CASPER COLLEGE COURSE SYLLABUS
ENGL/HUMN 2140-01 World Literature I

Semester and Year: Fall, 2006

Lectures Hours: 3  Lab Hours: 0  Credit Hours: 3

Class Time: 10:00-10:50 a.m.  Days: MWF  Room: AD 198

Instructor’s Name: Dr. C. E. (Jay) Graham, Jr.  Office: AD 8

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Office Hours: MW 1:00-1:50 p.m., TTH 1:30-2:00 p.m.

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Course Description: Although primarily a study of the literature of the Classical Period of Ancient Greece and Rome, some attention will be paid to the other arts, to religion, and to philosophy. Literary values and the qualities of the greatness of selected works of Western Civilization, including any ideas embodied in those works, will be our focus.

Statement of Prerequisites: ENGL 1020 or permission of the instructor.

General Objectives: The purpose of this course is to acquaint the student with some of the so-called “Great Books” of the Classical Period of Western Civilization.

Specific Objectives: To study writings—epic poems, tragedies, history, and biblical literature—of Classical Greece and Rome in order to appreciate the achievements of the past.

Methods: The professor lectures and leads in-class discussions.

Evaluation Criteria: Students are evaluated according to the following: attendance; performance on both objective and essay examinations, as well as on short essays, written in or out of class; regularity and quality of in-class participation in discussions; and overall improvement.

Required Readings: Homer, Odyssey; Aeschylus, Oresteia; Sophocles, Oedipus Rex and Antigone; the Old Testament (selections); Herodotus, Histories (selections); Virgil, Aeneid (selections)

Last Date to Change to Audit Status: See catalogue of Casper College.

Last Date to Withdraw with a “W” Grade: See catalogue of Casper College.

Student Rights and Responsibilities: Refer to the Casper College Student Conduct and Judicial Code for information concerning students’ rights and responsibilities as a Casper College student.
**ADA Accommodations Policy:** It is the policy of Casper College to provide appropriate accommodations to any student with a documented disability. If you have a need for accommodation in this course, please make an appointment to see me at your earliest convenience.

**General Responsibilities and Expectations:** The student ought to be aware that professors have expectations of the students in their classes, some of which are merely matters of general etiquette and others of which are matters of attitude. Some of those expectations are:

--that the student notify the instructor beforehand of any necessary absence or failure to meet a deadline.

--that the student consider himself a member of the group and responsible to the group; hence, any disciplinary problems, such as chatting or popping gum in class, are detrimental to the group and will not be tolerated.

--that the student will come to class with assignments prepared and with a willingness to participate.

--that the student will complete all writing assignments and take all examinations.

--that the student will raise any questions or issues that pertain to assignments.

--that the student will ask any questions about the course, such as clarification on assignments or justifications for readings.

--that the student ask the instructor for help with any problem that is an obstacle to the student's academic improvement. (Note: Personal problems may or may not be appropriate to discuss with an instructor. Usually, if a student wants to discuss personal problems, the instructor can help, if only to listen or to direct the student to someone else who might be better able to help.)

--that the student work toward becoming a responsible, independent learner. This expectation is in no way in conflict with the entry above, for a responsible, independent learner is not afraid to ask for help in the process or in the event of another's being more knowledgeable.

--that the student try, honestly and without excuses, to meet the standards set for the course.

--that the student put in the time and effort necessary for meeting the standards for the course, recognizing that one gets no credit for effort, except insofar as effort pays off in results. It is a general rule that a college student can expect to put in two hours of study outside of class for every hour in class or for every hour of credit for the course. The student ought to assume that the time should be quality time and that the amount of time varies from student to student, course to course, assignment to assignment. Students who
are engaged in their work spend whatever time is necessary to be successful in that course.

--that the student be engaged in learning, which entails taking personally, or taking to heart, the purposes and processes of learning. Only if the student learns to be engaged or take learning seriously can he grow and make of learning a lifetime process--and truly enjoy it.

Just as the teacher has certain expectations of his students, the student has some of his teacher. Aside from expecting the teacher to be in class, on time, well-prepared, and well-informed, the student has a right to expect certain qualities from a teacher. Before I list those, however, it has become clear to me that the student needs to be aware of several things that he has no right to expect:

--that a teacher will entertain the class.

--that a teacher will lower the standards of the class just because the student isn't interested in it or good at it.

--that it is the teacher's responsibility to make the student anxiety-free or make learning pain-free.

--that a teacher can read a student's mind and anticipate everything that a student doesn't understand.

--that the teacher will specify every problem or issue involved in doing an assignment. Parts of many assignments entail the student's discovery of and dealing with the problems encountered in the process--and that dealing with those issues might well mean asking questions in class.

