



Ancient Cultures: HUMN 3301 (28168)

Course Syllabus

SPRING 2021

Section I: Class Philosophy

The Greek maxim that man is the measure of all things was not simply a philosophical explanation for the tendencies in ancient art and literature to personify the unknown elements of the cosmos. Rather it is a basic statement affirming the doctrine of a man-centered universe, the first axiom of the proof of human individuality and essential worth. This idea is at the center of the modern European and American value system. It is a basic assumption in the traditional Western concept of reality. Whether conscious of it or not, many Westerners, ourselves included, are still influenced by this essential principle.

The course will cover a wide-range of material and subjects. Beginning with the ancient myths of creation, moving through epic tales of heroes, including due emphasis on developments in drama and philosophy, and climaxing in the Roman Empire, Humanities 3301 will probe the evolution of Western man's self-concept. On the assumption that authors and artists are sensitive and talented individuals who are able to sense and express the meanings of experience, the material of this class will be the great writings and artifacts of the creative individuals who lived in the ancient Mediterranean world.

Section II: Learning Objectives

To improve their vocabulary recognition and information gathering skills students will read several different writing styles in selections from the Bible, Greek and Roman epic, drama, history and philosophy. The goal will be to improve students' ability to appreciate the connections between different ideas and bits of information and to guide students to realize the connections between individual elements of a text and the text's conclusions. Students will demonstrate their proficiency through written discussions of the evolving Western European views of human kind and how these views have been shaped by such things as the classical concept of cause and effect, the concept of rational order, and the ancient view of the gods and the supernatural.

By the end of this class, students will be better able to:

1. Analyze ideas in whole texts from a wide range of disciplines.
2. Contextualize historical thoughts and ideas in broad movements of history, culture and science.

3. Read critically in a wide range of genres and disciplines, including writings in philosophy, literature, politics, history, religion and science.
4. Apply past contexts to give perspectives to contemporary situations.
5. Identify the relationship between situational factors and perspectives of past authors.
6. Demonstrate a proficiency in reading and interpreting primary texts derived from various cultural contexts, historical milieus, and academic disciplines.
7. Write analytically with greater ability to:
 - Articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively.
 - Examine claims and accompanying evidence.
 - Support ideas with relevant reasons and examples.
 - Sustain a well-focused, coherent discussion.
 - Control the elements of standard written English.

Section III: Course Readings

- *Bible Use personal copy*
- *Hesiod and Theognis*, tr. Dorothea Wender *Electronic translation available for free*
- Homer: *The Essential Iliad*, tr. Stanley Lombardo
- Virgil: *The Essential Aeneid*, tr. Stanley Lombardo
- *Euripides I: Four Tragedies*, tr. D. Grene & R. Lattimore *Electronic copy available for free*
- *Sophocles I*, tr. by D. Grene & R. Lattimore *Electronic copy available for free*
- *The Symposium and the Phaedo of Plato*, tr. R. Larson
- *Pocket Aristotle*, ed. J. Kaplan
- *Roots of the Western Tradition*, 8th ed., Guy M. Rogers, C. Warren Hollister

Editions of these works (excluding the *Bible*) are available at the UTEP bookstore. Other book outlets also have some copies. Check to see if electronic copies of readings are available or if it is possible to rent copies of the books. Compare prices, if you already own an edition of these works or can purchase them elsewhere for less, do so.

To save money there are links in the weekly modules to electronic editions of some required readings, (see above) and there are printed excerpts from different works included in the modules for weeks one and six. The **Course Materials** link on Blackboard contains background information, guidelines for writing papers, and instructions for developing a good paper thesis. The Course Materials link is located in the Menu Column on the left side of the Blackboard home page.

Section IV: Directions for Posting Weekly Assignments and Discussions

For every unit students are required to:

- **First:** review Course Calendar and the weekly module for that unit. Outlines are found in each weekly module. Follow the instructions given in each weekly module.
- **Second:** read the works assigned for the week as listed on the Course Calendar found in the Menu column on the course screen and in the instructions for each module.
- **Third:** by the due date, answer the question/s that apply to the unit readings as posted in the weekly modules. Post their answers on the Assignment Board.

