

SAN JOSÉ STATE UNIVERSITY  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH AND COMPARATIVE LITERATURE  
ENGL 125: EUROPEAN LITERATURE FROM HOMER TO DANTE  
SPRING 2022

**Course and Contact Information**

Instructor:	Dr. José Juan Villagrana
Email:	jose.villagrana@sjsu.edu
Office Hours:	Tuesdays 1:30pm – 2:30pm, Wednesday 10:30am – 11:30am, and by appointment. Meetings take place online or in person.
Office:	FOB 108
Class Days/Time:	Monday and Wednesday 9:00am – 10:15am
Classroom:	Sweeney Hall 413
Prerequisites:	Upper-division standing

**Course Format**

The course will be held synchronously online from 26 January to 9 February. The class will then meet in person for the rest of the semester starting on 14 February.

**Course Description**

This course examines texts from European classical antiquity to the early modern era in a variety of genres and forms that include epic, drama, romance, chronicle, and theogony. We will primarily critique and examine the texts we read to understand how they have informed justifications for the rise of European imperial power and expansionism through the concept of *translatio imperii*, the historical notion that political power is meant to be concentrated in the hands of few—or often one—entity and transferred in linear succession. We will further explore how these texts have influenced major literary traditions.

**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.

## Course Goals

Students will learn how the elements of figurative language and literary fiction interact with central religious, political, and artistic concerns. Students will write essays of literary analysis by quoting textual evidence, making informed inferences about the evidence, and placing the discussion within the appropriate context of the literary piece and its conventions.

## Program Learning Outcomes (PLOs) for English and Comparative Literature

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able 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, and/or rhetoric.
2. Show familiarity with major literary works, genres, periods, and critical approaches to British literature.
3. Write clearly, effectively, and creatively.
4. Develop and carry out research projects.
5. Articulate the relations among culture, history, and texts.

## Required Texts/Readings

All of the course readings are freely available as PDFs on Canvas.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

**Participation:** Students are expected to discuss significant features of the works, providing specific textual evidence sourced from the works (PLOs 1-3, 5).

**Reading responses:** You will write five short essays at a minimum of 600 words in response to a specific question centered on the assigned reading. You must quote and explain evidence from the text in all of your responses (PLOs 1-3, 5).

**Essay:** You will select one of your five short reading responses, and you will revise and expand this response into an essay of 1,200 words (PLOs 1-5).

In order to maximize learning and uphold the highest standards of academic inquiry, students should avoid consulting online digests, “study guides,” “analyses,” or other materials of the sort. Upon request, the instructor will provide you with reputable sources to help you understand and complete the reading.

**Midterm and Final:** The midterm and final are take-home exams consisting of short answer questions and essay questions. The exams are designed to evaluate students’ completion and

comprehension of the reading and their critical thinking with regard to central course concepts (PLOs 1-3, 5).

### Determination of Grades

Grading Breakdown:

Class Participation (discussion and in-class exercises):	15%
Reading responses (5 x 5% each)	25%
Essay response	10%
Midterm	25%
Final Exam	25%

### Grading Information

Please see the Rubric for Argumentative Literary Analysis Essays available on Canvas to review expectations for graded essays.

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

All written work will be evaluated on the basis of a sustained argument based on (1) its demonstrated reading comprehension of the literary works, (2) the use of textual evidence, (3) the appropriate inference and contextualization of the textual evidence, (4) and its clarity of exposition.

Late work will not receive full credit. Please reach out to the instructor if you need any assistance.

All of the assignments above must be completed to a satisfactory level to earn a passing grade in the course.

Each graded component shall receive a score as a percentage which corresponds to the letter grade below.

