

San José State University  
Department of English and Comparative Literature  
English 125, Homer to Dante, Fall 2019

**Course and Contact Information**

<b>Instructor:</b>	Dr. Linda C. Mitchell
<b>Office Location:</b>	FOB 117
<b>Telephone:</b>	(408) 924-4453
<b>Email:</b>	<a href="mailto:linda.mitchell@sjsu.edu">linda.mitchell@sjsu.edu</a>
<b>Office Hours:</b>	Monday/Wednesday, 10:30-11:30
<b>Class Days/Time:</b>	Mondays/Wednesdays, 12:00-1:15
<b>Classroom:</b>	Sweeney Hall 238
<b>Prerequisites:</b>	Upper-division standing

**Course Description:**

This course offers an introduction to some of the major literary works of the first 2,000 years of Western Culture—works of great genius and superb craft. They are as much a part of our heritage as that which we receive from our parents. Our goal this semester is to take possession of that heritage—like heirs who have come of age—by understanding how these works are connected to each other and to us via a series of parallel and contrasting patterns of ideas and experiences that form a path of human continuity across time and place. Students will engage and explore the texts from a variety of contexts and viewpoints: textual, literary, political, social, and cultural; become familiar with a range of critical approaches to the texts; and demonstrate a working knowledge of the texts’ influences within the Western literary tradition.

**Required Work Hours for the Course**

Because this is a 4-unit course, students can expect to spend a minimum of twelve hours per week preparing for and attending classes and completing course assignments. Integrated into the syllabus are 1) increased course content and/or collateral readings and 2) higher-level critical thinking exercises.

**University’s Credit Hour Requirement:**

“Success in this course is based on the expectation that students will spend, for each unit of credit, a minimum of 45 hours over the length of the course (normally 3 hours per unit per week with 1 of the hours used for lecture) for instruction or preparation/studying or course related activities including but not limited to internships, labs, clinical practica.

Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

**Department of English and Comparative Literature Student Learning Objectives (SLOs): Students will demonstrate the ability to**

1. read closely in a variety of forms, styles, structures, and modes, and articulate the value of close reading in the study of literature, creative writing, or rhetoric;
2. show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British, American, and World Literature;
3. write clearly, effectively, and creatively, and adjust writing style appropriately to the content, the context, and the nature of the subject;
4. develop and carry out research projects, and locate, evaluate, organize, and incorporate information effectively;
5. articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

**Course Requirements:**

Daily reading responses (approximately one full page, double spaced, one-inch margins, Times New Roman, 12 pt.), engaged class participation, a midterm exam, and a final exam.

**Required Texts:**

- *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, Vols. A, B, & C, 4th edition only because of translations
- Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*, trans. Fagles. Penguin Publishers.
- Course Reader from Maple Press
- Edith Hamilton’s *Greek Mythology*. Any edition. You must have a working knowledge of Greek myths. Hamilton’s book will be used for reference.

**Class Policies:**

**Friday Emails**

I send out an email each Thursday night or Friday that reviews work for the coming week. Be sure to read the Friday emails because you are responsible for the information.

**Reading:**

Assignments (including all introductory information) are to be read before the class session for which they are assigned. Close, careful reading takes time, so plan accordingly. Be prepared to discuss the readings in class.

**Reader Responses: Guidelines and Policies. 25%**

- You have twenty-one response papers, but I count only twenty.
- I assign twenty-one responses papers, so that you have option of taking a bye on a day when you do not get the paper written, are not feeling well, or are out of town. Plan carefully on how you will use the bye. For extenuating circumstances, talk to me in advance. Do not email response paper to me or the GA without an agreement in advance.

- Response papers are due at the **beginning** of class. Place them on the table when you arrive. Printing your paper is not an excuse for being late.
- You must attend the class for which the assigned work is turned in. You cannot drop the paper off and leave. Do not have someone else turn in the paper for you.
- Reader responses are one page. They must be typed and double-spaced. Use Times New Roman, 12 pt, and standard margins.
- Write a paper title. “Response Paper #2” is not a title.
- Write the response number.
- Reader responses must demonstrate a critical engagement with the language and content of the assigned texts—no summaries.
- Response papers must have standard grammar, punctuation, and spelling.
- No late work will be accepted unless you (1) make arrangements with me in advance, or (2) provide written verification that circumstances completely beyond your control prevented you from getting the work in on time, e.g., an organized mandatory SJSU event, a signed and stamped doctor's slip verifying an illness, a court order, a documented hospital emergency, a natural disaster, or proof of attendance at a funeral.
- “Having to work” or “writing a paper for another class” is not an excused absence for getting assignments turned in on time.
- Pages should be stapled in the upper-left corner (no paper clips, please!). Always keep a copy of everything you turn in. I do not accept work via email unless there is an extenuating circumstance.

