

DEPARTMENT OF CLASSICAL STUDIES

C. G. Brown
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Classical Studies 3110F

Fall 2024

Greek Epic Poetry

Course Outline

This course will consider the tradition of epic poetry in Ancient Greece through a reading of the *Iliad*, *Odyssey*, and the *Argonautica* of Apollonius of Rhodes. The lectures will seek not only to examine the particular characteristics of each poem, but also to situate these texts within the larger framework of literary and cultural history.

The final grade will be derived from

- In-class Writing Assignment 1 (25%): 30 October 2024
- In-class Writing Assignment 2 (35%): 27 November 2024
- Three-hour final examination (40%) (as scheduled by the University).

Programme

What is epic?

Historical background to the Homeric poems

Homeric style: oral poetry

Text and Transmission

'Homer' and the Epic Cycle

On translating Homer

Iliad

Odyssey

The Legacy of Homer

From the Classical World to the Hellenistic World

Alexandrian poetry

Apollonius' *Argonautica*

Epic After Apollonius

Required Texts

R. Lattimore (tr.), *The Iliad of Homer* (Chicago)

_____ *The Odyssey of Homer* (Harper)

Richard Hunter (tr.), *Apollonius of Rhodes: Jason and the Golden Fleece* (Oxford)

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

- i) analyze Greek epic in translation in terms of the basic aesthetics of genre and style;
- ii) situate a reading of ancient epic texts within the context of literary and social history;
- iii) read ancient epic with a view to performance and the rhapsodic tradition;
- iv) understand the role of epic in the ancient intellectual and literary traditions;
- v) consider epic with a view to the reception of ancient literature.

LEARNING OUTCOMES/TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- an understanding of the importance of historical perspective, and how social norms and customs and the construction and consumption of literary culture (e.g. epic poetry) is a product of time, events and context;
- how literary texts in any historical period may be used *inter alia* to address issues of collective social importance;
- the ability of critical reading of ancient literary texts and the results of such analysis to formulate, develop, and argue an hypothesis/thesis based on this primary evidence. The assigned *research papers* will provide students the opportunity to apply these analytical skills in a scholarly format;
- a nuanced sense of the development of ancient literary history, and to apply that historical perspective to a broad range of social and literary phenomena;
- to have developed and /or advanced written communication skills in the clear and organized presentation of an argument/hypothesis within the prescribed word limits of the *research paper*; among the basic research skills are the ability to collect relevant bibliography on a prescribed topic, critically engage with the scholarly literature with an assessment of the relative merits of an argument, and write a thesis in a format that includes a clear introductory statement of intent, a well-constructed and logical presentation of the argument including the relative merits of various scholarly opinion, and a conclusion that gives an assessment of the evidence and the author's own evaluation of the evidence.

NOTE FROM THE DEAN OF ARTS and HUMANITIES: You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

PLAGIARISM: Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION FOR MEDICAL ILLNESS:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf

[downloadable Student Medical Certificate (SMC):

https://studentservices.uwo.ca/secure/medical_document.pdf]

Students seeking academic accommodation on medical grounds for any missed tests, exams and/or assignments worth 10% or more of their final grade must apply to the Office of the Dean of their home faculty and provide documentation. **ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION CANNOT BE GRANTED BY THE INSTRUCTOR OR DEPARTMENT.**

UWO ACCESSIBILITY POLICY: Western has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social and academic needs of students with disabilities. For more information and links to these services: <http://accessibility.uwo.ca/>

MENTAL HEALTH: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.health.uwo.ca/mental_health/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Course delivery with respect to the COVID-19 pandemic

Although the intent is for this course to be delivered in-person, the changing COVID-19 landscape may necessitate some or all of the course to be delivered online, either synchronously (i.e., at the times indicated in the timetable) or asynchronously (e.g., posted on OWL for students to view at their convenience). The grading scheme will not change. Any assessments affected will be conducted online as determined by the course instructor.

When deemed necessary, tests and examinations in this course will be conducted using a remote proctoring service. By taking this course, you are consenting to the use of this software and acknowledge that you will be required to provide personal information (including some biometric data) and the session will be recorded. Completion of this course will require you to have a reliable internet connection and a device that meets the technical requirements for this service. More information about this remote proctoring service, including technical requirements, is available on Western's Remote Proctoring website at: <https://remoteproctoring.uwo.ca>.