

****THIS IS A PROVISIONAL DRAFT: PLEASE REFER TO THE SYLLABUS
ON NTULEARN ONCE THE SEMESTER BEGINS****

HL 1007: Classical Literature – Doing Things with the Classics

Instructor: Samara Cahill

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Meeting Time: TBA

Location: HSS Auditorium (and tutorial rooms)

Course Overview

This course will introduce students to major authors, genres, themes, narratives, tropes, and conventions of what is known as the “Western canon” while putting these classics in conversation with both classical texts from non-Western cultures and with adaptations.

The course has three main goals: (1) To introduce students to foundational texts of Western and non-Western literature; (2) To question the canon (a set of authoritative or foundational texts) and canon formation (who decides what counts as “authoritative” or “foundational”?); (3) To practice *doing* things with these foundational texts, whether that “doing” is adaptation, interrogation, translation, comparison, cultural analysis, or creative work. Your instructor and tutors welcome feedback, questions, and suggestions. This course is about grappling with the classics while also having fun with them—it will give you instruments for the scholarly toolbox that you will use throughout your time in university (and beyond). But you will only get out of the course what you put into it, so please let us know if you are confused about anything or if you have ideas for discussion points. If you find examples of contemporary or pop culture references to the classics that you think would be helpful to talk about in class—please email Prof. Sam!

Method of Instruction

Lectures: 2 hours per week

Tutorials: 1 hour per week

Texts

Most of the texts will be available on NTULearn. However, you will need to purchase the following:

- Margaret Atwood, *The Penelopiad*

Course Assessment

Continuing Assessment: 50 %

Final Examination: 50 %

Continuing Assessment

Tutorial Presentation (10%) – These 10 minute presentations will be organized by your tutors.

Midterm Project (10%) – This 700-word (lower limit) essay can be either an adaptation of a traditional folktale OR a story of your own creation. You must include a one-page (~250-word) commentary on (a) how the story includes or adapts important elements (structure, character, theme, symbol) that are also present in one of the texts we have so far read in class and (b) why you wrote it the way you did. (So, that's 250+ words of commentary and 450+ words of story). Be creative, have fun with this assignment! Essay must be written in MLA format and include a Works Cited page with the class text listed. Please submit **hard copies** to your tutors by 5pm.

Final Essay (30%): This 1500 word (lower limit) essay will be written in response to a list of prompts distributed to the class during week 7. You must cite and quote at least two (2) scholarly sources. Essay must be written in MLA format and include a Works Cited page. Please submit **hard copies** to your tutors by 5pm.

****Warning: Plagiarism will not be tolerated and will result in automatic failure on the assignment****

Course Schedule

Origins

Week 1

Introductions, Syllabus, Canon Formation and Fanfic, Essay Writing/Plagiarism/MLA Overview

Week 2

Thomas C. Foster, *How To Read Literature Like a Professor*, Chapter 5; Excerpts from Edith Hamilton, *Mythology* (NTULearn)

Week 3

Excerpts from Edith Hamilton, *Mythology* (continued); excerpts from Ovid's *Heroides* and *Metamorphoses* (NTULearn)

Week 4

Excerpts from Homer, *The Odyssey* and Chamberlain, *Chinese Gods* (Kuan Yin, Sun Wukong, Na Cha) (NTULearn)

Week 5

Plato, *The Symposium* (NTULearn)

(in-class overview: How to write a persuasive academic essay; What is this thing called MLA, again? What is a “scholarly” source?)

Week 6

Vyasa (?), Chapters 1-2, *Bhagavad Gita*; Zhuangzi, “Discussion on Making All Things Equal”; excerpt from Plato, *The Republic* (allegory of the cave) (NTULearn)

Week 7

Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*; selection of Sappho’s lyric poetry (Fragment 16 and 44) (NTULearn)

****Midterm Projects Due: TBA by 5pm****

Week 8: Midterm Recess

Week 9

Ibn Tufayl's Hayy Ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale (School of Humanities will provide copies of the text—thank you, SoH!)

Week 10

Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* (NTULearn)

Week 11

Sophocles, *Antigone* (NTULearn)

Week 12

Carol Ann Duffy, “Circe” and “Penelope,” from *The World’s Wife* (NTU Learn); Atwood, *The Penelopiad*

Week 13

Atwood, *The Penelopiad* (continued)

Week 14

Semester Review

****Final Papers Due: TBA by 5pm****