- **Fourth:** after posting their responses on the Assignment Board, immediately make their responses available to all of their group members by posting their responses on the Discussion Board.
- **Fifth:** on the Discussion Board of each module, respond in a manner informed by the readings to the Discussion postings of fellow group members and the instructor before the assigned due date.
- Failure to complete step three satisfactorily by the due date without notifying the instructor within 48 hours will result in the loss of 100% of the points for that posting. Failure to post answers in the correct Discussion Group by the due date (step four) and to reply to the content of fellow group members in a manner informed by the assigned readings (step five) will result in a loss of a substantial portion of the points available for that discussion. Students who do not complete step 3 will NOT receive credit for steps four and five.

ALL GROUP ASSIGNMENTS MUST BE COMPLETED ON THE ASSIGNED GROUP DISCUSSION BOARD ONLY. THIS IS THE ONLY WAY POINTS WILL BE GIVEN FOR PARTICIPATION. **DO NOT POST ASSIGNMENTS ON E-MAIL OR ENGAGE IN THE GRADED DISCUSSIONS BY E-MAIL.**

WHEN POSTING A WEEKLY ASSIGNMENT RESPONSE ON THE DISCUSSION BOARD, SIMPLY CLICK REPLY AND RESPOND TO THE THREAD CREATED BY THE PROFESSOR. DO NOT START A NEW FORUM OR THREAD.

WHEN RESPONDING TO THE POSTINGS OF YOUR GROUP MEMBERS, SIMPLY CLICK REPLY TO THEIR POSTING AND RESPOND TO YOUR GROUP MEMBER. DO NOT START A NEW FORUM OR THREAD.

Note: Except for Week One, discussions each week will occur from Wednesday to Saturday. The exception is that in Week One, students must post their Knowledge Matrix before 10:55 PM Mountain Time on Wednesday. Responses to the question for only Week One will be due by Saturday at 10:55 PM Mountain Time with discussion until 10:55 PM Mountain Time on Sunday.

All assignments are available to students in the assignment modules when the course begins. Student responses must be posted on the Assignments Board by 11:59 PM Mountain Time on the date stated in the assignment module. Responses to group members must be made after 11:59 PM Mountain Time on the date stated in the assignment module and before the end of the Discussion Period at the end of the week. The professor will comment upon student postings and responses.

Students must contribute to the discussions at several points throughout the discussion period to help the discussion progress. The professor will intervene in the discussion at points throughout the discussion to check the relevance of postings, provide feedback, and check the quality of postings. Students should read all of the responses by fellow students and the professor for the most complete feedback on each week's assignment.

In Person Video Consultations

To assist students to participate in discussions more effectively, the professor will conduct video office hours once per week through Blackboard Collaborate to discuss the week's assignment and help students with any difficulties. The time for office hours will be determined in the first week to fit the schedules of as many students as possible. Each session will be recorded for those students who cannot attend.

Section V: Guidelines for Maximum Success in HUMN 3301

Dealing with COVID-19 Related Issues: We can only extract ourselves from the disaster of COVID-19 if we all act with responsibility to one another. To do that we must all stay informed. All students, including online students, can play their parts by taking advantage of the training video for the return to campus provided by UTEP students at <https://covidtraining.questionpro.com/>. It is very important that all persons coming on to the UTEP campus participate in campus contact tracing by voluntarily screening themselves at the following URL each time they come to campus: <https://adminapps.utep.edu/screening/Home/Launch>

This class is built around the principal of shared inquiry. It seeks to develop students' ability to inquire critically about textual information as they increase their knowledge of the texts themselves.

Cooperative group discussions are significant parts of class work. To facilitate group work, at the beginning of the term the class will be divided into working groups of students. Each group consists of four to five people.

All students must read course texts, post their responses and make timely, original, constructive comments to the postings of their group members on the Discussion Groups link. Group postings and responses are the means by which the class will examine the different elements of the reading and receive the professor's feedback.

How to Complete Discussion Assignments

When assignments are due, students will write at least 200 words but not more than 350 words in response to the assignment, which is posted at the Assignment link. (30 pts.).

After posting their initial responses to the weekly Assignments, students immediately post their answers on the Group Discussion Board and reply to the postings of group members--at least 3 times for every assignment to receive minimum credit--(no more than 150 words for each response). Responses are judged on by the criteria listed in Section VI on a scale of either 1 to 5 or 1 to 7 depending on the value of the assignment. The deadlines for postings and replies are listed in the directions to each Assignment. Remember, the professor is interested in each student's analysis of the readings, not a summary of the plot in each reading!