What, then, does a student have a right to expect of the teacher? The student ought to be able to expect the teacher:

--to be a leader and an example of the learned person.

--to take the student's questions or problems seriously and respond to them appropriately. Some questions can be answered precisely in quantitative terms; others cannot. The answers to some questions entail, not a brief, measurable response or formula, but a discussion or a consideration of the possibilities. (Consider the question at least implied by an essay to which the essay is the response.) Just because a teacher's answer isn't a one- or two-word, quantitative answer does not mean that the student's question hasn't been answered. However, if the answer raises more questions, ask them, too.

--to ask any student in class questions relevant to an assignment and to ask questions impartially of any student.

--to exercise his personality--to be humorous, disappointed, dull, frustrated, angry, or jolly--always provided that his expressions are at no student's expense and that the
student recognizes that the same right to personal expression is granted to all students as well.

--to make clear the standards used in grading writing assignments and examinations.

--to grade according to those standards and not according to the level or atmosphere of the class. Theoretically, at least, a class full of average students should all get "C's." A class full of superior students should all get "A's."

--to be willing to help any student patiently and as much as it takes, within practical limits, to help the student fulfill the objectives of the class. The student should note that in no case does this imply that the teacher should do any of the work and that in many cases the teacher will give the student a general direction, which the student is then expected to take on his own.

--to urge all students to improve their thinking and clarity of communication, even if this means challenging what a student says and how it is expressed in a paper or in class.

--to let the student know when he has given a wrong answer or holds a mistaken notion (there are such things).

--to give tests that are challenging and fair.

--to mark errors on papers and provide comments about what the student needs to do in order to improve.

--to allow a student, or even challenge a student, to express opinions about anything relevant to the content or methods of the class, including challenging the teacher's values and philosophy of education.

**What Grades on Essays Mean**

Some students believe, blindly, that an evaluation of writing depends entirely or even mostly on the reader's personal opinion, on purely private matters of taste or bias. Some students even believe that an average or poor grade on a paper means that the teacher doesn't like them personally. That both of these beliefs are misinformed, are in fact wrong, the following description of what determines a student's grade on an essay is meant to show.

Keep in mind that for grades "A" through "D" the following are assumed and expected:

1. that the paper is neatly typed according to proper manuscript format.

2. that any corrections in the manuscript are made neatly and that no more than three or four minor corrections are written in on any page.

3. that the essay fulfills the assignment.

4. that the student attains a vocabulary of formal words, avoiding conversational usage,
slang, jargon, or illiteracies.

5. that the essay is submitted in class on the day it is due.

Note on late papers: Any paper not turned in class on the day it is due is considered late. The first late paper will occasion no lowering of the grade; however, I shall expect that such a late paper be turned in no later than two class periods after the one for which it was due. After the second class period, I shall lower the grade for that essay one letter grade for each additional day it is late.

The final essay for the class must be turned in on time or the grade for it will be lowered.

The English department at Casper College has determined that a "C" paper for English composition must meet the following criteria. These standards apply equally to any literature course for which an essay is written. A "C" paper, then,

1. has clear, complete sentences (no fragments, comma splices, or fused sentences).
2. has clear transitions from sentence to sentence and from paragraph to paragraph.
3. shows the student's competence in spelling and punctuation.
4. has a topic sentence for each paragraph and a thesis statement for the whole paper.
5. develops its ideas with specific support.
6. indicates a clear understanding of the assignment.

Based on these minimal criteria, then, I describe grades as follows:

A (clearly superior): The essay is focused on a clearly stated thesis, which interestingly shows the student's significant approach to the topic. In order to be significant the thesis needed to show that the student has regarded the paper as more than an assignment, indeed as an opportunity to explore thought and feeling and to communicate. Formally, the essay succinctly, but fully, introduces the topic and thesis in proportion to the rest of the essay: the beginning, or introduction, is neither too long nor too short; the middle, or body, shows a development of paragraphs in logical order that clearly argues the thesis and provides specific evidence, showing unity, coherence, and clarity through substance and appropriate detail; the conclusion, like the other two parts, is proportionate and fulfills the purpose of a conclusion—to show that the thesis has indeed communicated its reasoning and, when necessary, points toward issues that logically take us beyond the thesis we’ve just encountered. The writing is primarily and appropriately concrete and specific, rather than abstract and general; it is fresh, rather than dulled by clichés and stock phrases; it is humane, rather than jargonistic or institutional or mechanical. Sentences are appropriately varied, and the student shows care about and sensitivity to words—they are accurate, both for their denotations and their connotations. The paper is virtually free of errors in punctuation, usage, structures of sentences, or other obstacles to communication.

