



## **Ancient Cultures: HUMN 3301 (12899)**

### **Course Syllabus**

**Fall 2024**

#### **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 Europeans and Americans are still influenced by this essential principle.

The course will cover a wide-range of sources 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 culture'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:
  - o Articulate complex ideas clearly and effectively.
  - o Examine claims and accompanying evidence.
  - o Support ideas with relevant reasons and examples.
  - o Sustain a well-focused, coherent discussion.
  - o 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 specific passages for Homer, Virgil and Aristotle are listed in the Calendar and the weekly assignments. 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 Completing Assignments & Packback Discussions

Packback Discussions are central to the work in units (1, 2, 3, 4, 5 & 7). To complete successfully the work in these units, students are required to:

- **First:** review the Course Calendar and the weekly module for that unit. Power Point outlines to guide students through the content of the course readings are part of 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 and in the instructions for each module.

- **Third:** before the due date, take part in the Packback Discussion, which applies to the unit readings as posted in the weekly modules. Respond in a manner informed by the readings assigned for the course.

In addition to the 6 weekly units using Packback, students are expected to complete 4 independent assignments.

- A Knowledge Matrix due on the second day of class.  
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). Each essay must be posted as a Packback Deep Dive.
- A power point presentation to complete the assignment in Unit Six.
- Packback does not electronically determine the grade for any student work. The Professor determines all grades. Packback provides an advisory rating of student responses, which allow students to revise their responses and improve their scores when done before the assignment deadlines. Use of AI in composing essays is considered plagiarism and is not acceptable.

### **Packback Questions (Instructions)**

Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion centered on class readings. Packback Questions is an online community where you can be fearlessly curious and ask open-ended questions to build on top of what we are covering in class and relate topics to real-world applications. Use of AI in composing questions and/or discussions is considered plagiarism and is not acceptable.

### **Requirements for Packback Questions & Discussions:**

Student participation in the Packback Questions will count toward 53% of each student's final course grade. There will be 6 weekly deadlines for Packback submissions, all on Monday at 11:59 PM MST. In order to receive full credit, every student should submit the following before each deadline:

- One (1) open-ended Question every week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, worth 20 pts of each assignment grade
- Three (3) Responses every week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 60, worth 20 pts each for a total of 60 pts for the assignment grade.
- *One of these responses will be dedicated to responding to a question from Dr. Weber.*
- *The remaining two responses will be dedicated to two student responses of your choice.*
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

### **Guidelines for successful questions and responses:**

1. Questions cannot be clarification questions. You can ask those during the online Zoom sessions or through email!
2. All questions and responses must relate to the assigned reading material and the topics being considered in that week.

3. Questions and responses can reference other sources and experiences that student's know. These can be previous chapters that we covered, prior courses, other research and information student's have obtained, etc.
4. Students should remember to cite their sources. Packback rates responses higher when students reference a credible source, and it serves as practice for assignment papers.
5. Successful students will edit, revise, and resubmit until they have a satisfactory post. Packback provides instant feedback on how to fix posts. With the minimum Curiosity Score set at 60, students should be sure to hit that mark to receive full credit.
6. Use the professor's feedback to learn and grow! He will provide feedback to your posts, and may bring exceptional posts into class throughout the semester.

### **How to Register on Packback:**

Packback requires a paid subscription. For more information, refer to [www.packback.co/product/pricing](http://www.packback.co/product/pricing).

**Note:** Students should only access Packback through Blackboard in order to ensure that grades sync properly.

1. Login to the Ancient Cultures Blackboard page.
2. Locate **Weekly Assignments and Activities** in the navigation panel on the left-hand side of the Home Page.
3. For Units One, Two, Three, Four, Five and Seven click on the link "How to Complete The Assignment for Unit" and open the Packback link: for example in Unit One, **Packback #1: Due Sept. 2**.
4. Follow the instructions on screen to finish your registration.

### **How to Get Help from the Packback Team:**

If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read the Packback FAQ page in the Packback Support Center at [help.packback.co](http://help.packback.co). If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly by email at [help@packback.co](mailto:help@packback.co).

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OV7QmkrD68>

**Note:** Except for Unit Six, Packback assignments each week will be active from Tuesday to Monday. The exception is that in Week Six, there is no Packback assignment

All assignments are available to students in the assignment modules when the course begins.

For best results, students should contribute to the discussions at several points throughout the week to help the discussion progress. AI will provide feedback to the Packback assignment as student work proceeds to check the relevance of postings, provide feedback, check the quality of postings, and provide opportunities to revise and improve postings.

### **Live In Person Video Meetings**

To assist students to participate in discussions more effectively, the professor will conduct live video sessions as needed through Blackboard Zoom to discuss the week's assignment and help students with any difficulties. Meetings will take place by appointment.

## **Section V: Guidelines for Maximum Success in HUMN 3301**

### **COVID-19 PRECAUTION STATEMENT**

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. Please stay home if you have been diagnosed with COVID-19 or are experiencing COVID-19 symptoms. If you are feeling unwell, please let Dr. Weber know as soon as possible, so that we can work on appropriate accommodations. If you have tested positive for COVID-19, you are encouraged to report your results to [covidaction@utep.edu](mailto:covidaction@utep.edu), so that the Dean of Students Office can provide you with support and help with communication with your professors. The Student Health Center is equipped to provide COVID-19 testing.

The Center for Disease Control and Prevention no longer recommends that people in areas of substantial or high COVID-19 transmission wear facemasks when indoors in groups of people. Therefore, wearing facemasks in class is optional. The best way that Miners can take care of Miners is to get the vaccine. If you still need the vaccine, it is widely available in the El Paso area. For more information about the current rates, testing, and vaccinations, please visit [epstrong.org](http://epstrong.org).

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION**

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

Packback assignments have been engaged to facilitate cooperative group discussions, and they are significant parts of class work. To facilitate group work, the class has been divided into working groups of four to five students.

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

To best prepare for completing the Packback assignments 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 the Packback assignments 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 to the class in advance 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. The same standards apply if you disagree with a fellow student's evaluation.

3. A message that demonstrates substance contributes to the understanding and application of ideas by doing one or more of the following:
  1. Reflects on the meaning of the text: 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 of preparation for every class meeting. 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 working on class material per week.

### **Section VI: Grading Criteria**

The professor will grade postings according to the following criteria:

- Did the student discuss the topic in a thoughtful way?
- Is the argument discussed 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 their argument?
- Does the student provide correct evidence?
- Does the student show that they have read the text and understand 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 they have encountered in their education?
- Does the student see where the text is relevant to their 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 Packback exercises 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 four kinds:

1. A personal Knowledge Matrix due on the second day of the term.
2. Weekly Packback unit assignments and discussions covering the required readings. The Packback assignments and discussions are worth 80 points each.
3. 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).. 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.
4. A Power Point presentation using ancient art to illustrate assigned texts. The Power Point presentation is worth 120 points.

There are a total of 930 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. This includes the use of Chat GPT in ones' research paper. 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 may call 915-747-5148 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 <http://sa.utep.edu/cass>.

### **Copyright Notice**

Many of the materials that are posted within this course are protected by copyright law. These materials are only for the use of students enrolled in this course and only for the purpose of this course. They may not be further retained or disseminated.

### **Technical Assistance**

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

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