Posting Assignments and Discussions

All weekly assignments are available to students when the course begins. Student responses must be posted on the Assignments Board by 10:55 PM Mountain Time on the date stated in the assignment. Except for the first assignment, the due date is usually on Tuesday. After posting their responses on the Assignment Board, students must then make their responses available to all of their group members by posting their responses on the Discussion Group Board at the same time. Students must then respond in a manner informed by the readings to the Group Discussion postings of fellow group members. Responses to group members must be made between 10:55 PM Tuesday and 10:55 PM Mountain Time on Saturday of the week the assignment designates. The professor will comment upon student postings and responses. All weekly assignments can be found in the weekly modules.

For optimal results from the group assignments and discussions, students should respond to their group early in the discussion period on Wednesday and then after rereading parts of the material return to the discussions for short periods to respond to group members in an informed manner. A final discussion wrap-up should complete the week's discussion on Saturday of each week. Discussions expose students to different approaches to the material and help to develop the ability of students to critically evaluate literary texts.

To best prepare for completing the unit assignments, unit discussions, and writing the essays, students should have read ALL of the assigned readings. Students should study the lesson outlines, which explain central issues and ideas in every unit. The study questions are designed to direct students to the facts and concepts relevant to the readings, which will be covered in the graded activities.

The greatest single reason why students achieve grades lower than they would like is the failure to complete assignments on time and to participate in discussions at the required times. This is an accelerated, seven-week course, and any absences or unreturned work will most likely result in a significantly lower grade. **Due to the short time period, make-up work is usually not possible.**

This course syllabus is subject to changes as circumstances warrant. Any such changes will be announced in advance to the class and will be updated on the Calendar.

Participation Policy

This course runs 24 hours a day 7 days each week. To be successful in this course, it is essential that each student begin class work during the first week, when we will orient them to the technical requirements of an online class, get everyone set up online, construct online groups, begin assignments, and answer any questions that may come up.

Successful class functions, assignments and activities rely heavily on every student's early understanding of expectations described in the different parts of the Course Syllabus and in each course assignment. Every student is personally responsible for keeping the instructor informed, doing all the work and going over the unit outlines every week.

Deadline Policy

Students and instructor can deal with all difficulties when students inform the instructor of problems within 48 hours of any deadline.

All on-line assignments are **due by the deadlines specified on the weekly Assignment Board without exception**. If the instructor is not informed within 48 hours of the deadline, late assignments will be penalized 100% of the total possible points. Essays posted late without notice will be penalized 25% for each day late. If the essay is more than 3 days late without notice, there will be no points given, but the essay is still required for course credit.

Discussions depend upon student and instructor interaction, so discussion posts will not be accepted past the allotted time.

Please ensure that you carefully read all instructions for each assignment, particularly the due dates and times. Every effort has been made to ensure that weekly assignments are due on the same day of the week and the same time of day for all assignments, but due to unexpected circumstances, at times posting dates may change. **It is the student's responsibility to read all instructions and students should not assume due dates or times except as printed in class instructions.**

Effective Electronic Communication Guidelines

Make sure that assignment responses and discussion statements are concise and clearly written. Most ideas can be stated in a couple of paragraphs, although sometimes a longer message may be needed to develop thoughts adequately. Keep in mind that people are more apt to read and digest shorter messages than long ones.

1. Be respectful to the ideas, opinions, and beliefs of others. It is fine to disagree with someone, but please respect their right to think differently.
2. Avoid posting simple two or three word statements such as "I agree" or "Good point". If you think someone has made an especially strong point and you want to say so, you must explain why by adding a few sentences describing your response or adding to the original point.
3. A message that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
 1. Reflection about meaning: Describes thoughtfully what something means or new insights it provides, or raises a question as a seed for clarification or further discussion.
 2. Analysis: Discusses relevant themes, concepts, main ideas, components, or relationships among ideas. Analysis identifies hidden assumptions or fallacies in reasoning.
 3. Elaboration: Builds on ideas of others or ideas found in the readings by adding details, examples, a different viewpoint, or other relevant information.
 4. Application: Provides examples of how principles or concepts can be applied to actual classroom situations or discusses the implications of theory in practice.
 5. Synthesis: Integrates multiple views to provide a summary, a new perspective, or a creative refashioning of ideas.

6. Evaluation: Assesses the accuracy, reasonableness or quality of ideas.

Time Management

The rule of thumb for time planning for a course is approximately three (3) hours for every credit hour taken. This is a standard figure recommended across the board by American universities. For a 3 credit course, you should expect to spend:

3 hours of class time + 9 hours of study and prep time = 12 hours per week.