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>A plus</i>	<i>96 to 100%</i>
<i>A</i>	<i>93 to 95%</i>
<i>A minus</i>	<i>90 to 92%</i>
<i>B plus</i>	<i>86 to 89 %</i>
<i>B</i>	<i>83 to 85%</i>
<i>B minus</i>	<i>80 to 82%</i>

<i>Grade</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
<i>C plus</i>	<i>76 to 79%</i>
<i>C</i>	<i>73 to 75%</i>
<i>C minus</i>	<i>70 to 72%</i>
<i>D plus</i>	<i>66 to 69%</i>
<i>D</i>	<i>63 to 65%</i>
<i>D minus</i>	<i>60 to 62%</i>

### **University Policies**

Per University Policy S16-9 (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>), relevant information to all courses, such as academic integrity, accommodations, dropping and adding, consent for recording of class, etc. is 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/>.

*The [University Policy S16-9](http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf), Course Syllabi (<http://www.sjsu.edu/senate/docs/S16-9.pdf>) requires the following language to be included in the syllabus:*

“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 three hours per unit per week) for instruction, preparation/studying, or course related activities, including but not limited to internships, labs, and clinical practice. Other course structures will have equivalent workload expectations as described in the syllabus.”

## English 125 / Spring 2022, Course Schedule

The following schedule is subject to change with advance notice through a Canvas Announcement.

**\*\*Please note that there will be additional, short readings (1-2 pages, maximum) that we will read in class together that are not listed below\*\***

### Course Schedule

Date	Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines
W 1/26	Introductions
M 1/31	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Books 1 and 3
W 2/2	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Books 9 and 16
M 2/7	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Books 19 and 20
W 2/9	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Iliad</i> , Books 22 and 24
M 2/14	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> , Books 1 and 2 <b>Due:</b> Reading response 1
W 2/16	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> , Books 4, 9, and 10
M 2/21	<b>Read:</b> Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> , 20, 21, and 22
W 2/23	<b>Read:</b> Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , scenes 1 and 2 (pages 1-20)
M 2/28	<b>Read:</b> Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , scenes 3 and 4 (pages 21-48) <b>Due:</b> Reading response 2
W 3/2	<b>Read:</b> Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , scenes 5 and 6 (pages 49-70)
M 3/7	<b>Read:</b> Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> , scenes 7 and 8 (pages 70-84)
W 3/9	<b>Read:</b> Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> , Book 1, Book 4, “Pyramus and Thisbe,” and Book 10 “Orpheus and Eurydice” <b>Due:</b> Reading response 3
M 3/14	<b>Read:</b> Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> , Books 1 and 2
W 3/16	<b>Read:</b> Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> , Books 4 and 6
M 3/21	Midterm review

<b>Date</b>	<b>Topics, Readings, Assignments, Deadlines</b>
W 3/23	<b>Read:</b> Virgil, <i>Aeneid</i> , Books 8 and 12
<b>Due:</b> Take-home Midterm, Friday, 25 March, by 11:59pm	
<b>Spring Recess, 28 March – 1 April</b>	
M 4/4	<b>Read:</b> <i>Bible New Revised Standard Version</i> , selections <b>Due:</b> Reading response 4
W 4/6	<b>Read:</b> <i>King of Tars</i> , lines 1 – 549
M 4/11	<b>Read:</b> <i>King of Tars</i> , lines 550 – 1241
W 4/13	<b>Read:</b> <i>King of Tars</i> , continued
M 4/18	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , cantos 1-5 <b>Due:</b> Reading response 5
W 4/20	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , cantos 8, 10, and 12
M 4/25	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , cantos 13, 14, and 15
W 4/27	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , cantos 26 and 32
M 5/2	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Inferno</i> , cantos 33 and 34
W 5/4	<b>Read:</b> Dante, <i>Purgatorio</i> , cantos 1 and 2
M 5/9	<b>Read:</b> Popul Vuh
W 5/11	<b>Read:</b> Popol Vuh <b>Due:</b> Essay
M 5/16	Final exam review
<b>Final Take-home Exam Due Friday, 20 May by 11:59pm</b>	