

Muhsin Yanar

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Sabancı University, Foundations Development Directorate

FASS UC 1083/1089

Course Syllabus

HUM 311 Major Works of Literature: The World Before Modernity, SPRING 2022

The Course

When are we ever at home? But how do we know we are “back home”?

But do we ever really return?

When is Odysseus at home? How does he know he is “back home”?

Does Odysseus really return?

This course provides an in-depth look at Homer’s epic poem *The Odyssey*, which tells the story of a journey. We will look at what journeys have in common as well as what makes them different, whether they are physical, spiritual, or metaphorical, whether they transform and change the journey taker, whether the journey taker will become a hero at the end of the journey.

Along with these, in this course, we aim to do a close reading on this long-enduring traditional story that has influenced their times and continues to have an impact on our understanding of the world and its cultures. We explore and discuss the nature and function of myth, how to read, receive and interpret myth, how they affected life within their times, and how they are related to our current time. Through the story of the journey, we also dig out subtle codes, universal symbols, or patterns that speak about the creation of the universe, immanent men and gods, human limitations, religion, family, death, and the like.

Classroom and Office at Zoom

<https://sabanciuniv.zoom.us/j/6254307359>

Class Schedule (Live on Zoom)

Tuesday, 14:40 – 16:40

Thursday, 12:40 – 13:40

Office Hours (on Zoom)

Thursday, 13:40-14:40 or by appointment

Course requirements

Attendance (10) and Participation (10) =%20

- Attendance is compulsory in this course.
- Attendance is taken on an hourly basis during all live sessions. Students who miss 9 hours (regardless of medical reports) in total will automatically receive 0 for participation and attendance grades.

- Attendance follow-up starts at the end of the add-drop period.
- Keeping your cameras on during all live sessions is **mandatory**.
- Prepare and complete all readings and tasks on time. Your active participation is critical.

In-class Response Papers 4x5=20%

- In-class response papers aim to concentrate on what you have read and learned.
- On Thursday, you will be given a question or issue to think about. On Friday, you will be expected to write a min. one-page (400 words) essay to present your findings and opinions with a title, a proper beginning, and a proper conclusion.
- The response paper will be submitted through SuCourse+.
- Please check the dates of the remaining response papers from the Syllabus and note them down in your calendar.

Midterm Exam 25%, Final Exam 35%

- In these exams you are expected to answer the questions in a proper essay format which mainly consists of; an introduction to an argument, supporting ideas and examples, and a conclusion. You are required to make references to the texts with appropriate citations. Please make sure to understand the question well and plan your essay according to what the question asks you. Please do not forget to always read the exam instructions.

Time-Conflict Policy: Time Conflict requests will not be accepted for HUM courses.

Grading

Your letter grade, as well as exam grades, are based on your performance. Requests for extra work or other compensation will not be accepted. E-mails concerning such requests will not be replied to. Letter grades are calculated according to the following letter grade scale and are not open to negotiation.

min. 59	min. 64	min. 68	min. 72	min. 76	min. 80	min. 84	min. 88	min. 92	min. 96
D	D+	C-	C	C+	B-	B	B+	A-	A

Academic Honesty Policy

Major Works courses do not tolerate dishonesty and plagiarism. Plagiarism is an ethical and academic offense. Papers with plagiarism issues will be graded F, and your semester grade may be F depending on the severity of the offense. The offense may also be referred to as the University Ethics Committee. For information on plagiarism, please see Course Information.

Students with Special Needs

It is the policy of Sabancı University to accommodate students with special needs and disabilities. To determine accommodations and/or academic adjustments, please let us know and contact the Disabled Students Support Unit of CIAD (specialneeds@sabanciuniv.edu).

Anti-Discrimination Policy

HUM 311 classroom is free from all discrimination based on, including but not limited to, race, ethnicity, creed, religion, language, disability, gender, and sexual orientation. Students are expected to maintain this environment.

Core Texts

The Odyssey, Homer. trans. Robert Fagles. Penguin Classics. Deluxe Edition. 1997.

Tentative Schedule

Week 1(01-03 March):

- Introduction to the course, its goals, contents, and requirements.
- How to read myth: ancient and modern approaches to myths

Week 2(08-10 March):

- Books I: Athene Visits Telemachus
- Book II: The Debate in Ithaca

Week 3(15-17 March):

- Book III: Telemachus Visits Nestor
- Book IV: Menelaus and Helen

Week 4(22-24 March):

- Book V: Calypso
- Book VI: Nausicaa

Week 5(29-31 March):

- Book VII: The Palace of Alcinous
- Book VIII: The Phaeacian Games
- Book IX: The Cyclops

• Response Paper 1

Week 6(05-07 April)

- Book X: Circe
- A.D.Hope "Circe"
- Louise Gluck "Circe's Power"
- Alfred Lord Tennyson, "Lotus Eaters"

Week 7(12-14 April): Midterm Exam (In-class)

Week 8(18-21 April):

- Book XI: The Book of the Dead
- Book XII: Scylla and Charybdis

- Margaret Atwood "Siren Song"

• Response Paper 2

Week 9(26-28 April):

- Book XIII: Odysseus Lands in Ithaca,
- Book XIV: In Eumaeus' Hut
- Cavafy "Ithaca"

Week 10(10-12 May):

- Book XV: Telemachus Returns
- Book XVI: Odysseus Meets His Son
- "Odysseus to Telemachus," Joseph Brodsky

• Response Paper 3

Week 11(17 May):

- Book XVII: Odysseus Goes to Town
- Book XVIII: The Beggar in the Palace

Week 12(24-26 May):

- Book XIX: Eurycleia Recognizes Odysseus
- Book XX: Prelude to Crisis

Week 13(31 May – 01 June):

- Book XXI: The Great Bow
- Book XXII – XXIV: The Battle in the Hall, Odysseus, and Penelope, The Feud is Ended

• Response Paper 4

Week 14 (07-10 June):

- Wrap-up
- Questions and answers

The Final exam to be announced by SR

Reading list:

1. Cavafy, C. P. "Ithaka"
2. Ovid. "Letter from Penelope to Ulysses"
3. Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Lotus Eaters"
4. Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Ulysses"
5. Hope, A. D. "Circe"
6. Hope, A. D. "The End of Journey"
7. Gluck, Louise. "Circe's Power"
8. Atwood, Margaret. "Siren Song"
9. Brodsky, Joseph. "Odysseus to Telemachus"
10. Finley, Moses. *The World of Odysseus*, NYRB Classics; 4th printing edition, August 10, 2002.
11. Fowler, Robert, and Robert Louis Fowler, eds. *The Cambridge Companion to Homer*. Cambridge University Press, 2004.

For general information:

- Edith Hamilton, *Mythology: Timeless Tales of Gods and Heroes*, Boston: Grand Central Publishing, 2011.