***English/Comparative Literature 266: World Literature to 1700***

*Spring 2012*

*TTh 10:30-11:45*

Charles Ross, Professor of English and Comparative Literature

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***Required Text***

* *The Norton Anthology of Western Literature,* vol. 1, 8th edition, available at University Bookstore or Follett’s.

***Related Web Site***

* *First Lines: A Project in Global Diversity* <http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~rosscs/First%20lines/First%20Lines.htm> (or via http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~rosscs/

***Course Description:***

This is a course in the close reading and appreciation of some of the most famous literary texts in the world, all of which were written when writing was the dominant medium (as opposed to speech or film, for example). This course serves as half of the introduction to the Comparative Literature major. It also applies to the English major and to certain Education majors.

***Course Goals:***

After finishing this course, you should know something about the major authors and forms of Western and world literature (drama, poetry, narrative, and non-fiction) from the beginnings until about 1600. You should know something of the history of ancient Greece, Rome, the Mediterranean, Western Europe, China, and India. You should understand the difference between prose and verse, also have a sense of what it means for literature to be written in the high style, and understand the symbolic nature of literary language.

***Course Methods:***

To read old texts is to enter different worlds, to escape the limits of our own time and place, to learn something about somewhere else. Were the people for whom these works written different from us? If so, can they possibly have anything to teach us today? To help us compare our own culture to the past, this course will try to develop three fields of inquiry: Translation, Customs, and Intentions. Focusing on translation helps us develop a sense of what it means to bring another language into English. To do this we will sometimes look at comparative translations and also at the original languages. Samples of the works in the original languages will be found at web project First Lines. Customs are useful things to think about because they help us realize not only what others take for granted, but that are own behaviors do not necessarily follow universal standards of right and wrong. The issue of intentionality helps us understand what literary characters do. In general they either take action or suffer and endure. As modern people we believe in controlling our own destiny and therefore favor those works of art that show us the results of intentional acts (tragedy, for example), but literature often surprises us by representing forces beyond the control of humans. The nature of these forces, like the customs of diverse societies and the special magic of different languages, help us understand the developments that made us who we are today.

***Assignments:***

1. Regular homeworks to be handed in every day. These serve for attendance as well as class preparation. Graded excellent, good, fair, NW (needs work), these establish your reputation as writers and thinkers to get you into the starting lineup.

2. Two midterms and a final exam. Exams include short answer questions, and passages for you to identify and explain, based on topics discussed in class.

3. A 3-5 page and a 5-7 page paper, generally some kind of comparison of two texts not normally found together on-line, using topics discussed in class.

4. A 10-minute, class media presentation on a canto of Dante, graded on concision and articulateness.

***Syllabus: English and Comparative Literature 266, Spring 2012***

Jan. 10: Gilgamesh; Genesis 1-3, pp. 1-43.

[Jan. 12](266%20audio/266%20Jan%2011%2007.WMA): Genesis 4, 6-9, 11, 7-19, 25, 27, pp. 44-53 (FirstLines Genesis)

Jan. 17: Genesis 37, 39-46 (Joseph), Exodus 19-20, Job, Psalms, Song of Songs. pp. 54-99.

Jan. 19: Homer, *Iliad* 1, 6, 8, 9, 16, 18 (cf. *Aeneid* 8, pp. 1014-1018), 22, 24, pp. 100-206 (FirstLines Homer)

Jan. 24: Homer, *Odyssey* 1-6, 9, 21, pp. 206-279, 301-315, 452-462.

Jan. 26: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*, pp. 502-550.

Jan. 31: **1st Midterm**

Feb. 2: Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex*, pp. 607-652; Aristotle’s *Poetics* 779-784

Feb. 7: Euripedes *Medea*: pp. 688-720; (tape available on-line)

Feb. 9: Hesiod, Herodotus, Thucydides, pp. 784-816.

Feb. 14: Plato, (the allegory of the cave); Aristotle (*Ethics*); Lucretius; Seneca; Apuleius: pp. 816-863.

Feb. 16: Virgil, *Aeneid* 1, 2, 4, 6, 8, 12: pp. 926-995 (FirstLlines Virgil)

Feb. 21: Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* 1, pp. 1023-64; Petronius, pp. 1064-1082.

Feb. 23: **2nd Midterm: plus take-home 3-5 page essay due**

Feb: 28: The New Testament, pp. 1082-1097; Lucian, *A True Story*: pp. 1097-1112. (FirstLines: Sappho to John)

Mar. 1: The Koran, pp. 1143-1173 (FirstLines Arabic)

Mar. 6: Chinese T’ang Dynasty Poetry: see *First Lines* and handout. (FirstLines: T’ang Poetry)

Mar. 8: Renaissance Poetry: pp. 1896, 1901, 1916, 1917, 1918, 1943, 1959, 1967, 2049, 2053,

Mar. 13: Spring Break

Mar. 15: Spring Break

Mar. 20: *Beowulf*, p. 1180-1197; Chrétien de Troyes, *Story of the Grail*: pp. 1325-1374

Mar. 22: Dante’s *Inferno* 1-5

Mar. 27: *Inferno* 6-12

Mar. 29: No class—**1st paper due.**

Apr. 3: *Inferno* 13-25

Apr. 5: *Inferno* 26-33.

Apr. 10: *Purgatorio*, 1, 2, 21, 22, 30; *Paradiso* 33

Apr. 12: Boccaccio, *The Decameron*, pp. 1598-1634.

Apr. 17: Chaucer, *Canterbury Tales*: pp. 1701-1702; 1718-1732 (*Miller’s Prologue and Tale*)

Apr. 19: Medieval Women: 1843-1882

Apr. 24: Montaigne, from *Essays*, pp. 2178-2221

Apr. 26: **2nd Paper due.**

Final Exam:

# *Study Hints:*

1) Read the assigned pages before class and write 200-250 words on what you have read, using the homework sheet.

2) Bring your text to class and take notes.

3) Classes will be available on Boilercast.

**Grading:** Points possible for assignments are as follows.

Midterm #1 200

Midterm #2 200

Final Exam 200

Dante Project and Presentation: 100

Essay #1 100

Essay #2 200

Final grades will be based on the following percentage scale, out of 1000 points: 100-94 A; 93-90 A-; 89-87 B+; 86-84 B; 83-80 B-; 79-77 C+; 76-74 C; 73-70 C-; 69-67 D+; 66-64 D; 63-60 D-; 59-0 F.

**Attendance:** You are expected to attend every class. 30 points off your final total for each absence. If you have an emergency, email me *before* class. If you are sick, traveling for a team, or an interview, bring in the appropriate note. You can have one free, excused absence. After that, you lose 10 points for excused absences. You assignment is still due on time or you will be considered fully absent.

***Boilerplates:***

*Please be aware of the penalties for doing otherwise, as set forth in Purdue University’s “Academic Integrity: A Guide for Students” [*[*http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm*](http://www.purdue.edu/ODOS/osrr/integrity.htm)*.].*

*Classroom behavior: See the Purdue University “Student Code of Conduct” available at:* [*http://www.purdue.edu/usp/acad\_policies/student\_code.shtml*](http://www.purdue.edu/usp/acad_policies/student_code.shtml)*. Do not annoy your neighbors by texting, eating, or doing email during class. Phones should be off.*

*In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances. Changes in this course will be announced via email.*

*On Monday of the fifteenth week of classes, you will receive an official email from evaluation administrators with a link to the online evaluation site.  You will have two weeks to complete this evaluation. Your participation in this evaluation is an integral part of this course. Your feedback is vital to improving education at Purdue University.*