

**Tompkins Cortland Community College**  
**Master Course Syllabus**

**Course Discipline and Number: HUMN/ENGL 285H**

**Year: 2020-2021**

**Course Title: Classic Epic in Transition - Honors**

**Credit Hours: 3**

**Attendance Policy:** *To maintain good grades, regular attendance in class is necessary. Absence from class is considered a serious matter and absence never excuses a student from class work. It is the responsibility of all instructors to distribute reasonable attendance policies in writing during the first week of class. Students are required to comply with the attendance policy set by each of their instructors. Students are not penalized if they are unable to attend classes or participate in exams on particular days because of religious beliefs, in accordance with Chapter 161, Section 224-a of the Education Law of the State of New York. Students who plan to be absent from classroom activity for religious reasons should discuss the absence in advance with their instructors. See college catalog for more information.*

**Services for Students with Disabilities:** *It is the College's policy to provide, on an individual basis, appropriate academic adjustments for students with disabilities, which may affect their ability to fully participate in program or course activities or to meet course requirements. Students with disabilities should contact the Coordinator of Access and Equity Services, to discuss their particular need for accommodations. All course materials are available in alternate formats upon request.*

### **Course Description**

This course introduces the classical epics: the Iliad, Odyssey, and Aeneid. These great poems provide important views of ancient Greek and Roman culture, mythology, and civilization. Their influence ranges over thousands of years, from ancient epic and tragedy to a variety of modern and contemporary arts. As pillars in the western canon of great books, they remain a focus of literary theory and criticism today. Students in this course are required to participate in research and discussion. Open to students in the honors program or by instructor permission. Prerequisites: ENGL 102; RDNG 116 if required by placement testing. 3 Cr. (3 Lec.) Occasionally.

### **Course Context/Audience**

Intended for students in the honors program, this course satisfies a humanities, liberal arts, or unrestricted elective requirement. While the course can be of use to any student interested in a better understanding of western civilization, it is particularly appropriate for those who wish to pursue a program or career in literature or in the teaching of literature. Moreover, those interested in teaching secondary school English should find this course near the top of their list.

### **Basic Skills/Entry Level Expectations**

**Writing:** WC College level writing skills are required. See course co-requisites or pre-requisites.

**Math:** M0 Course requires very little or no math.

**Reading:** R4 Before taking this course, students must satisfactorily complete RDNG 116 or have assessment indicating that no reading course was required.

### **Course Goals**

1. To develop familiarity with epic poetry as an important genre of human expression. The study of these three epics will enable students to recognize the techniques of epic poetry and the strong connection these epics have to the values and mores of their respective cultures.
2. To build student knowledge concerning the mythology of Greece and Rome. Since these myths are found in much of Western Literature, this knowledge should prove invaluable in the student's subsequent studies of literature and culture.
3. To acquaint the student with classical Greek and Roman civilization. Literature occurs in a context; instruction in the course will provide the classical context for these epics.
4. To strengthen the ability of the student to locate relevant critical research and to analyze the positions and relative merits of the research found.
5. To provide students with the opportunity to express their ideas in informed discussions and in formal presentations.

6. To sharpen the reading skills of students. The three epics in question present a challenge to the modern reader because of the density of concept and content that are developed in the texts. For example such themes as Kleos (Glory and Reputation), Nostos (Homecoming), and Xenia (Hospitality) appear frequently in the texts, and the student reader will learn to recognize and appreciate the conceptual reverberations that are taking place.

7. To occasion an epiphany in students as they become aware of the artistic power and sophistication at work in the ancient world.

8. To develop in students a sense of enjoyment in the life of the mind. In this course they will find the reading of great art, the discussion of various perspectives, and the process of research that brings their minds into conversation with great thinkers to be among the most enjoyable aspects of a full life.

**Course Objectives/Topics**

<b>Objective/Topic</b>	<b># Hours</b>
The epic tradition	1 Hour
Discussion of The Iliad	9 Hours
Hourly exam	1 Hour
Discussions of The Odyssey	9 Hours
Student presentations on the Iliad or Odyssey	3 Hours
Summary and comparison of Iliad and Odyssey	1.5 Hour
Second hourly exam	1 Hour
Introduction to classical Rome	1.5 Hour
Discussions of the Aeneid	9 Hours
Student presentations on the Aeneid	3 Hours
Summary and comparison of Homer and Virgil	1.5 Hour
The influences of Homer and Virgil	1.5 Hour
Final exam	3 Hours

**General Education Goals - Critical Thinking & Social/Global Awareness**

<b>Critical Thinking Outcomes</b>	<b>How does the course address Critical Thinking (include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used.)</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will be able to develop meaningful questions to address problems or issues.</li> </ul>	Reading of the epics as well as of critical texts will provide significant challenge. Presentations and discussions will underscore keen listening and the informed articulation of ideas.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will be able to gather, interpret, and evaluate relevant sources of information.</li> </ul>	The presentations on critical perspectives will engage the student in the process of locating, evaluating, and synthesizing critical research. The ability to apply critical perspectives beyond the text mentioned in the criticism will be encouraged.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will be able to reach informed conclusions and solutions.</li> </ul>	While the epics themselves present varying perspectives concerning the human experience, classroom discussion will present each student with a panoply of perspectives with respect to the meaning of literary text and the soundness of critical opinion developed in student presentations.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will be able to consider analytically the viewpoints of self and others.</li> </ul>	