In addition, the writer of an "A" paper shows the reader that he has discovered something significant and meaningful and has taken pains to find the means to communicate those
discoveries. The student's view of the topic is, then, that student's own: the student has been keenly observant of possibilities, reflected on them, and more or less successfully fulfilled them.

**B (superior; very good):** The general qualities of a "B" essay are the same as those described in the first paragraph for an "A" essay. In addition, the "B" paper shows the reader that the author has discovered something significant and been careful to find the means to communicate those discoveries, avoiding the obvious. The author has, perhaps, not entirely succeeded in fulfilling or observing possibilities, but has reflected on them and taken pains to communicate.

**C (average; adequate):** Along with those criteria determined by the English department for a "C" paper, I shall say the following: The "C" paper is focused on a clearly stated thesis; however, the thesis may be faulty in some way--it might not accurately reflect what the essay is about or it might not be particularly significant or it might not be properly limited. The paragraphs in the paper are governed by clearly stated topic sentences, although the paragraphs might not develop strictly according to those topic sentences, or the topic sentence might need to be revised to more accurately reflect the content of the paragraph.

The paper is an adequate fulfillment of the assignment, showing the student's understanding of the assignment; but the paper may be little more than that. Formally, the introduction might be out of proportion to the rest of the paper (too long or too short) or might be partly or wholly irrelevant or extraneous. Transitions from sentence to sentence and from paragraph to paragraph might be merely mechanical and dull, and the structures of sentences might not be varied--they might be choppy or repetitive or use weak linking verbs over and over. Although paragraphs develop with specific support of the topic sentence, perhaps the details are not specific enough or are not directly relevant to the point. The writing might well be too general, abstract, or clichéd or jargonistic. The writing shows the student's unwillingness or inability to be sensitive to the use of words.

**D (below average; inadequate):** The "D" paper lacks focus because the thesis is absent or may not be clearly stated or not adhered to in the essay. The paper may merely be the student's attempt to fulfill an assignment and, consequently, states only the obvious in flat, uninteresting words and sentences. The paper may reflect the student's lack of ability to deal with the assignment or to recognize that the writing is not communicating well. Organization of the paper is unclear or lacking. Individual paragraphs may lack topic sentences, may be disunified or incoherent, or may lack development. The writing is general, rather than detailed; it depends on cliche or slang and shows the student's misuse of words. Structures of sentences may occasionally be uncontrolled, or they may not be varied beyond the simple and compound types. Fragments, comma splices, and fused sentences frequently appear. The student's use of punctuation is faulty, perhaps random, showing lack of understanding of the structures of sentences and of the punctuation appropriate to those structures. The paper may be messily typed or corrected, but it must be remembered that a paper can be neatly done and even relatively free of punctuational and mechanical errors and still be a "D" paper, a paper that was less than competent or a barely adequate response to the assignment.

**F (failing; unacceptable):** There are many reasons for a paper to be graded "F"; here are some:

1. The paper does not fulfill the assignment.
2. The paper shows no focus or the focus is trivial.
3. Paragraphs lack topic sentences.
4. The paper is disorganized: paragraphs do not follow in a recognizable order; sentences within paragraphs do not develop the paragraphs, do not cohere.
5. The writing is general to the point of confusion, lacking detail to substantiate generalities.
6. Structures of sentences are frequently uncontrolled, or fragments, comma splices, or fused sentences abound.
7. Punctuation is frequently incorrect.
8. The paper may be messy or may not meet the requirements for manuscript form.
9. The paper was an inadequate response to the assignment.
10. The paper shows that problems present in earlier papers persist, showing that the writing has not improved.

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**Etiquette in the Classroom:** First, let us define *etiquette*.

etiquette [from Fr. *étiquette*, a ticket, label; from O.Fr. *estiquette* from *estiquer*, to stick] 1. the forms, manners, and ceremonies established by convention as acceptable or required in society, a profession, or in official life. 2. the rules for such forms, manners, and ceremonies.

As a matter of common courtesy, the general rules of etiquette that one would follow in polite society will be expected of every student in each meeting of this class. Those rules include, but are not limited to, the following:

--All hats and caps will be removed during class.
--Students who chew gum must not pop it, blow bubbles or otherwise make noise with it.
--No student will chew tobacco in class.
--Students will not engage in private chat during class lectures or discussions. If we are discussing, only one discussion is proceeding.
--Students will not hand in paper torn from a spiral notebook.
--Students, in their readiness for the class period, will have all their own supplies (pens, appropriate paper for notes, the book, and so on) so that they will not have to bother other students or the class for borrowing or mooching.
--Students should wear clothing appropriate for college class and that does not attract undue attention that would serve as any sort of distraction from our purposes. It has been apparently occurred on some campuses that faculty or students offended by overly revealing clothing of some students have filed grievances for sexual harassment against those students.
--Students should not eat during class.

