

CID 2301.04E
The Human Experience
Course Syllabus, Fall 2023
Tuesday, Thursday, 9:30-10:45 AM
Sowers Education South (EDS) 127

INSTRUCTOR INFORMATION

I am: Andrew Donnelly, PhD
Office Location: Henderson 317 (for now! This will change in perhaps a month)
Office Hours: to be determined
University Email Address: andrew.donnelly@tamuc.edu
Preferred Form of Communication: email
Communication Response Time: as soon as I can (usually within 24 hours; on weekends in particular I may take longer)

Your Friendly Neighborhood Student Instructor: E.J. Mathis
Office Location: TBD
Office Hours: TBD
Email: emathis1@leomail.tamuc.edu

COURSE INFORMATION

The following books are (or will be) available for purchase at the University Bookstore and will likely be found for a cheaper price online. **Please make sure to acquire the correct editions of the books. I would like you to read the assigned translations, primarily because they are the most readable, especially for students who have never read epic poetry before.** I know that other editions are available, and potentially cheaper, but please note that not all translations are the same. Yes, you can get a relatively cheap copy of, say, John Dryden's translation, but keep in mind this was produced in the 17th century. You will find it challenging. Purchasing/acquiring a different edition will hamper you in our course, both when we read in class (as the line and page numbers will come from the Lombardo and Wilson editions), and take exams (as I will use the Lombardo and Wilson translations for passage IDs).

Homer, *Iliad*, trans. Stanley Lombardo. ISBN: 978-0872203525

Homer, *Odyssey*, trans. Emily Wilson. ISBN: 978-0393356250

COURSE DESCRIPTION

CID 2301: The Human Experience introduces students to humanities-based inquiry by guiding students through an exploration of important humanistic questions across all elements of the human experience. Through the deep focus on a connecting theme, students will engage in holistic discussions of topics addressing fundamental questions about human life and human interactions, develop the skills of humanistic inquiry (including critical thinking, research,

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literacy skills, and communication skills), and learn to apply their knowledge to their personal, professional, and academic goals.

This course is the foundational course for the Humanities Certificate program, a grant-funded, TAMU System-wide initiative designed to create an intentional connective pathway through the core curriculum to infuse the humanities and humanities-based inquiry (critical thinking, research, communication, ethics, morality, cultural awareness, empathy, etc.) into student degree pathways and encourage students to see the relationships between larger questions of the human experience and their own lives and goals. The course is based on Transformative Texts and a Transformative Project.

This course centers on two of the great epics of the ancient Mediterranean world—the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*—their nature and significance, and, especially, the concepts of heroes and heroism.

Students will be able to demonstrate knowledge of ancient epic as a literary genre, what heroes are and why they are featured in epics, and how epics began and evolved to reflect audiences and their social, cultural, political and other concerns, values (such as leadership) beliefs and practices. Specific topics focused on include the role of the hero in ancient literature; ancient understanding of choice, freedom, and personal agency; the depiction of women in epics; and the relationship between humans and gods.

Most importantly, this course will improve your reading and communication skills, sharpen your mind, and make you a more informed (and interesting!) member of our nation and world.

A NOTE ON SMARTPHONES

Smartphones are one of the most amazing pieces of educational technology ever created. Smartphones are one of the most frustrating and distracting pieces of educational technology ever created. We might, at times, use smartphones to look up information, to explore historical sources, and to examine alternate interpretations. At all other times cellular phones (and computers not being used for note taking) should be silenced and put away. Smartphones also work against the development of a lively and engaging classroom community. They also really, really distract me—think of the dog from the movie *Up* who shouts “Squirrel!” For this reason, students are asked to put away their phones upon entering the classroom. Students who would like to spend the time between classes on their phones should do so in the hallway or lounges. Upon entering the classroom, students should be prepared to engage socially and intellectually with their fellow students and professor in an in-person format. Students violating this policy should expect a penalty on their participation grade for each offense.

STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES

1. Critical/Integrative Thinking: Students will apply insights from the humanities (i.e., examinations of human history, culture, language, ethics, and aesthetics) to problems or questions that intersect with other areas of inquiry, including STEM and professional disciplines. (Core Outcome Alignment: Critical Thinking)

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2. Communication: Students will communicate ideas effectively through writing and, where appropriate, through oral communication, visual communication, or creative performance. (Core Outcome Alignment: Communication)

3. Ethical Reasoning: Students will engage with multiple perspectives in exploring the human dimensions of real-world situations and problems. (Core Outcome Alignment: Personal Responsibility; Critical Thinking)

4. Cultural Awareness: Students will demonstrate an appreciation for social and cultural diversity while engaging in critical analysis of various forms of literary, artistic, or cultural expression. (Core Outcome Alignment: Social Responsibility; Critical Thinking)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Instructional Methods

This is a readings course. The majority of our meetings will be reading and discussing these epic poems as a group. I will ask questions of you and explain developments in the poem. I will also provide historical context, as one of the goals of this course is to understand the relationship between these poems and the civilizations that created and listened to them. Talking about literature is one of the most fulfilling activities of human life, and we will do this for the next several months. Thus active participation—you talking and engaging with the poems and our class conversation—is key to your and this course’s success.

I encourage an open exchange of ideas between the class and myself. Please do not hesitate to ask questions. The only silly question is the one left unasked.

Grading and assignments

Final grades in this course will be based on the following scale:

A = 90%-100%

B = 80%-89%

C = 70%-79%

D = 60%-69%

F = 59% or Below

Your overall course grade will be based on several factors:

First examination:	20%
Final examination:	20%
Participation/discussion:	25%
Quizzes:	25%
Transformative Project:	10%
TOTAL	100%

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I am available, whether in person or via email, to help you with your work. Please seek me out. Students are often not aware that faculty members are here to help. My door is open. I very much enjoy getting to know and helping my students.

Assignment breakdown

Assessments

Both **examinations** will include a discussion of a passage selected from your readings and a choice from among several general short answer questions about material covered in class and read at home. You will not be examined on material not yet covered in class or the readings. You will be graded on your command of the material and ability to offer nuanced, thoughtful opinions on it. This assignment supports SLOs 1-4

We will spend a significant amount of each class involved in the **discussion** of epic poetry. This course only works when there is free-flowing discussion of the material that you have read. Thus please come to class ON TIME having prepared this reading for our discussion. The bulk of your class participation grade will come from your performance. This participation grade is calculated on your willingness and ability to contribute to our class discussion. Asking questions; contributing to the conversation; helping to discuss or explain the workings of a particular passage or book—all of these are what I hope to see from each of you over the course of this semester, and doing these is vital for your success in this portion of the course. Please note that discussion is more than a requirement: it makes the class enjoyable. No one likes a silent classroom. Many doubt, however, that their voice or contributions are the solution. I assure you this is not the case: your contributions will be an invaluable part of our experience this semester. Not only will your peers thank you, they will learn from you. So will I. This assignment supports SLOs 1-4.

There will be several **quizzes** throughout the semester. They will be held on the first class of most weeks and will consist of two questions directly related to the reading for the week. There will be 12 in total, and I will count the 10 highest grades. There are NO make-up quizzes. This assignment supports SLOs 1-4.

The **Transformative Project** will ask students to take a theme from the course, engage in research about that topic, identify relevant sources, present an argument, and link the outcomes to an issue relevant to their own career or personal trajectory. For this year's transformative project, students will prepare research posters built on themes that we will investigate over the course of our semester together. These themes include honor, violence, and death. We'll focus on developing these themes over the first weeks of our course, and will pay attention to them in detail each week. This assignment supports SLOs 1-4.

Attendance and Participation

For all class meetings, students are expected to come prepared having done all the reading. I expect all students to participate actively in our class and to contribute their thoughts, ideas, and questions to our collective exploration. I especially encourage you to bring your questions

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to class. I will create, and expect you to uphold, an intellectual environment in the classroom where we can listen to and consider others' arguments and opinions with an open mind and where we respect viewpoints other than our own.