**Midterm Exam and Final Exam 2 x 25% = 50%**

Each exam is worth 25% of the final grade.

**Participation, 20%**

- Contribute at least one oral response per class. Present a thread of your argument during the discussion, propose a new idea that has occurred to you during class, or elaborate on a classmate’s comment.
- **Please Note:** (1) You have to be here to contribute; (2) Your presence alone does not qualify as participation; you need to talk.

**Specified Assigned Work for One-Unit Enhancement, 5% (50 points)**

- A well-constructed essay question submitted for the midterm exam. 5 points
- A well-constructed essay question submitted for the final exam. 5 points
- Performance in the *Antigone* trial. 15 points
- Performance in *Lysistrata*. 5 points
- People’s Court for Medea. 5 points
- Attendance at the three guest lectures in class. (3 x 5) 15 points

**Grading: Your written work will be evaluated according to the following criteria.**

**Qualities of “A” Writing**

**Content:** complies with all parts of the assignment; displays original, provocative thought in one or more of the following ways:

- finds a general significance in the specific instance,
- identifies and resolves a contradiction,

disproves or qualifies a common misconception,  
achieves a fresh insight into a frequently discussed topic,  
places the known in a novel context,  
supports an arguable assertion;  
develops its thought by explanation, example, illustration, or analysis, as appropriate;  
displays flawless logic;  
has the voice of a real person speaking to a real audience;  
is interesting and detailed.

**Organization:** has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has an effective and appropriate overall pattern of organization; has unified, coherent paragraphs organized around recognizable topic sentences that are verbally or logically related to the thesis; has effective and appropriate transitions between paragraphs; has an effective introduction and conclusion.

**Style:** frequently chooses grammatical options that mirror the content portrayed; shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; frequently and appropriately uses emphatic sentence patterns such as long cumulative and periodic sentences, various strong parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs to control rhythm, pace, and emphasis.

**Conventions:** has NO diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; demonstrates a sophisticated knowledge of English grammar, syntax, punctuation, and usage.

### **Qualities of “B” Writing**

**Content:** complies with all parts of the assignment; displays original, provocative thought in one or more of the ways listed above; attempts to develop its thoughts in the ways listed above; contains no overt logical fallacies; has the voice of a real person; is detailed.

**Organization:** has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has an overall pattern of organization; has unified, coherent paragraphs organized around recognizable topic sentences related to the thesis; has appropriate transitions between paragraphs; has an introduction and conclusion.

**Style:** shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; frequently and appropriately uses emphatic sentence patterns such as long cumulative and periodic sentences, various strong parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs.

**Conventions:** has no more than ONE diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling error; the error does not prevent comprehension; does not repeat an error marked on a previous paper; demonstrates a sound knowledge of English grammar, syntax, punctuation, and usage.

### **Qualities of “C” Writing**

**Content:** complies with the main parts of the assignment; finds significance beyond the subjective response;

goes beyond mere description of the topic and response (analysis, generalization, etc.); is detailed.

**Organization:** has a recognizable thesis, stated or implied, that conforms to our definition of a thesis; has coherent paragraphs organized around topic sentences, most of which relate to the thesis; has a recognizable beginning, middle, and end.

**Style:** shows a variety of sentence lengths and openers; occasionally uses emphatic sentence patterns such as cumulative and periodic sentences, parallel structures, and compound sentences using semicolons and conjunctive adverbs.

**Conventions:** has no more than TWO diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; errors do not prevent comprehension; does not repeat an error marked on a previous paper; demonstrates the ability to write correct simple, compound, and complex sentences.

### **Qualities of “D” Writing**

**Content:** complies with the main parts of the assignment; makes a definite statement about the topic; attempts to support that statement.

**Organization:** has a recognizable thesis; attempts to support that thesis; has paragraphs organized around topic sentences; has enough coherence to be recognized as a unit.

**Style:** varies sentence types frequently enough to avoid monotony; attempts the occasional stylistic emphasis of an important point.

**Conventions:** has no more than THREE diction, syntax, grammar, punctuation, or spelling errors; errors do not prevent comprehension; does not repeat errors marked on a previous paper; demonstrates a basic understanding of the conventions of written English.

Your class participation will be assessed as follows:

A = Regular, pertinent questions and comments; fully engaged

B = Occasional, pertinent questions and responses; good listening

C = Infrequent, tangential questions or comments; attentiveness questionable

D = Rare interaction; disengaged from discussion; not prepared for class

F = Regularly absent, physically or mentally

### Grading overview

You can earn up to 1,000 points in this course.

