

The American University of Rome
Department of Arts and Humanities

CLS 307: HEROES AND LOVERS

EPIC AND THE EPIC TRADITION

Professor: Marco Conti - email: marcocnt@yahoo.co.uk / m.conti@aur.edu

Office Hours: by appointment

Pre-requisites for an upper-level Classical Studies course: previous course in Classics, Classical Studies, or Ancient History (e.g. CLS 201) or permission.

Credit Hours: Three (3).

Mission Statement: Classical Studies

The program in Classical Studies is a vigorous and important component of the Department of courses the program in Classical Studies introduces students to a wide variety of aspects of Arts and Humanities that aspires to excellence. Combining both traditional and innovative the ancient worlds of the Mediterranean with a special emphasis on Roman civilization and culture and its survival down to the present. Taking advantage of AUR's location in the heart of Rome, courses are offered on archaeology, art history, political, religious and social history, literature and language, and philosophy. A great deal of the teaching is conducted on-site. The emphasis given by the program to the cultural interchange of the ancient world prepares students to recognise similar mechanisms in the modern world and the need for intercultural understanding and mutual respect.

Course Description

This course outlines the development of the epic genre from Antiquity to the Renaissance (in translation). Both the linear narratives of Homer and Virgil and the episodic alternative, exemplified by Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, will be studied. This course traces number of strands in the broad epic tradition. Narratives of warfare, quest narratives (both geographical and spiritual) and the combination of the two in narratives of chivalry and love, will be explored in both the classical period and beyond.

Epic was the master-genre of the ancient world: it was central to group identity, education, literature and culture. The Middle Ages sought to re-define the classical epic in terms of Christian and Vernacular (i.e. non-Roman) beliefs. Therefore, in its final section, the course will move on to selections from some of the most representative Epic Poems of the Middle Ages and the Renaissance, taking into consideration both the works which closely followed Classical tradition and those which tried to transform profoundly this literary genre. Emphasis will be both upon the literary qualities of these poems and on the values and ideals of the societies which produced them.

Course Learning Objectives

Upon completing this course students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and analyze the structure and component parts of the epic genre.
- 2) Use the sophisticated language of literary criticism to structure an analysis of the form and function of epic verse.
- 3) Produce written commentaries on literary topics.
- 4) Compose and deliver, using the new and specialized lexicon, an oral presentation on an aspect of the epic tradition.
- 5) Assess the influence of individual epics within the larger literary tradition and their function within the society for which they were produced.

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Course Learning Activities

- Out of class reading and writing assignments (CLO 1\2\3\5): Each week students will read the scheduled primary texts (see attached schedule) in preparation for seminar discussion. Students will produce different drafts of their final paper. The final paper will consist of the development of a thesis, analysis of textual reference and use of textual evidence and conclusions.
- In class analysis (CLO 1\2\4\5): students will read and analyze primary texts; they will become familiar with analytic methodology and critical terms; they will answer orally and in writing to questions stemming from the assigned readings. Critical and interpretive essays will also be subject to critical analysis.
- In class discussions (CLO 2\3\4): Students will participate in discussions, sustain their views and ideas by using new and specialized lexicon.
- Oral presentations (CLO 2\4\5): students will choose a topic among the ones listed on the scheduled syllabus which they will prepare and present to the class, using elements of critical terminology already learned.
- End-of-term paper (CLO 1\2\3\5): offers opportunities for further research and in depth analysis of a chosen theme or topic.

Assessment tools and grading

The following assessment opportunities have been devised to achieve the learning objectives:

Oral presentations: each week students will be asked to discuss the assigned readings for that week. Each student will make two oral presentations: one, on a particular book of an epic (e.g. Aeneid IV); two, on an aspect of epic or an epic character. These will be accompanied by a A4 handout to be distributed to other member of the class (10% of the final grade)

Midterm and final examinations: There will be both a midterm and final examination. The one-hour midterm examination consists of two short questions, and an essay (from a choice of three) on the themes discussed in class. The final examination will follow exactly the same format. (60% of the final grade).

Final paper: Students are also asked to produce a final paper. It should be at least 3,000 words in length (including footnotes and bibliography) of double-spaced script. Two drafts are due before the final version. (30% of the final grade)

Grade tabulation:

Oral presentation	10%
Midterm Examination	30%
Final Examination	30%
Final Paper	30%

AUR grade values:

94 – 100 points	=	A	“Excellent”
90 – 93.99 pts	=	A-	
87 – 89.99	=	B+	
83 – 86.99	=	B	“Good”
80 – 82.99	=	B-	
77 – 79.99	=	C+	

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73 – 76.99	=	C	“Satisfactory”
70 – 72.99	=	C-	“Less than Satisfactory”
60 – 69.99	=	D	“Poor”
59.99 – 0	=	F	“Failing”

Required textbooks

Students must buy:

Homer, *Iliad*, ed P. Jones, trans E.V. Rieu, Penguin Classics.

