

The Heroic Temper: Homer and the Tragedians (HN 110-03)
TR 1:00-2:15

Fall 2011
GH 202

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Texts:

Homer, *The Iliad* (trans: Fagles)
Euripides, *Trojan Women* (trans: Lattimore)
Homer, *The Odyssey* (trans: Fagles)

Sophocles, *Philoctetes* (trans: Heaney)
Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* (trans: Hughes)
Hacker, *A Pocket Style Manual*

Opening remarks:

A study of ancient Greek tales surrounding the Trojan War will take us face to face with seminal stories that record the way that the ancient mind sought to understand the workings of man as he found himself in conflict with his world—not only his military adversaries, but his comrade warriors, his friends, his family, those whom he loves, and, of course, his gods. What it means to be a hero in this culture, what it means to be singled out as the chosen one, often surprises a modern reader because of the caricature of the modern-day superhero.

These stories reveal poets' deep rooted desires to think about the most fundamental of human questions—what does it mean to be a living, breathing human being confronted with mortality? For the ancient Greeks, the task of being human was the task of a lifetime, wrought with the difficulties of controlling, shaping, and understanding their human urges. The ancient Greeks, as we will see, knew all too well that human impulses are often in conflict with what is good or reasonable or even fair—even in their heroes.

As we read these tales, one of our primary goals will be to come to an understanding of this ancient culture through what they valued as recorded in the mythology surrounding the heroes—their actions and the effects of their actions. As we come to this understanding, we will also be thinking about our own culture. How far removed are we from the obstacles confronting the Greeks? What in their experience continues to overlap with our own? What can these ancient heroes teach us about the human condition? Why do we continue to read stories that are over 2500 years old?

In an effort to explore the last question, we will, throughout the semester, examine modern film adaptations of these stories. Despite the preposterous elements of the ancient accounts of the Trojan War's heroes (a warrior whose shout can frighten an entire army or one-eyed giants with the strength of a hundred men), modern filmmakers continue to return to these ancient stories for inspiration. These stories have the ability to extol the virtue and the bravery of the hero while at the same time acknowledging his vulnerability and faults. As we hone our skills in critical thinking and effective discussion through our reactions to Homer and his adaptors, we may even come to critique our own modern conceptions of heroic action, remembering that our own heroes are at some level human beings.

Goals of the First Year Seminar

- To reflect on “big questions” about yourself, your community, and your world.
- To develop the capacity to read and think critically.
- To develop the capacity to write clear and persuasive expository and argumentative essays with an emphasis on thesis formation and development.
- To gain an understanding of basic principles of oral communication as they apply to classroom discussion.
- To understand the liberal arts as a vital and evolving tradition and to see yourself as agents within that tradition.
- To develop capacities for careful and open reflection on questions of values and norms.
- To develop the ability to carry out research for the purpose of inquiry and to support claims.

Seminar expectations and policies: The First-Year Seminar as part of Butler's Core Curriculum uses the “seminar” method quite intentionally. In this environment, students study a topic of interest, think deeply about the issues of this same topic, and share the fruits with one another. The goal is for each of us to develop authority over the material through our engagement with primary and secondary texts as well as with one another. The ancient Greeks, we will see, were a vitally engaged lot, and we have much to learn from how they conducted themselves not only in times of war, but in other times of personal adversity. Cultural issues abound. Literary interpretations collide, begging for our research and analysis. That will be our task—to look at the issues for ourselves—to explore the issues arising from the great Greek epics, the Trojan War cycle—to better understand the reasons these particular works have held and continue to hold such significance in the culture of western civilization. We need to think about why we continue to read these works and why so much of our literature uses these heroes as the standards by which others are created and judged.

To this end, the class will operate primarily as a student-oriented discussion class—which means that responsibility for preparedness falls squarely on everyone’s shoulders. Have the material read and responses prepared the day they are due on the schedule of assignments. Contribution to class discussion will be counted towards your final grade.

As part of an Honors section of this course, you will also be required to meet weekly outside of class with a smaller group of fellow-classmates in tutorial sections. Throughout the semester, your tutorial section will be called upon to guide classroom discussion, introducing us to your group’s thoughts and reactions to the text of the week.