Activities	Percentage	Points
Reader's Responses, 21, daily	25%	250
Exam 1 (SLO 1-3, 5)	25%	250
Exam 2 (SLO 1-3, 5)	25%	250
Class participation (SLO 1-2-3, 5)	20%	200
Specified assigned work (SLO 1-2-3,5)	5%	50

### Grading scale

930-1,000 points = A (93%-100%)

900-929 points = A- (90%-92.9%)

870-899 points = B+ (87%-89.9%)

830-869 points = B (83%-86.9%)

800-829 points = B- (80%-82.9%)

770-799 points = C+ (77%-79.9%)

730-769 points = C (73%-76.9%)

700-729 points = C- (70%-72.9%)

670-699 points = D+ (67%-69.9%)

### Departmental Grading Policy

The Department of English reaffirms its commitment to the differential grading scale as defined by the SJSU Catalog (Grades-Letter Grading). Grades issued must represent a full range of student performance: A+/A/A- = excellent; B+/B/B- = above average; C+/C/C- = average; D+/D/D- = below average; F = failure. Within any of the letter grade ranges (e.g. B+/B/B-), the assignment of a + or - grade will reflect stronger (+) or weaker (-) completion of the goals of the assignment.

Courses graded according to the A,B,C,NoCredit system shall follow the same pattern, except that NC, for NoCredit, shall replace D or F. In A,B,C,NoCredit courses NC shall also substitute for W (for Withdraw) because neither NC nor W affects students' grade point averages. In English Department courses, instructors will comment on and grade the quality of student writing as well as the quality of the ideas being conveyed. All student writing should be distinguished by correct grammar and punctuation, appropriate diction and syntax, and well-organized paragraphs.

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9, university-wide policy information relevant to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, etc. will be available on Office of Graduate and Undergraduate Programs' [Syllabus Information web page](http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/) at <http://www.sjsu.edu/gup/syllabusinfo/>"

### **SJSU Writing Center**

The SJSU Writing Center is located in Clark Hall, Suite 126. All Writing Specialists have gone through a rigorous hiring process, and they are well trained to assist all students at all levels within all disciplines to become better writers. In addition to one-on-one tutoring services, the Writing Center also offers workshops every semester on a variety of writing topics. To make an appointment or to refer to the numerous online resources offered through the Writing Center, visit the Writing Center website: <http://www.sjsu.edu/writingcenter>. For additional resources and updated information, follow the Writing Center on Twitter and become a fan of the SJSU Writing Center on Facebook.



Library Liaison: Peggy Cabrera, [peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu](mailto:peggy.cabrera@sjsu.edu). Fourth floor of MLK Library.

## English 125, Homer to Dante, Fall 2019

### Course Schedule

Assigned Readings are to be completed before the class period designated. Schedule is subject to change by instructor with reasonable notice given in class or by class email.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
<b><u>Week 1</u></b> W 8/21	Course Introduction and Overview: The Hero's Journey Guide for reader response papers.
<b><u>Week 2</u></b> M 8/26	<i>Gilgamesh</i> , 93-145. <b>Reader Response #1 due</b>
W 8/28	<i>Iliad</i> , Books 1, 6, 8, 9, pp. 232-271. <b>Reader Response #2 due</b>
<b><u>Week 3</u></b> M 9/2	Holiday. Campus closed.
W 9/4	<i>Iliad</i> , Books 16, 18, 22, 24, pp. 272-324. Compare Achilles' shield in Homer to the shield in Auden's poem (CR). FYI: You are not required to write on the shield for the <b>Reader Response #3 due</b>
<b><u>Week 4</u></b> M 9/9	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 1-8, pp. 324-414. <b>Reader Response #4 due</b>
W 9/11	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 9-16, pp. 415-511. <b>Reader Response #5 due</b>
<b><u>Week 5</u></b> M 9/16	<i>Odyssey</i> , Books 17-24, pp. 511-602. <b>Reader Response #6 due</b> Homer epithet. Write on board. Read "Ulysses" by Tennyson. (CR)
W 9/18	Introduction to Greek Tragedy. Guest speaker Professor Emerita Bonnie Cox. Use lecture notes on the midterm and final exams. Read pages 624-29 in the Norton text for intro to Greek Drama.
<b><u>Week 6</u></b> M 9/23	<i>The Oresteia: Agamemnon</i> . Read in Penguin edition or in Norton. <b>Reader Response #7 due</b> For a good introduction to <i>Agamemnon</i> , read pages 630-34 in Norton.
W 9/25	<i>The Eumenides</i> (Penguin edition) <b>Reader Response #8 due</b> Introduce court trial for <i>Antigone</i> .
<b><u>Week 7</u></b> M 9/30	<i>Oedipus Rex</i> , pp. 687-724. <b>Reader Response #9 due</b> Assign roles for <i>Antigone</i> .
W 10/2	<i>Antigone</i> , pp. 725-55. <b>Reader Response #10 due</b> Court trial based on the stasis theory (CR)
<b><u>Week 8</u></b> M 10/7	<i>Medea</i> , pp. 759-90. <b>Reader Response #11 due</b>