Homer, *Odyssey*, ed P. Jones, trans E.V. Rieu, Penguin Classics.

Virgil, *Aeneid*, trans D. West, Penguin Classics.

Primary sources of the more obscure texts will be available as class handouts.

Syllabus and Weekly Schedule

Introduction

Mon. January 26: What is Epic? Epic and Mythology. Homer and the Beginning of Epic Poetry in the West

Wed. January 28: Homer’s Poems: *Iliad* and *Odyssey*

Homer’s *Iliad*

Mon. February 2: ‘All the King’s Men’, *Iliad*, I-II.

Wed. February 4: ‘War Music’, *Iliad*, XX-XXII.

Homeward Bound: Homer’s *Odyssey*.

Mon. February 9: The wanderings of Odysseus, *Odyssey*, IX-XI.

Wed. February 11: The Revenge of Odysseus, *Odyssey*, XX-XXII.

Hesiod:

Mon. February 16: *Theogony* (selections)

Wed. February 18: *Works and Days* (selections)

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Alexandrian Epic Poetry

Mon. February 23: Callimachus, *Hecale* (complete fragments)

Phase 1 of Research Paper due!

Wed. February 25: Apollonius Rhodius, *Argonautica* (selections)

Virgil: War and Love.

Mon. March 2: Virgil, *Aeneid*, II.

Wed. March 4: Virgil, *Aeneid*, IV.

Virgil: Underworld and the future of Rome

Mon. March 9: Virgil, *Aeneid*, VI + Review

Wed. March 11: **Midterm Examination**

SPRING BREAK WEEK – MARCH 16-20

Virgil: End of the War in Latium.

Mon. March 23: Virgil, *Aeneid*, XII

Phase 2 of Research Paper due!

Wed. March 25: Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (selections)

Silver Latin.

Mon. March 30: Lucan, *The Civil War* (selections)

Wed. April 1: Statius, *Thebaid* (selections)

Mon. April 6: *Easter Monday* – National Holiday

Epic Poetry in Late Antiquity

Wed. April 8: Iovencus, *Gospels* (selections)

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From Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages

Mon. April 13: Nonnus of Panopolis, *Dionysiaca* (selections)

Wed. April 15: Hrosvitha, *Gesta Ottonis* (selections)

Developments in Medieval Epic Poetry

Mon. April 20: *Waltharius* (selections)

Wed. April 22: *Ruodlieb* (selections)

From Late Medieval to Humanistic Epic Poetry

Mon. April 27: Walter of Châtillon, *Alexandreis* (selections)

Wed. April 29: Petrarch, *Africa* (selections)

Phase 3 of Research Paper due!

Epic Poetry in the Renaissance

Mon. May 4: Teofilo Folengo, *Baldus* (selections)

FINAL EXAMINATIONS:

Wednesday 6 May, 1-3 pm - Room: CARINI F\24

Course Policies

Students are expected to arrive PUNCTUALLY for class and to remain in the classroom for the duration of the lesson. Students arriving late and going in and out to visit the bathroom disrupt the whole class. As this course involves a lot of discussion this type of interruption will seriously impede the concentration of the other students. All cell phones MUST be switched off during the class period.

Assessment and Grading

There will be both a midterm and final examination. The ninety minute (90) midterm examination consists of two parts. The first part is the identification of two short passages from the texts that we have read together for comment on its significance within the poem and the epic tradition at large. The second part is an essay (from a choice of three) on the themes discussed in class. The final examination will follow exactly the same format.

In addition students will produce an end of term paper. It should be at least 3,000 words in length (including footnotes and bibliography) of double-spaced script. This paper will be a report on any aspect of epic poetry. It is one of the objectives of this course to investigate how we can all improve our writing skills through developing our critical and

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analytical thinking. The term paper is intended to be a formative, learning experience that contributes to this development and thus it is divided into phases that can be reworked. It should be seen as an opportunity for each student to study in depth an aspect of epic poetry that is of particular interest. The paper should be submitted in three (3) phases.