Social/Global Awareness Outcomes	How does the course address Social/Global Awareness (include required or recommended instructional resources, strategies, learning activities, assignments, etc., that must or could be used)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Students will begin to understand how their lives shape and are shaped by the complex world in which they live.</li> <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have social consequences.</li> <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have economic consequences.</li> <li>➤ Students will understand that their actions have environmental consequences.</li> </ul>	<p>Understanding the cultural context of this outstanding poetry will inevitably increase the student's familiarity with the glory that was Greece and the grandeur that was Rome.</p> <p>Both the Greeks and the Romans use their epic as models and guides for citizens to understand the complexity, challenges, and duties inherent in the human experience.</p>

### Instructional Methods

A variety of instructional methods including lecture, discussion, student presentations, exams and audio-visual resources should be used in the course. However, reading the texts will be the primary method for learning. To assist students in their reading, they will have access to recordings read by professional performers.

### Methods of Assessment/Evaluation

Method	% Course Grade
Two hourly exams	30%
Two student presentations	30%
Final exam	20%
Attendance and participation	10%
Numerous quizzes, assessing student preparation of the reading assignments	10%

### Text(s)

Required, The Iliad, Robert Fagles., Latest edition, © 1998. New York: Penguin.

Required, The Odyssey., Robert Fagles., Latest edition, © 2005. New York: Penguin.

Required, The Aeneid., Robert Fitzgerald., Latest edition, © 1990. New York: Vintage Classics.

### Bibliography

Library Holdings: General Resources:

Alsop, Joseph. From the Silent Earth: Report on the Greek Bronze Age. New York: Harper & Row, 1964.

Barr, Stringfellow. The Will of Zeus: A History of Greece. Philadelphia: Lippincott, 1961.

Bernal, Martin. Black Athena: the Afroasiatic Roots of Classical Civilization. New Brunswick: Rutgers, 1987.

Boardman, John, and Jasper Griffin. The Oxford History of the Classical World. New York: Oxford, 1986.

- Cahill, Thomas. Sailing the Wine-Dark Sea: Why the Greeks Matter. New York: Doubleday, 2003.
- Campbell, Joseph. Occidental Mythology. New York: Penguin, 1976.
- Carcopino, Jerome, Henry T. Rowell and E.O. Lorimer. Daily Life in Ancient Rome. New Haven: Yale, 1940.
- Cassirer, Ernst. The Myth of the State. New Haven: Yale, 1946.
- Dillon, Matthew. Girls and Women in Classical Greek Religion. New York: Routledge, 2002.
- Ehrenberg, Victor. Society and Civilization in Greece and Rome. Cambridge: Harvard, 1964.
- Fairclough, H. Rushton. Love of Nature Among the Greeks and Romans. New York: Cooper Square, 1963.
- Feder, Lillian. Crowell's Handbook of Classical Literature. New York: Crowell, 1964.
- Godolphin, Francis Richard Borroum, ed. Great Classical Myths. New York: Modern Library, 1964.
- Goodwater, Leanna. Women in Antiquity: An Annotated Bibliography. Metuchen, N.J. : Scarecrow Press, 1975.
- Guirand, Félix. New Larousse Encyclopedia of Mythology. New York: Putnam, 1968.
- Gwinup, Thomas and Fidelia Dickinson. Greek and Roman Authors: A Checklist of Criticism. Metuchen, N.J., Scarecrow Press, 1973.
- Hadas, Moses. Imperial Rome. New York: Time, 1965.
- Hale, William Harlan. The Horizon Book of Ancient Greece. New York: American Heritage, 1965.
- Harrison, Jane Ellen. Mythology. New York, Cooper Square Publishers, 1963.
- Harvey, Paul, Sir. The Oxford Companion to Classical Literature. New York: Oxford, 1984.
- Hazel, John. Who's Who in the Greek World. New York: Routledge, 2000.
- Hillman, James. The Dream and the Underworld. New York: Harper & Row, 1979.
- Hornblower, Simon and Antony Spawforth. The Oxford Classical Dictionary. New York: Oxford, 1996.
- Johnstone, Mary. Roman Life. Chicago: Scott Foresman, 1957.
- Kirkwood, Gordon MacDonald. A Short Guide to Classical Mythology. New York: Rinehart, 1959.
- Jones, Girard. Killing Monsters: Why Children Need Fantasy, Super-Heroes and Make-Believe Violence. New York: Basic Books, 2002.
- Leach, Maria, and Jerome Fried. Funk & Wagnalls' Standard Dictionary of Folklore, Mythology and Legend. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1949-1950.
- Levi, Peter. Atlas of the Greek World. New York: Facts on File, 1980.
- Monaghan, Patricia. The New Book of Goddesses and Heroines. St. Paul: Llewellyn, 1997.
- Neeson, Liam and Anthony Geffen. The Greeks: Crucible of Civilization. PBS Video, 2000. (VHS format)
- Nilsson, Martin P. A History of Greek Religion. Oxford: Clarendon, 1949.
- Nulle, Stebelton Henry. The Ancient World. New York: Harcourt, Brace & World, 1964.
- Pomoroy, Sarah B. Goddesses, Whores, Wives and Slaves: Women in Classical Antiquity. New York: Schocken, 1975.