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
W 10/ 9	<i>Lysistrata</i> , pp. 793-827. Performance credit.
<b><u>Week 9</u></b> M 10/14	<i>Aeneid</i> , 1, 2, 4, pp. 926-89. <b>Reader Response #12 due</b> Review themes for midterm question.
W 10/16	<i>Aeneid</i> , 6, 8, 12, pp. 989-1025. <b>Reader Response #13 due</b> Reminder of midterm questions due on Wednesday.  Note for preparing Reader Response #14 for 10/21. Option #1: Write the usual response paper. Option #2: Rewrite a scene from Ovid's <i>Metamorphoses</i> or from Ovid's <i>The Heroides</i> . Present the 3-5 minute scene in class and turn in a hard copy.  <b>Email your suggested midterm question by Friday at 9 P.M.</b>
<b><u>Week 10</u></b> M 10/21	Read 1) Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> : Book I, all; Book II, all; Book V, all; Book IX, Book X, pp. 1029-1068. 2) Ovid's <i>The Heroides</i> : letters from Penelope, Dido, and Medea. <a href="http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Heroideshome.htm">http://www.poetryintranslation.com/PITBR/Latin/Heroideshome.htm</a> <b>Reader Response #14 due.</b>
W 10/23	Review for exam 1. Each group presents main points for its assigned essay question. Double participation points today for your oral presentation of your group's question. 3 per group; 4 minutes per question
<b><u>Week 11</u></b> M 10/28	<b>Exam 1: bring large exam booklet</b>
W 10/30	From Roman Empire to Christian Europe: Polytheism to Monotheism Guest speaker: Professor Emerita Bonnie Cox
<b><u>Week 12</u></b> M 11/4	<i>The Bible: Vol. A.</i> Old Testament: Genesis; Exodus; Job; Psalms 23, 137. Read pages 152-215. <i>Vol. B.</i> New Testament: Luke 2, Matthew 5-7, Luke 15, Matthew 13, 27-28, John 1, pp. 18-34. <b>Reader Response #15 due</b>
W 11/6	<i>The Song of Roland</i> , #1-#150, pp. 223-53. <b>Response #16 due</b> See suggestions for readers responses in the course reader for this paper. There are also ideas in the weekly notes I made on Roland. You can take this paper in so many different ways. Be specific and support whatever direction you take. If you talk about propaganda, you might want to do it for RR #18 when you have read the entire work.

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines					
<b>Week 13</b> M 11/11	Holiday. Campus closed.					
W 11/13	<i>The Song of Roland</i> , #151-#291, pp. 253-286. <b>Reader Response #17 due</b>					
<b>Week 14</b> M 11/18	Introduction to Dante. Guest speaker: Professor Emerita Bonnie Cox					
W 11/20	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos I-XI, XII-XVIII, pp. 394-472. <b>Reader Response #18 due</b>					
<b>Week 15</b> M 11/25	<i>Inferno</i> , Cantos XIX-XXXIV, pp. 472-548. <b>Reader Response #19 due</b> What do you consider to be your vice, which circle of hell, and what punishment?					
W 11/27	No instruction on campus today					
<b>Week 16</b> M 12/2	<i>Purgatorio</i> , Cantos I-II, IX, XXI-XXII, XXIV, XXVII, XXX, XXXII, XXXIII, <b>Reader Response #20 due</b> Spend time working on final exam questions.					
W 12/4	<b>TBA</b>  <b>Reader Response #21 due. Special topic</b>					
M 12/9	Review for exam 2. Each group presents main points for its assigned essay question. Double participation points today for your oral presentation of your group's question. 3 per group; 4 minutes per question					
Exam 2	The final exam will cover all the works on the syllabus and all class discussions. <table border="1" data-bbox="446 1329 1141 1417"> <tr> <td data-bbox="446 1329 646 1417">MW classes 1130 or 1200</td> <td data-bbox="646 1329 976 1417">Monday, December 16</td> <td data-bbox="976 1329 1141 1417">0945-1200</td> </tr> </table>			MW classes 1130 or 1200	Monday, December 16	0945-1200
MW classes 1130 or 1200	Monday, December 16	0945-1200				