2014

GREK 322-01H Homer's Odyssey: Honors

Alexander Hall

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**Description**
This course will be a study of Homer’s *Odyssey*, its content and its history. We will read the entirety of the work in English, and (hopefully) 3 key books in Greek: 8, 9, and 10. These books were chosen because they contain some of the best known scenes of the epic (Polyphemus the Cyclops, Circe), but also the performances of the bard, Demodocus, commonly believed to be a type of Homer himself. Epic performance, and its relationship to the text we now possess, will be a recurrent theme for discussion, as well as for secondary reading.

**Objectives**
By the end of this course you will be able to:

- Translate passages of the *Odyssey* into English without the aid of a lexicon.
- Scan and read lines of dactylic hexameter in Greek.
- Read and discuss modern scholarship on Homer in general and the *Odyssey* in particular.
- Observe and understand the particular markers of “oral literature.”
- Compile an annotated bibliography of sources connected with some aspect of the *Odyssey*.
- Formulate an argument about Homer and/or the *Odyssey* and defend it at length with primary and secondary sources.

**Daily Activities**
On Mondays and Wednesdays we will translate. Everyone will translate every day. You are to come prepared, but you are not to come with a written translation. We will also read scanned lines in Greek. Everyone, everyday. On Fridays there will be a quiz over the previous week’s reading, as well as objective questions about books of the *Odyssey* read in English. During the first half of the semester, we will also spend time on Fridays discussing assigned secondary sources about Homer and the *Odyssey*. These will be available on the course website.

**Grading**
Quiz average: 25% (Translation, parsing, questions on content; lowest quiz drops).
Exams: 2 x 20% = 40% (Translation, parsing, questions on content)
Reflection paper: 5% (1 page paper exploring a topic of interest and proposing questions to explore about it)

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1 If you have attended and participated in class and completed readings and assignments.
Annotated bibliography: 10% (sources connected to the topic explored in the reflection paper)

Research paper: 15% (10-15 pages, making an argument on the topic of the reflection paper, using sources from the bibliography)

Attendance and Participation: 5% (see below)

The Departmental grading scale is:

- **A**: 100-95
- **A-**: 94-93
- **B+**: 92-91
- **B**: 90-87
- **B-**: 86-85
- **C+**: 84-83
- **C**: 82-79
- **C-**: 78-77
- **D+**: 76-75
- **D**: 74-72
- **D-**: 71-70
- **F**: <69

**Course Policies**

**ATTENDANCE**: Attendance and active participation are essential for the successful completion of this course, and as such are strongly (and ruthlessly) incentivized. Every unexcused absence lowers your attendance grade by 20 points, and thus your final grade by 1. If you somehow miss more than 5 classes (and thus are already receiving a 0 for attendance), you will still be docked points at the rate of 1 final grade point / missed class.

Absences may be excused for personal, medical, religious, or co-curricular reasons at the instructor’s discretion if you contact me AT LEAST 24 hours in advance or after the fact in the case of a true (and documentable) emergency. We will discuss the rescheduling of graded activities when you contact me. Graded activities missed due to an unexcused absence cannot be made up, and you will receive a grade of 0.

Whether excused or not, students are still responsible for any material covered on the days they miss. Plan to get notes from a friend, and consult the course website for any handouts or similar materials that may have been distributed.

**DECORUM**: To create and preserve an environment where all are able to learn, students are expected to observe a minimal level of decorum in the classroom. Those who do not will be instructed to leave and marked as absent for the day. Violations of decorum include but are not limited to: disrespectful or abusive treatment of other students or of the instructor; disruptive use of technology (texting, facebooking, or talking on the phone in class); preparing assignments for other classes during class time.

**COMMUNICATION**: The best ways to communicate with the instructor outside class are face-to-face or via email. Please drop by any time, especially but not exclusively during posted office hours. I have included my office phone on the syllabus, which you may use to call during non-posted hours to see if I’m in (I sometimes am). Otherwise, email communication is preferred. I will always answer an email I receive by the beginning of the next posted office hour after it was sent. I will be on the course chat page on Canvas on Monday evenings from 9 till 10 to answer any question you might have.
Email and the course website will also be the ways I will get in touch with you outside class. Extra readings and any materials distributed during class will usually be posted on the course website afterwards. Announcements relating to the class will be made there (and distributed by email), so check in frequently. I will also keep an online grade book there, which should be your first destination for questions you have about your grades.

A discussion forum is enabled on the website to facilitate discussion among students.

ACCOMMODATION: Any student who feels s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability (including learning disabilities) should contact the Learning Assistance Center at 513-745-3280 on the Fifth Floor of the Conaton Learning Commons, Room 514, to coordinate reasonable accommodations.

ACADEMIC HONESTY: The following is excerpted from the Student Handbook, and thus applies not only to this class but University wide: “The pursuit of truth demands high standards of personal honesty. Academic and professional life requires a trust based upon integrity of the written and spoken word. Accordingly, violations of certain standards of ethical behavior will not be tolerated at Xavier University. These include theft, cheating, plagiarism, unauthorized assistance in assignments and tests, unauthorized copying of computer software, the falsification of results and material submitted in reports or admission and registration documents, and the falsification of any academic record including letters of recommendation.

“All work submitted for academic evaluation must be the student’s own. Certainly, the activities of other scholars will influence all students. However, the direct and unattributed use of another’s efforts is prohibited as is the use of any work untruthfully submitted as one’s own.

“Penalties for violations of this policy may include one or more of the following: a zero for that assignment or test, an "F" in the course, and expulsion from the University. The dean of the college in which the student is enrolled is to be informed in writing of all such incidents, though the teacher has full authority to assign the grade for the assignment, test, or course. If disputes of interpretation arise, the student, faculty member, and chair should attempt to resolve the difficulty. If this is unsatisfactory, the dean will rule in the matter. As a final appeal, the academic vice president will call a committee of tenured faculty for the purpose of making a final determination.”

HARASSMENT: The following is excerpted from the Student Handbook, and thus applies not only to this class but University wide: “Harassment is the creation of a hostile or intimidating environment, in which conduct, because of its severity and/or persistence, is likely to interfere significantly with an individual’s life by affecting the person physically or emotionally. Harassment will not be tolerated.

“Individuals who believe they have been harassed, individuals charged with harassment, and individuals with knowledge of situations in which harassment may
exist should consult the Xavier University Harassment Code and Accountability Procedures (HCAP). All students are responsible and expected to know and follow the HCAP. Any student violation of the HCAP is also a violation of the Standards of Student Conduct. The full HCAP can be found at www.xavier.edu/hr/docs/employees/harassmentcode.pdf."

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4/4 - Bibliography due

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4/11 - Quiz 10

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4/16 - Quiz 11
4/18 - EASTER

4/21 - EASTER
4/23
4/25 - Quiz 12

4/28
4/30 - Paper due
5/2

5/7 - EXAM