Rostovtzeff, Michael Ivanovitch. Out of the Past of Greece and Rome. Biblio & Tannen, 1965.

Simpson, D.P. Cassell's New Latin Dictionary. New York: Funk & Wagnalls, 1960.

Smith, Jeff. The Frugal Gourmet Cooks Three Ancient Cuisines: China, Greece, Rome. New York: Morrow, 1989.

Stewart, Zeph. The Ancient World: Justice, Heroism and Responsibility. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1966.

Stone, Irving. The Greek Treasure: A Biographical Novel of Henry and Sophia Schliemann. New York: Doubleday, 1975.

Vermeule, Emily. Greece in the Bronze Age. Chicago: U Chicago Press, 1964.

Vickery, John B., ed. Myth and Literature: Contemporary Theory and Practice. Lincoln: Nebraska Press, 1966.

Wendell, Barrett. Traditions of European Literature from Homer to Dante. New York: Ungar, 1964.

Library Holdings: Specialized Resources:

Bloom, Harold. Homer: Modern Critical Views. New York: Chelsea House, 1984.

Brooks, Otis. Virgil: A Study in Civilized Poetry. Oxford: Clarendon, 1964.

Clarke, Howard W. The Art of the Odyssey. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1967.

Finley, M.I. The World of Odysseus. New York: Viking, 1965.

Homer, The Iliad. Trans. Richmond Lattimore. Chicago: U Chicago, 1962.

Homer, The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Doubleday, 1961.

Kirk, G.S. The Songs of Homer. Cambridge: Cambridge Press, 1964.

Mueller, Martin. The Iliad. Boston: Allen & Unwin, 1984.

Ovid. Metamorphoses. Trans. Rolfe Humphries. Bloomington: Indiana, 1955.

Plutarch, The Lives of the Noble Greeks and Romans. Trans. John Dryden et al. New York: Modern Library, 1932.

Putnam, Michael C.J. The Poetry of the Aeneid: Four Studies in Imaginative Unity and Design. Cambridge: Harvard, 1965.

Schliemann. Heinrich. Ilios: The City and Country of the Trojans. New York: Blom, 1881.

Schliemann. Heinrich. Troja: Results of the Latest Researches and Discoveries. New York: Arno, 1884.

Schliemann. Heinrich, and Philip Smith. Troy and Its Remains. New York: Blom, 1875.

Scott, John Adams. Homer and His Influence. New York: Cooper Square, 1963.

Shields, John C. The American Aeneas: classical origins of the American self. Knoxville: U Tennessee, 2001.

Steiner, George (ed). Homer: A Collection of Critical Essays. Englewood Cliffs: Prentice-Hall, 1964.

Virgil. The Aeneid. Trans. Rolfe Humphries. New York: Scribner, 1951.

Virgil. The Aeneid. Trans. L.R. Lind. Bloomington: Indiana UP, 1963.

Resources to be placed on Library Reserve:

Homer. The Iliad. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin, 1998.

Homer. The Iliad. Trans. Robert Fagles. Read by Derek Jacobi. New York: Penguin-HighBridge Audio, 1992.

Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin, 2005.

Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. Robert Fagles. Read by Ian McKellen. New York: Penguin Audiobooks, 1996.

Pukstas, Daniel. Traveling with Athena: A Blind Man's Odyssey through Italy and Greece. Lincoln: iUniverse, 2003.

Virgil. The Aeneid. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. New York: Vintage Classics, 1990.

Virgil. The Aeneid. Trans. Robert Fitzgerald. Read by Christopher Ravenscroft. New York: HighBridge Audio, 1995.

Other books owned by the instructors are available to be placed on reserve.

### Other Learning Resources

<b>Audiovisual</b>
Numerous media have been developed around the classical epics. Recent films, like <i>Troy</i> and <i>O Brother, Where Art Thou?</i> , attest to the enduring interest of these essential stories. Where time, availability and finances permit, the course will include some of these materials, either during scheduled class time or as resources on reserve.
<b>Electronic</b>
A variety of excellent web sites present information, commentary and analysis on Homer, Virgil, epic, and related topics. There are abundant materials to supplement and enhance students' readings of the poems.
<b>Other</b>
No resources specified