Your participation grade will be based on your engagement in our class discussions and be guided by the following rubric:

- A: Always prepared, frequently participates, not absent
- B: Always prepared, participates only when called on, rarely absent
- C: Usually prepared, rarely speaks, rarely absent
- D: Often unprepared, several absences
- F: Usually unprepared, frequent absences

COURSE OUTLINE / CALENDAR

Week one: Introduction and Explanation of Class

We meet: August 29, 31

Week two: Of Greece and Troy and gods and goddesses; Iliad Book One

We meet: September 5, 7

Week three: The Breaker of Horses

We meet: September 12, 14

Week four: Of Gods and Men

We meet: September 19, 21

Week five: Set Fire to the Ships

We meet: September 26, 28

Week six: Achilles at War

We meet: October 3, 5

Week seven: Achilles at War

We meet: October 10, 12

Week eight: Iliad conclusion and midterm exam

We meet: October 17, 19

Midterm examination: October 19

Week nine: Meet Telemachus

We meet: October 24, 26

Week ten: Odysseus the Captive

We meet: October 31, November 2

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Week eleven: Odysseus Returns to the World of Men

We meet: November 7, 9

Note: I may be traveling this week. We will adjust accordingly.

Week twelve: A Tale of My Wanderings

We meet: November 14, 16

Note: I may be traveling this week. We will adjust accordingly.

Week thirteen: Thanksgiving break/catch-up day

We meet: November 21

Week fourteen: Guess Who's Back

We meet: November 28, 30

Week fifteen: Honey, I'm Home: *Odyssey* conclusions and final exam

We meet: December 5, 7

In-class final exam: December 7

TECHNOLOGY REQUIREMENTS

LMS

All course sections offered by Texas A&M University-Commerce have a corresponding course shell in the myLeo Online Learning Management System (LMS). Below are technical requirements

LMS Requirements:

<https://community.brightspace.com/s/article/Brightspace-Platform-Requirements>

LMS Browser Support:

https://documentation.brightspace.com/EN/brightspace/requirements/all/browser_support.htm

YouSeeU Virtual Classroom Requirements:

<https://support.youseeu.com/hc/en-us/articles/115007031107-Basic-System-Requirements>

ACCESS AND NAVIGATION

You will need your campus-wide ID (CWID) and password to log into the course. If you do not know your CWID or have forgotten your password, contact the Center for IT Excellence (CITE) at 903.468.6000 or helpdesk@tamuc.edu.

Note: Personal computer and internet connection problems do not excuse the requirement to complete all course work in a timely and satisfactory manner. Each student needs to have a backup method to deal with these inevitable problems. These methods might include the availability of a backup PC at home or work, the temporary use of a computer at a friend's

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home, the local library, office service companies, Starbucks, a TAMUC campus open computer lab, etc.

COMMUNICATION AND SUPPORT

If you have any questions or are having difficulties with the course material, please contact your Instructor.

Technical Support

If you are having technical difficulty with any part of Brightspace, please contact Brightspace Technical Support at 1-877-325-7778. Other support options can be found here:

<https://community.brightspace.com/support/s/contactsupport>

Interaction with Instructor Statement

Course communications will come through your university email account. Be sure to check it regularly. You should contact me through my email address (andrew.donnelly@tamuc.edu).

Statement on AI (ChatGPT)

At A&M University-Commerce we recognize that there are legitimate uses of Artificial Intelligence, ChatBots, or other software that can generate text, or suggest replacements for text beyond individual words. AI is a powerful tool for generating text and for consolidating information. As a tool it requires that both students and faculty think through how to use it wisely and responsibly to accomplish our goals. AI is also a powerful tool for gathering the work of others and combining it, without citation, into a polished product. In this it is morally dubious.

For this course our goals are to practice historical thinking, to interpret historical evidence, and to grow in our understanding of the past. As a tool AI does little to help us in these tasks. On the contrary, using AI for course assignments would undermine your learning in these areas—the learning you are paying for. For this reason, students and faculty are not authorized to use any AI software in this course. Any use of such software constitutes an instance of academic dishonesty (plagiarism). As a student you are fully responsible for the content of any assignment you submit.

Statement on Student Grievances

Students who have questions or concerns about the Instructor's course policies or the conduct either of the Instructor or a classmate should first consult with the Instructor. In the event of a lack of resolution or satisfaction on the matter, the student may bring their concerns to the head of the History Department, Sharon Kowalsky (Sharon.Kowalsky@tamuc.edu). If this does not result in a satisfactory conclusion to the matter, students may bring the issue to the attention of the Associate Dean of Students per procedures outlined on pp. 15-19 of the Student Guide Book.