Phase 1 (5%): a **description** of the topic which is of interest and a tentative thesis statement, which should be approximately 250 words long. **Due 23 February.**

Phase 2 (5%): a **revised thesis statement** and a preliminary bibliography (taking account of the comments made on Phase 1). This is a list in note form of the subject matter of each paragraph in sequential order. **Due 23 March.**

Phase 3 (20%): draft of **final research paper**, with bibliography (at least ten titles) and illustrations if pertinent.

It should be at least 3,000 words in length (including footnotes and bibliography) of double-spaced script. This is to be regarded as the final item. **Due 29 April.** Failure to submit the final draft on this date will mean that this paper will NOT be marked. Extensions will be granted only in the most exceptional circumstances.

****Please include each previous phase with your submissions****

Definition of Grades

Written work and examination meriting the grade "A" (excellent) must:

- a) address the assigned question or topic directly and intelligently;
- b) demonstrate a careful and considered reading of the text at hand;
- c) present a lucid thesis and a persuasive argument in its defense;
- e) use correct grammar, punctuation, and sentence construction;
- f) make ample and appropriate use of quotations from the text at hand;
- g) weave together thesis and argument, quotations and interpretations;
- h) reveal thoughtfulness, originality and insight.

Written work and examinations awarded the grade "B" (good) fulfils the majority of the criteria, often adequately but with definite room for improvement as indicated in the grading marks and comments.

The grade "C" (average) is given when written work and examinations fail to meet the majority of the above criteria.

The grade "D" is assigned when written work and examinations are unacceptable

Plagiarism of any sort will result in a grade of "F" for the assignment.

Grading

Mid-term Examination	30%
Final Examination	30%
Term Paper	30%
Oral Presentation	10%

ATTENDANCE POLICY

In keeping with AUR's mission to prepare students to live and work across cultures, the University places a high value on classroom experience. As a result attendance is expected in all classes and attendance records are maintained. The University's attendance policy is as follows:

1.0. Minimum Attendance Requirement: Students must attend a minimum of 70% of a course in order to be eligible to be considered for a passing grade.

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1.1. Automatically Accepted Absences

Students will not be penalized for one absence from classes meeting once a week;

Students will not be penalized for three absences from classes meeting twice a week;

Students will not be penalized for four absences from classes meeting more than twice a week, as in the case of some intensive courses.

1.2. If further absences are recorded, grade penalties will be applied according to the Instructor's specific attendance policy, as stated in the syllabus, and following the institutional parameters given in the Note* below.

1.2.1. If the Instructor does not specify an attendance policy, there will be no grade penalty other than that attached to the minimum attendance requirement, and any penalized absences recorded above the basic 70% attendance requirement for the course will be invalidated.

1.3. During Summer sessions where courses are taught more intensively over a shorter period the following applies:

- Students will not be penalized for two absences from class.

2.0. Tolerated Absences

Certain categories of absence will not be penalized but they will be counted as an absence (for a 3-credit course meeting twice a week). These absences are:

- The Model United Nations (MUN);
- Permit to Stay,
- SG's "Ambassador Program" (Student Government initiative)
- Religious Holidays

The American University of Rome makes all reasonable efforts to accommodate students who must be absent from classes to observe religious holidays. (Please refer to the Provost's Office list of accepted absences for religious holidays)

Not attending a class due to the observance of a religious holiday will normally not be counted as an absence.

Students who will need to miss class in order to observe religious holidays must notify their Instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (first week of classes), and must make prior arrangements with their Instructors to make up any work missed.

2.1. The list does NOT include academic field trips because these (including arrangements for travel) must not overlap with other classes.

3.0. Cases of prolonged absences caused by an emergency or a medical condition may require students to withdraw from some or all of their courses. Under such circumstances students should first consult their academic advisors.

*Note: No Instructor may penalize a student more than half a letter grade for each absence beyond the tolerated limit (e.g. from A- to B+).

AUR Academic Integrity Code & Policy against Plagiarism

"Integrity is fundamental to the academic enterprise. It is violated by such acts as borrowing or purchasing assignments, including but not limited to term papers, essays, and reports; lending to or producing assignments for others (either for or without payment); using concealed notes or crib sheets during examinations, copying the work of others and submitting it as one's own; and otherwise misappropriating the knowledge of others. Such acts are both dishonest and deceptive: the work submitted to instructors is not the work of the person whose name it bears. In consequence, the sources from which one derives one's ideas, statements, terms, and facts, including internet sources, must be fully

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and specifically acknowledged in the appropriate form. Failure to do so, intentionally or unintentionally, constitutes plagiarism.” -- AUR Student Handbook, 2006/2007, p. 15.