

— JUDY AND BOBBY —

SHACKOULS

HONORS COLLEGE

MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY

COURSE SYLLABUS

Course Number HON 1163 H01	Course Title The Quest Begins		
Fall Semester Fall	Spring Semester	Summer Semester	Year 2018
Name of Instructor Dr. Christopher A. Snyder			
Meeting Day, Time, and Room Number M W 3:30-4:45 Griffis 201			
Final Exam Day, Time, and Room Number Monday, Dec. 10, 3-5 PM Griffis 201			
Office Hours, Location, Phone Drop in or by appointment (with Mrs. Smith) Griffis C207 325-2522			
E-mail csnyder@honors.msstate.edu			

1. BROAD PURPOSE OF COURSE

This course serves as an introduction to the Honors Curriculum, the *Cursus Honorum*. It is a seminar in which students examine core texts from the Western tradition, from Classical Antiquity, the Middle Ages, through the Enlightenment. These texts, both whole and excerpted and broadly defined to include art and film, represent the great ideas that have shaped and challenged our ways of thinking about art, science, religion, politics, and culture.

2. COURSE OBJECTIVES

Upon successful completion of this course students will be expected to:

Know where the Quest begins by demonstrating the capability to reason and express thoughts lucidly through the written and spoken word by:

- participating in and leading class discussions on assigned readings

- writing summaries and interpretive essays of primary sources
- analyzing primary sources and writing a comparative essay

3. TEACHING METHOD

The class will be conducted as a seminar, which means that **all** students will be expected to do the assigned readings beforehand and, in class, to discuss the common readings. One student will be assigned to lead each discussion; **all students must bring a written discussion question with them for each class.** This is NOT a lecture course.

4. GRADING POLICY

Course grading is based on attendance and participation (10%), leading a discussion (20%), short papers (30%), and one comparative essay (40%). The papers must be typed, double-spaced, and of the following lengths:

Summaries: 3-4 pages
 Interpretive essays: 4-5 pages
 Comparative essay: 8-10 pages

Regular attendance is required. More than three unexcused absences will result in the lowering of the final attendance and participation grade by 10 pts per absence. Please take advantage of visiting the instructor during the office hours listed above.

5. CLASS SCHEDULE

Aug. 22	Introduction and syllabus.
Aug. 27	The Quest for Civilization. <i>The Epic of Gilgamesh</i> , Tablets I & II http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab1.htm
Aug. 29	The Quest for Immortality. <i>The Odyssey</i>
Sept. 3	Labor Day. NO CLASS.
Sept. 5	The Quest for Home. <i>The Odyssey</i> (cont.)
Sept. 10	The Quest to Understand the Divine, Part I: Judaism. <i>Genesis</i> and <i>I Samuel</i> .
Sept. 12	Humanism and Classical Art. How to talk about art. The Parthenon (including the Elgin Marbles). Handout.
Sept. 17	Greek Tragedy. Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the Tyrant</i>

- Sept. 19 The Quest for Love, Part I. **Summarize in an essay the first five speeches.**
Plato, *The Symposium*.
- Sept. 24 Plato, *The Symposium* (cont.).
- Sept. 26 NO CLASS.
See *Oedipus*, Griffis Courtyard, Sept. 25-26, 5-6:15 PM.
- Oct. 1 Hellenistic Ethics and Politics
Plato, *The Republic* (selections)
Aristotle, *The Politics* and *The Nichomachean Ethics* (excerpts)
- Oct. 3 Liberty and Natural Law. Empire and Slavery.
Cicero and Tacitus (excerpts)
- Oct. 8 The Quest to Understand the Divine, Part II: Christianity.
The Gospels (selections)
- Oct. 10 Duty to Family and State in Ancient India. **Write a summary essay.**
The Bhagavad Gita
- Oct. 15 Augustine, Pelagius, and the Fall of Rome.
Augustine (handout)
- Oct. 17 Research lecture.
- Oct. 22 The Hero Quest: Seeking Honor and Glory.
Beowulf
- Oct. 24 The Hero Quest: A Good Death.
Beowulf (cont)
- Oct. 29 Civilizing the Barbarian. Romanesque and Gothic Architecture.
The Song of Roland, Stanzas 1-45, 80-184, <http://omacl.org/Roland/>
Chartres Cathedral (handout)
- Oct. 31 The Quest for Love, Part III: Courtly Love.
Chrétien de Troyes, *Lancelot* and *Yvain* (excerpts)
- Nov. 5 The Quest for the Holy Grail. How to Talk about Film.
The Quest of the Holy Grail (13th cent., excerpt)
Monty Python: The Quest for the Holy Grail (film)
- Nov. 7 TBA.
- Nov. 12 Death and Community.
Bergman, *The Seventh Seal* (film)
- Nov. 14 Death and the Individual. **Write an interpretive essay**
Dante, *The Divine Comedy: The Inferno*

