyang*

Week 7: Introduction to Greek Drama  
ASSIGNMENT: Begin reading *Agamemnon* and *Iphigeneia at Aulis*

Week 8: *Agamemnon* and *Iphigeneia at Aulis*  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Agamemnon* and *Iphigeneia at Aulis*; Watch *Iphigeneia*

Week 9: SPRING BREAK

Week 10: *Trojan Women*  
ASSIGNMENT: Read *Trojan Women*; Read reviews of recent productions of *Trojan Women* (distributed in class)

Week 11: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*  
ASSIGNMENT: Read Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*; Watch 9 to 5

Week 12: The *Histories* of Herodotus and *The English Patient* (part 1)  
ASSIGNMENT: Read the *Histories* of Herodotus, books 1 and 2; watch *The English Patient*

Week 13: The *Histories* of Herodotus and *The English Patient* (part 2)  
ASSIGNMENT: Read the *Histories* of Herodotus, books 1 and 2; watch *The English Patient*

Week 14: The *Iliad* revisited  
ASSIGNMENT: Watch *Troy*; READ: "Learning Lessons From The Trojan War: Briseis and the Theme of Force."

Week 15: Review and final discussions

<a href="#">HOME</a>	<a href="#">ASSIGNMENTS</a>	<a href="#">MORE RESOURCES</a>
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