

English 44A, World Literature,
Fall Semester, 1999, 2:00 to 3:15 p.m., T Th, Room BUS 43
Betty Higdon, Instructor
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Class will not meet on the following days: November 11, Veterans' Day; November 25, Thanksgiving Vacation.

Deadlines to observe:

- Friday, Sept. 3, last day to drop a class and not have it on the transcript
- Friday, Sept. 17, last day to change a class to CREDIT/NOCREDIT status
- Friday, Oct. 15, last day to drop a semester length class without a letter grade

INTRODUCTION TO THE CLASS

English 44A is a one-semester course. In order to enroll, you need to be eligible for English 1A, for the reading and writing required in 44A are fairly demanding. In this class you will have the chance to sample literature from around the world, with emphasis on works from antiquity to the early modern world. We may sample not only the works that have been central in Western thinking for centuries but also some parallel or contemporary works from Eastern and New World literatures. Our principal reason for reading and discussing and writing about this literature is to enjoy and understand it, to develop reading and writing skill, and to share the discovery of some of the works and ideas that have become part of our own background. Any literature which we read and study may become part of our own lives and heritage; this class enlarges our view by giving us a chance to read, study, and talk or write about some revealing works. The fact that we try to see this literature in an historical context encourages us to notice how literature not only reflects the times in which it is written but may sometimes make some history of its own. Some of the works in our text are familiar or at least familiar titles to some of us. Other works will be new to everyone in class!

The text is Caws and Prendergast, The HarperCollins World Reader: Antiquity to the Early Modern World, HarperCollins College Publishers, 1994. The collection is designed to introduce major works and to encourage comparative literature studies. There is more in the text than we can possibly read in a semester, so we have the opportunity to make choices and to follow some of the interests of the class. Everyone should find something to enjoy or recognize. A good dictionary is also required.

The class will be conducted through informal lecture and discussion. Participation, asking good questions, and working together to solve some of the problems posed in the class work are important. There will be at least five major papers assigned, essays which will be written out of class, though the work in progress may be brought to class for discussion along the way. The final examination will include a major

Grade scale

essay component. Quizzes and short objective tests are possible but not inevitable. If everyone participates in discussion and other class activities, quizzes should not be necessary.

Grades in the class will be based sixty or seventy percent on the major papers, ten percent on quiz grades (if any), and thirty percent on the final examination. Graded papers may be revised and improved (not just corrected) for reevaluation and a better grade.

You are expected to (1) read all assignments on time, (2) complete all written assignments, (3) participate in class activities and discussions, and (4) talk with the instructor about your work. Obviously, if discussion is to include everyone, it is very important to keep up with the reading assignments. Late written work will usually be accepted unless it is always late or very late. Any change in this policy will be discussed in class. If illness or some other crisis interferes, please communicate with the instructor and keep up with the work.

While everyone is expected to come to class on time, **if you should happen to be late**, please come in quietly and get to work. **The college policy on attendance**—that you may be dropped from class after the equivalent of two weeks of absence—may be followed if the instructor is not informed about your absence or intentions toward the work of the class.

The final examination for this class is scheduled for Monday, December 13 from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Part of the final will be a take-home essay that will be handed in at this final class meeting. The other part of the final may be written or a discussion (oral final).

The drop date this semester is Friday, October 15. To evaluate your progress in the class is your responsibility. If you are not doing as well as you wish, there will still be time to get busy, talk with the instructor, and finish your work. If you decide to drop the class, you may do so without penalty only until October 15. By the end of the eighth week you should have completed at least two major papers and should have an idea of your success. The instructor will be glad to discuss your progress with you.

This class may be taken credit/no credit. If you take the class for credit only (no letter grade), your work must be C or better to receive the units.

If there is any problem with the work at any time, it is wise to talk with the instructor about solving that problem before it becomes serious.

A detailed schedule of reading and writing assignments will be distributed every two or three weeks so that you may always know what is expected each day. If a schedule must be changed or if the instructor is slow to produce the schedule, the assignments will be explained in class. There is some flexibility in the work we do: if some work or concept requires more time, we'll take that time.

OUTLINE (may be changed and will be expanded)

The textbook is organized according to both geography and chronology, and we shall follow that organization most of the time. Sometimes we may choose to work with themes across physical boundaries and times in order to compare and contrast the works. The experience and interests of the class will influence some of the things we do and how much time we spend with specific topics.

These headings come directly from the textbook. The selections listed are probably assignments although we as a class may modify this plan.

You are strongly encouraged to keep a reading notebook as you read the assignments or discover better things on neighboring pages. Write down your questions, observations, brief summaries, doubts, and discoveries, pleasant or not. Marking a text and keeping notes help focus your attention and memory so that you can ponder meanings and remember what you want to share with the class.

Section I, "The Ancient Mediterranean World"

"The World of the Hero"

"The Epic of Gilgamesh," pp. 97-140

from The Iliad, Books 1, 6, 9, 16, 18, 22, 24, pp. 141-183

from The Odyssey, Books 1 and 9, pp. 185-198

The Book of Job, pp. 43-77

Also, samples from creation stories . . .

"The World of the City"

Sophocles, Antigone, 229

Plato, "The Apology," 265

Love poems from Egypt, The Song of Songs, Sappho, Catullus, and others

"The World of the Empire"

"The Joseph Story," The Bible, 335

"The Book of Ruth," The Bible, 357

Euripides, Bacchae, 368

Vergil, Book 4 from the Aeneid, 428

possibly other selections, too

Section II, "South Asia: Early and Middle Periods"

Selections from The Mahabharata, 492

Valmiki, from The Ramayana, 518

Selected poetry

Banarasi, "Half a Tale," 591

Section III, "East Asia: Early and Middle Periods"

Confucius, "Selected Analects) 608

Lao-Tzu, selections 612

Shih-Ching Book of Songs, 615

Poems by Li Po, Tu Fu, Po Chü-Yi, etc. 661 ff.

A selection of Japanese poems

Murasaki Shikibu, from The Tale of Genji, 711

Zeami, Kagekiyo, A Nō Drama, 752

A selection from the Korean poets . . .

Section IV, "Medieval Europe"

Saint Augustine, "Confessions," 798

Song of Roland selections, 816

Marie de France, "Yonec," 830; The Fables, "The Wolf and the Lamb," 837

Dante Alighieri, selections from The Divine Comedy, 878

Giovanni Boccaccio, Sixth Day, Fourth Tale from the Decameron, 899

Geoffrey Chaucer, "The Wife of Bath's Tale," from The Canterbury Tales, 901

Section V, "Early and Classical Middle East"

"The Darkening," "The Forenoon," and "Joseph," from The Koran, 945

Firdawsī, "The Tragedy of Sohrāb and Rostām," 971

Ibn Hazm, "Of Various Loves," from The Dove's Neckring, 983

Section VI, "Africa: The Epic Tradition"

Selections from the Merina, Soninké, Songhay, Bedouin, and Maninka Peoples

Section VII, "Early Modern Europe"

Selections from the following:

Francesco Petrarch, 1080

Niccolò Machiavelli, 1095

Marguerite de Navarre, 1107

François Rabelais, 1109

William Shakespeare, 1140

John Donne, 1216

Section VIII, "The Early Americas"

Selections as time permits, possibly in relation to other sections (such as that on creation stories)

You are always welcome to read any selections that catch your attention, whether they are specifically assigned or not. The class discussions will provide opportunities for sharing any discoveries along the way!