- Nov. 19 Dante, *The Inferno* (cont.)
- Nov. 21 Thanksgiving. NO CLASS.
- Nov. 26 Medieval and Renaissance Music.
- Nov. 28 The Renaissance Man (and Woman). **Proposal for Comparative Essay Due.**
Baldesare Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*
- Dec. 3 Castiglione, *The Courtier* (cont.)
- Dec. 5 Renaissance Art & Architecture. **Comparative Essay Due.**
The Arena Chapel, Padua (including the Giotto Frescoes) (handout)
- Dec. 10 Monday, 3-5 PM: **Final Exam.**

6. REQUIRED TEXTS

Homer, *The Iliad* (trans. Fagles)
The Bhagavad Gita (trans. Patton)
 Sophocles, *The Three Theban Plays*
 Plato, *The Symposium* (trans. Benardete)
Beowulf (trans. Heaney)
 Chrétien de Troyes, *Arthurian Romances*
 Dante, *Inferno*
 Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier*

7. STUDENT HONOR CODE

Mississippi State has an approved Honor Code that applies to all students. The code is as follows: “As a Mississippi State University student, I will conduct myself with honor and integrity at all times. I will not lie, cheat, or steal, nor will I accept the actions of those who do.” Upon accepting admission to Mississippi State University, a student immediately assumes a commitment to uphold the Honor Code, to accept responsibility for learning, and to follow the philosophy and rules of the Honor Code. Student will be required to state their commitment on examinations, research papers, and other academic work. Ignorance of the rules does not exclude any member of the MSU community from the requirements or the processes of the Honor Code. For additional information, please visit: <http://honorcode.msstate.edu/policy>.

8. TITLE IX

MSU is committed to complying with Title IX, a federal law that prohibits discrimination, including violence and harassment, based on sex. This means that MSU’s educational programs and activities must be free from sex discrimination, sexual harassment, and other forms of sexual misconduct. If you or someone you know has experienced sex discrimination, sexual violence and/or harassment by any member of the University community, you are encouraged to report the conduct to MSU’s Director of Title IX/EEO Programs at 325-8124 or by e-mail to titleix@msstate.edu. Additional resources are available at

<http://www.msstate.edu/web/security/title9-12.pdf>, or at
<http://students.msstate.edu/sexualmisconduct/> .

9. SUPPORT SERVICES

Students who need academic accommodations based on a disability should visit the Office of Student Support Services, 01 Montgomery Hall, call 662-325-3335, or visit the website at www.sss.msstate.edu.

10. RESEARCH

Each student is expected to conduct library research and to prepare a formal introduction to the author/book for which they are leading discussion. “Library research” is here defined as utilizing primary sources (whether literary, visual, material, etc.) and scholarly secondary sources. Scholarly or academic writing includes articles in peer-reviewed journals, monographs or books published by university presses (and certain trade presses), and entries in scholarly reference works (e.g. some subject encyclopedias). Reference librarians can help you identify and obtain these resources, and you should obtain prior approval from your professor if you are at all uncertain about whether or not something is an academic source. While the majority of academic scholarship (especially in the humanities) is on paper, electronic resources can be used as long as they fit the descriptions above. While students are not required to write research papers for Quest I, good essays almost always involve a little research. All essays for this class require a thesis, a body/argument, and a conclusion along with citation (normally MLA or Chicago Style).

Discussion and Presentation Sign-Up

Aug. 29	The Quest for Immortality. <i>The Odyssey</i>	_____
Sept. 3	Labor Day. NO CLASS.	
Sept. 5	The Quest for Home. <i>The Odyssey</i> (cont.)	_____
Sept. 10	The Quest to Understand the Divine, Part I: Judaism. <i>Genesis</i> and <i>I Samuel</i> .	_____
Sept. 12	Humanism and Classical Art. How to talk about art. The Parthenon (including the Elgin Marbles). Handout.	
Sept. 17	Greek Tragedy. Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the Tyrant</i>	_____
Sept. 19	The Quest for Love, Part I. Plato, <i>The Symposium</i> .	_____
Sept. 24	Plato, <i>The Symposium</i> (cont.).	_____
Sept. 26	NO CLASS. See <i>Oedipus</i>, Griffis Courtyard, Sept. 25-26, 5-6:15 PM.	
Oct. 1	Hellenistic Ethics and Politics Plato, <i>The Republic</i> (selections) Aristotle, <i>The Politics</i> and <i>The Nichomachean Ethics</i> (excerpts)	_____
Oct. 3	Liberty and Natural Law. Empire and Slavery. Cicero and Tacitus (excerpts)	_____
Oct. 8	The Quest to Understand the Divine, Part II: Christianity. <i>The Gospels</i> (selections)	_____
Oct. 10	Duty to Family and State in Ancient India. <i>The Bhagavad Gita</i>	_____
Oct. 15	Augustine, Pelagius, and the Fall of Rome. Augustine (handout)	_____
Oct. 17	Research lecture.	
Oct. 22	The Hero Quest: Seeking Honor and Glory. <i>Beowulf</i>	_____

- Oct. 24 The Hero Quest: A Good Death. _____
Beowulf (cont)
- Oct. 29 Civilizing the Barbarian. Romanesque and Gothic Architecture.
The Song of Roland, Stanzas 1-45, 80-184, <http://omacl.org/Roland/>
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