Section VI: Grading Standards

The professor will grade postings according to the following criteria:

- Did the student discuss the topic in a thoughtful way?
- Is the argument under discussion relevant and applicable to the question that was asked and to the discussions and readings?
- Does the student provide relevant evidence from the readings and the lecture outlines for each assignment to support her/his argument?
- Does the student provide correct evidence?
- Does the student show that she/he has read the text and understands the purpose of the author?
- Does the student appreciate the significance of the original context of the work?
- Does the student recognize the underlying theme of the work?
- Does the student see how the text relates to other course texts?
- Does the student see how the readings relate to other texts that she/he has encountered in her/his education?
- Does the student see where the text is relevant to her/his knowledge and experience?
- Does the student use correct grammar, punctuation and word choice?

Course Grading

Because this class seeks to stimulate students to examine personal and social attitudes and because students will be examined upon how well they learn to apply concepts, a free exchange of ideas is essential. Students are required to PARTICIPATE in all individual and group work connected with the class. Each assignment that is not completed diminishes the student's grade. To complete the class with a high grade, all postings, discussions and assignments must be completed and be of a consistently high quality.

Written, graded assignments will be of two kinds:

1. Two focused essays discussing the implications of a concept formulated by the professor from the assigned readings. Each essay must be from 4 to 6 typewritten pages in length (1500 - 1800 words): 1 typewritten page must equal 300 words. The completed essays will be done according to the schedule on the course Calendar. Both essay questions will be posted among the weekly modules. The first essay is worth 120 points, and the second essay is worth 180 points.

2. Weekly unit assignments and discussions covering the required readings. The Knowledge Matrix with discussion and the weekly assignment and discussions for the first week are worth a combined 40 points each. For the remaining 6 weeks assignment and discussion are worth a combined 60 points.
3. There are a total of 740 points available for the term.

Final Grades will be based on the sum of all points students accumulate from the written graded assignments throughout the semester. Letter grades will be determined by the percentage of the total number of points made available throughout the semester. Typically 99-90% = A; 89-80% = B; 79-70% = C; 69-60% = D; below 60% = F.

To receive a minimum grade of D for the course each student must complete both of the written essays and obtain at least 60% of the total points. Failure to complete any of these requirements will result in a failing grade.

Academic Dishonesty Statement

Academic dishonesty is prohibited and is considered a violation of the UTEP Handbook of Operating Procedures. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, not doing one's own work, plagiarism, and unacceptable collusion. Not doing one's own work may involve copying from or providing information to another student, possessing unauthorized materials during a test, or falsifying research data on laboratory reports. Plagiarism occurs when someone intentionally or knowingly represents the words or ideas of another person as one's own. Collusion involves collaborating with another person to commit any academically dishonest act. Any act of academic dishonesty attempted by a UTEP student is unacceptable and will not be tolerated. Violations will be taken seriously and will be referred to the Dean of Students Office for possible disciplinary action. Students may be suspended or expelled from UTEP for such actions.

Academic dishonesty is an assault upon the basic integrity and meaning of a University. Cheating, plagiarism, and collusion in dishonest activities are serious acts, which erode the University's educational and research roles and cheapen the learning experience not only for the perpetrators but also for the entire community. It is expected that UTEP students understand and subscribe to the ideal of academic integrity and that they are willing to bear individual responsibility for their work. Materials (written or otherwise) submitted to fulfill academic requirements must represent a student's own efforts.

Section VII: Disclaimers

Disabled Student Statement

As per Section 504 of the Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the [Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\) of 1990](#), if a student needs an accommodation please contact the Center for Accommodations and Support Services (CASS) located at UTEP. If you have a condition, which may affect your ability to perform successfully in this course, you are encouraged to discuss this in confidence with the instructor and/or the director of CASS. You can reach CASS at 915-747-5148 or cass@utep.edu for general information about the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the rights that you have as a UTEP student with a difficulty and/or disability.

Individuals with disabilities/difficulties have the right to equal access and opportunity. It is the student's responsibility to contact the instructor and The Center for Accommodations and Support Services _at The University of Texas at El Paso, which is located in their office in UTEP Union East, Room 106. See their website at <https://www.utep.edu/student-affairs/cass/> .

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Technical Assistance

For technical assistance, please refer to the Technical Support links in the left side navigation menu.

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