This course is required to address academic writing and clear, civil discourse, which serves as a guarantee that the university sees a direct relationship between serious and provocative writing and speaking and the quality of such a liberal arts education. To foster and promote intellectual development, the course will include a variety of writing and speaking opportunities including personal response, critical analysis, and academic research. The goal is to study, learn, record, report, synthesize, and create—to leave the course with much more than when we came.

Writing Assignments

- Three (3) formal essays. These will be analytical/interpretive essays over topics of interest rooted in the material we will be studying. Technical matters: 1400-2000 words, typed, double-spaced, with conventional necessities: Thesis; unified, coherent, well developed discussion; edited and proofread. Integration of secondary sources will be required for these assignments.
- Approximately ten (10) informal written assignments. These will be in response to our material, analyzing and responding to a small section of the week’s readings. The format for these assignments will be fairly standard, and they will be due as listed on the schedule of assignments.
- Four (4) research write-ups. These will be in response to the secondary articles you read about the titles under study. The format for these write-ups will mirror the format of the informal essays described above. The guidelines for these assignments will also be posted on Blackboard. The due dates for these assignments have not been set yet.
- Reader/Writer Portfolio. This portfolio will ask you to reflect on your development as both a reader and as a writer. You will be asked to do work that will contribute to your portfolio throughout the semester.

Oral Communication Assignments

Throughout the semester, your tutorial group will be asked to lead discussion 4-5 times throughout the semester. As part of these discussions, you will on occasion be asked to work through secondary material (scholarly essays, journal articles, etc.), and to lead a class discussion that helps us think about how we use secondary materials to better understand our primary sources.

Electronic Needs

- **Butler email:** Much communication will come to you via electronic format, generally through Butler email. All students should get in the habit of using and checking your email regularly – daily.
- **Microsoft Word or Rich Text Format:** All written assignments must be in typed form (hard copy) and electronic form. I will ask for an electronic copy of each of your written assignments – formal and informal.
- **Blackboard:** All course materials and assignments including student grades will be posted on Blackboard.

Reading Quizzes: If needed, and as needed. This is meant to keep us reading and to keep us honest.

Late Assignments

Late work will be accepted up to one week for informal assignments with a scoring penalty attached; after one week, you will receive 0 credit. No make-ups will be permitted for missed quizzes, regardless of reason, and the score will be recorded as a 0. If you anticipate the need for an extension for the formal essays, please contact me via email. Some leeway may be granted, but only if arranged in advance. Formal essays submitted late will receive a grade penalty—1/3 letter grade per day. Please note that technology breakdowns do occur—systems go down, printers jam. SAVE your work periodically when you are working on it, and use the Butler system as much as possible. You have a much greater shot at retrieving work on the system rather than on your own disks or hard drives—assuming, of course, that you save your work before the downtime occurs.

Tentative Grade Scheme:

Formal Essays (3):	50 each	150
Informals (10):	5 each	50
Research write-Ups (4):	5 each	20
Reader/Writer Portfolio:	10	10
Leading Class Discussion:	50	50
Contribution:	20	20
		300 pts

Grading will be based upon a 90% = A, 80% = B, 70% = C, 60% = D scale. Criteria for written and oral assignments will be posted on Blackboard (Course Documents).

Attendance Policy

Attendance is required. If you are ill or cannot attend for other reasons (competitions, performances, family emergencies, etc.), please provide a brief email explaining your absence. In the event of absence for whatever reason, students are still responsible for material covered in class and for assignments due. Note: Students who miss six classes or more (that equates to two weeks of missed work) will be asked to withdraw. A student who accumulates nine absences or more and still remains in the course will receive an F for the course because of insufficient participation and attendance.

Requests for Academic Accommodations

It is the policy and practice of Butler University to make reasonable accommodations for students with properly documented disabilities. Written notification from Student Disability Services is required. If you are eligible to receive an accommodation and would like to request it for this course, please discuss it with me and allow one week advance notice. Otherwise, it is not guaranteed that the accommodation can be received on a timely basis. Students who have questions about Student Disability Services or who have, or think they may have, a disability (psychiatric, attentional, learning, vision, hearing, physical, medical, etc.) are invited to contact Student Disability Services for a confidential discussion in Jordan Hall 136 or by phone at extension 9308.