Late Papers

The syllabus and schedule are subject to change.

All written assignments are due as indicated in this syllabus. Late assignments may be accepted only with the advance approval of the professor and may be assessed a penalty of one letter grade per week. If you have a problem with a due date because of a specific emergency, please notify the professor in advance or plan to turn the assignment in early. *I can be very understanding and flexible with you, but only if you come to talk to me in advance.* To pass this class, all assignments must be completed. Any missing assignments at the end of the course will result in an overall course grade of F.

Your Mental Health

The Counseling Center at A&M-Commerce, located in the Halladay Building, Room 203, offers counseling services, educational programming, and connection to community resources for students. Students have 24/7 access to the Counseling Center's crisis assessment services by calling 903-886-5145. For more information regarding Counseling Center events and confidential services, please visit www.tamuc.edu/counsel

COURSE AND UNIVERSITY PROCEDURES/POLICIES

Syllabus Change Policy

The syllabus is a guide, not a contract. Circumstances and events, such as student progress, may make it necessary for the instructor to modify the syllabus during the semester. Any changes made to the syllabus will be announced in advance.

Student Conduct

All students enrolled at the University shall follow the tenets of common decency and acceptable behavior conducive to a positive learning environment. The Code of Student Conduct is described in detail in the [Student Guidebook](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/Admissions/oneStopShop/undergraduateAdmissions/studentGuidebook.aspx>

Students should also consult the Rules of Netiquette for more information regarding how to interact with students in an online forum: <https://www.britannica.com/topic/netiquette>

TAMUC Attendance

For more information about the attendance policy please visit the [Attendance](#) webpage and [Procedure 13.99.99.R0.01](#).

<http://www.tamuc.edu/admissions/registrar/generalInformation/attendance.aspx>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/academic/13.99.99.R0.01.pdf>

Academic Integrity

Students at Texas A&M University-Commerce are expected to maintain high standards of integrity and honesty in all of their scholastic work. For more details and the definition of academic dishonesty see the following procedures:

[Undergraduate Academic Dishonesty 13.99.99.R0.03](#)

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[Undergraduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/documents/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyForm.pdf>

[Graduate Student Academic Dishonesty Form](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/academics/graduateschool/faculty/GraduateStudentAcademicDishonestyFormold.pdf>

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/13students/undergraduates/13.99.99.R0.03UndergraduateAcademicDishonesty.pdf>

Students with Disabilities-- ADA Statement

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute that provides comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact:

Office of Student Disability Resources and Services

Texas A&M University-Commerce

Velma K. Waters Library Rm 162

Phone (903) 886-5150 or (903) 886-5835

Fax (903) 468-8148

Email: studentdisabilityservices@tamuc.edu

Website: [Office of Student Disability Resources and Services](#)

<http://www.tamuc.edu/campusLife/campusServices/studentDisabilityResourcesAndServices/>

Nondiscrimination Notice

Texas A&M University-Commerce will comply in the classroom, and in online courses, with all federal and state laws prohibiting discrimination and related retaliation on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, national origin, disability, age, genetic information or veteran status. Further, an environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression will be maintained.

Campus Concealed Carry Statement

Texas Senate Bill - 11 (Government Code 411.2031, et al.) authorizes the carrying of a concealed handgun in Texas A&M University-Commerce buildings only by persons who have been issued and are in possession of a Texas License to Carry a Handgun. Qualified law enforcement officers or those who are otherwise authorized to carry a concealed handgun in the State of Texas are also permitted to do so. Pursuant to Penal Code (PC) 46.035 and A&M-Commerce Rule 34.06.02.R1, license holders may not carry a concealed handgun in restricted locations.

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For a list of locations, please refer to the [Carrying Concealed Handguns On Campus](#) document and/or consult your event organizer.

Web url:

<http://www.tamuc.edu/aboutUs/policiesProceduresStandardsStatements/rulesProcedures/34SafetyOfEmployeesAndStudents/34.06.02.R1.pdf>

Pursuant to PC 46.035, the open carrying of handguns is prohibited on all A&M-Commerce campuses. Report violations to the University Police Department at 903-886-5868 or 9-1-1.

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