--Students should not crack or pop their knuckles during class. Doing so is a distraction, as well as a sign of disrespect, showing boredom or feigned boredom.

--YOU MAY NOT DISTURB ANY CLASS PERIOD WITH YOUR CELL PHONE, INCLUDING LEAVING THE ROOM TO ANSWER A CALL. THE UBIQUITY OF CELL PHONES AND THE DISCOURTESY OF SO MANY PEOPLE IN USING THEM HAS MADE IT NECESSARY FOR ME TO RULE THAT IF A STUDENT HAS ONE OF THESE WITH THEM, IT MUST BE SHUT OFF IN THE CLASSROOM AND LEFT IN A PURSE OR BACKPACK WHICH HAS BEEN LEFT IN A LOCATION OTHER THAN WHERE THE STUDENT SITS. IF YOUR CELL PHONE GOES OFF IN CLASS, YOU WILL BE ASKED TO LEAVE. SIMILARLY, IT IS A GROSS BREACH OF ETIQUETTE TO USE YOUR CELL PHONE IN THE LIBRARY!
“STUDY TO BE QUIET.”

--Isaac Walton, *The Compleat Angler*

At the entrances to public parks in Britain are posted signs to inform people that motorized vehicles of all kinds and electronically amplified or electrified music are prohibited. Boorish Yanks surely wonder how the government would dare to restrict citizens’ rights by banning radios or stereos in a park—a public park. Do not all citizens have equal rights to do what they want? Surely, citizens have rights and more or less equal rights, at that. But people go to parks for two reasons: first, for the greenery, the trees and grass and bushes, and the water and the birds that greenery and water attract, all of which contrast with the pavement and steel and smells of town or city life; and second, for the quiet, the natural, peaceful quiet that contrasts so wondrously to the noise outside the park and that imitates in an artificially limited space the quiet of large natural spaces, the fields and hills and mountains. The Brits have determined that the green and the quiet provide a salubrious alternative to clutter and bustle and noise and that that alternative takes precedence of importance over citizens’ rights to impose ugliness of noise. The 17th Century writer, most famous for his book on fishing, stated their ideal in his practical and philosophical book, *The Compleat Angler*, in which he admonishes fishermen and would-be fishermen to “Study to be quiet.” Chatter and other noise detract from the experience, indeed from one of the main purposes, of angling—the seeking of quiet within which one can learn to listen to the sounds of nature, both internal and external, and by doing so to focus on matters of greater significance than daily work or even the immediate goal of catching a fish.

**our five minutes of quiet**

We all come to class from elsewhere in the world, our attentions scattered from the topics and issues we assemble to study. Whether we arrive with our lives and minds cluttered, we need to focus on those things that make up our purpose in this room. In order for us to enclose ourselves within the proper quiet necessary for focus, I am imposing a five-minute period of quiet following roll at the beginning of each class session. This time of enforced quiet is for each of you to gather your thoughts, review notes from the last class or the reading, to write down or perhaps revise already written questions you intend to ask following the quiet, and in general simply draw yourself into a focused presence in and for this class. It is in support of this purpose that no student will be allowed to enter the classroom during our five minutes of quiet.

During this five minutes no one will be allowed to speak or to communicate in any nonverbal way with classmates or me. Because you will already have discarded your cell ‘phones and physical clutter and will have with you only your book, your notebook, and your pens, you should find it relatively easy to focus; moreover, you will find that as your practice of gathering yourself becomes habitual, it will become increasingly easy.

I expect that our taking five minutes before beginning the lectures and discussions will help us to accomplish more in the remaining time than we might ordinarily manage.
Schedule of Assignments: Humanities or English 2140
(44 class-meeting schedule)

1. Introduction to the course
2. Homer: *The Odyssey*: I-II
3. Homer: *The Odyssey*: III-IV
4. Homer: *The Odyssey*: re-read I-IV
5. Homer: *The Odyssey*: V-VIII
6. Homer: *The Odyssey*: IX-XII
7. Examination: *The Odyssey*, I-XII
8. Homer: *The Odyssey*, XIII-XVI
9. Homer: *The Odyssey*, XVII-XX
10. Homer: *The Odyssey*, XXI-XXIV
11. Examination: *The Odyssey*
12. Introduction: Greek Drama: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*
13. Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*
14. Aeschylus,
15. Aeschylus,
16. Examination: Aeschylus
17. Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*
18. Sophocles: *Oedipus Rex*
19. Sophocles: *Antigone*
20. Examination: Greek Drama
21. Ancient Hebrews: Genesis
22. Ancient Hebrews: Genesis; Exodus
23. Ancient Hebrews:
24. Ancient Hebrews:
25. Ancient Hebrews:
26. Ancient Hebrews:
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FINAL EXAMINATION