Cautionary Note on Plagiarism: One important task of FYS101 and FYS102 is for you to master integrating source material correctly and ethically into your own writing. You will have the opportunity to practice summarizing, paraphrasing, directly quoting sources and then to integrate the material into your own essays. The essays incorporating secondary materials are assigned so that you will have occasion to generate an original thesis, support it with your own reasoning as well as secondary sources. The task will be for you to differentiate your original ideas from these sources. Recording source material as though it is your original idea constitutes plagiarism—whether intentional or not. All first-year seminar students are asked to take the "Plagiarism Tutorial" on the Library's website as well as to complete the "Plagiarism Quiz" available on Blackboard. An essay plagiarized in part or in full will receive an F. Plagiarized work also places a student in jeopardy of failing the course. **Repeated incidents involving academic dishonesty can result in a student's suspension from the University.** Students should also refer to the *Butler University Student Handbook* (available online at www.butler.edu) for a full discussion of student rights and responsibilities regarding "Academic Integrity."

Schedule of Reading Assignments:

Schedule: This schedule is tentative and may change at any time.

Week 1	R	August 25 th	Who am I as a reader and writer?
Week 2	T	August 30 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 1-3
	R	September 1 st	<i>Iliad</i> Book 4-6 [Informal 1]
Week 3	T	September 6 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 7-8
	R	September 8 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 9-10 [Informal 2]
Week 4	T	September 13 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 11-13
	R	September 15 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 14-15 [Informal 3]

Week 5	T R	September 20 th September 22 nd	<i>Iliad</i> Book 16-17 <i>Iliad</i> Book 18-20 Viewing of <i>Troy</i> in the evening
Week 6	T R	September 27 th September 29 th	Bungard in Italy <i>Iliad</i> Book 21-22
Week 7	T R	October 4 th October 6 th	<i>Iliad</i> Book 23-24 [Informal 5 – <i>Iliad</i> v <i>Troy</i>] Writing Workshop: Moving from observation to insight. [Raising good questions & constructing a preliminary response or hypothesis.]
Week 8	T W R	October 11 th October 12 th October 13 th	Writing Workshop: Moving from thesis to support. [Finding evidence in primary sources, examining and testing support for thesis.] Essay 1 (<i>Iliad</i>) due by 5:00pm Reading Break (NO CLASS)
Week 9	T R	October 18 th October 20 th	Sophocles <i>Philoctetes</i> [Informal 6] Viewing of <i>Trojan Women</i> in the evening Euripides <i>Trojan Women</i> ; Film Discussion
Week 10	T R	October 25 th October 27 th	Aeschylus <i>Agamemnon</i> [Informal 7] Research Workshop @ Irwin Library
Week 11	T R	November 1 st November 3 rd	Writing Workshop: Analyzing and integrating a secondary source. Writing Workshop: Drafting a response to another's argument
Week 12	T R	November 8 th November 10 th	<i>Odyssey</i> Book 1-4 <i>Odyssey</i> Essay 2 (Tragedy) due by 5pm <i>Odyssey</i> Book 5-8 <i>Odyssey</i> [Informal 8]
Week 13	T R	November 15 th November 17 th	<i>Odyssey</i> Book 9-12 <i>Odyssey</i> Book 13-16 [Informal 9]
Thanksgiving Break (NO CLASS)			
Week 14	T R	November 29 th December 1 st	<i>Odyssey</i> Book 17-20 <i>Odyssey</i> Book 21-24 [Informal 10]
Week 15	T R	December 6 th December 8 th	Writing Workshop: Revising and expanding <i>Odyssey</i> Film in the evening Film Discussion Course Evaluations
		Monday, December 12 th at 5pm	Essay 3 (Revised and Expanded) due
		Thursday, December 15 th at 5:00pm	Reader/Writer Portfolio due by 5:00pm

This syllabus is subject to change. Any changes will be given in written and oral format.



