


CBM003 ADD/CHANGE FORM

Undergraduate Council
 New Course Course Change
 Core Category: VPA-Critical Effective Fall 2009

or

Graduate/Professional Studies Council
 New Course Course Change
 Effective Fall

RECEIVED OCT 06 2008

1. Department: MCL College: CLASS
2. Faculty Contact Person: Casey Due-Hackney Telephone: 3-3240 Email: Casey.Due@mail.uh.edu
3. Course Information on New/Revised course:
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
CLAS / 3380 / Epic Masculinity: Ideologies of Manhood in Ancient Epic and Modern Film
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Short Course Title (30 characters max.)
CLAS / 3380 / EPIC MASCULINITY
 - SCH: 3.00 Level: JR CIP Code: 161201001 Lect Hrs: 3 Lab Hrs: 0
4. Justification for adding/changing course: To meet core curriculum requirements
5. Was the proposed/revised course previously offered as a special topics course? Yes No
 If Yes, please complete:
 - Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title:
 / /
 - Course ID: Effective Date (currently active row):
6. Authorized Degree Program(s): BA Classics
 - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in the College/Department? Yes No
 - Does this course affect major/minor requirements in other Colleges/Departments? Yes No
 - Can the course be repeated for credit? Yes No (if yes, include in course description)
7. Grade Option: Letter (A, B, C ...) Instruction Type: lecture ONLY (Note: Lect/Lab info. must match item 3, above.)
8. If this form involves a change to an existing course, please obtain the following information from the course inventory: Instructional Area / Course Number / Long Course Title
CLAS / 3380 / Epic Masculinity: Ideologies of Manhood in Ancient Epic and Modern Film
 - Course ID: 297149 Effective Date (currently active row): 20053
9. Proposed Catalog Description: (If there are no prerequisites, type in "none".)
Cr: 3. (3-0). Prerequisites: ENGL 1304, Description (30 words max.): Taught in English. Ideologies of masculinity in ancient Greek and Roman epic as compared to modern cinema (e.g., Spartacus, Gladiator, and Braveheart).
10. Dean's Signature:  Date: 10/02/08
 Print/Type Name: Sarah Fishman

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON
CORE CURRICULUM COURSE REQUEST

Originating Department/College: Modern & Classical Languages, CLASS
Person making request: Casey Dué-Hackney Telephone: 3-3240
Dean's signature: _____ Date: _____

I. General Information:

Course number and title: CLAS 3380: Epic Masculinity: Ideologies of Manhood in
Ancient Epic and Modern Film

Complete catalog description (NOT required if attached to CBM 003 form):

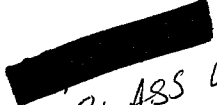
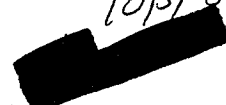
Category of Core for which course is being proposed (mark only one):

- Communication
- Communication: Writing Intensive Experiences in the Disciplines
- Mathematics
- Mathematics/Reasoning (IDO)
- Natural Sciences
- Humanities
- Visual/Performing Arts Critical
- Visual/Performing Arts Experiential
- Social/Behavioral Sciences
- U.S. History
- American Government

II. Objectives and Evaluation (respond on one or more separate sheets):

Call 3-0919 for a copy of "Guidelines for Requesting and Evaluating Core Courses"
or visit the website at www.uh.edu/academics/corecurriculum

- A. How does the proposed course meet the appropriate Exemplary Educational Objectives (see **Guidelines**). Attach a syllabus and supporting materials for the objectives the syllabus does not make clear.
- B. Specify the processes and procedures for evaluating course effectiveness in regard to its goals.
- C. Delineate how these evaluation results will be used to improve the course?


CLASS U.S.C.
10/13/05


CLAS 3380 EPIC MASCULINITY:
IDEOLOGIES OF MANHOOD IN ANCIENT EPIC AND MODERN FILM

Mondays 1-4pm, 322 AH

In the wake of feminism and gender studies, masculinity is increasingly studied as a contingent, historically bound, and malleable concept, quality, or way of being. This course will examine particular ideas, ideologies, and representations of masculinity as they appear in two high-prestige art forms: ancient epic poetry and modern film.

At first blush, it might seem that we are really comparing two epic traditions: the long narrative genre from antiquity and the modern "epic" spectacle of the twentieth century. As cultural forms that focus on the heroic exploits of male protagonists, epic poetry and film do have valid points of comparison, particularly if one examines them as narratives. However, we shall be equally interested in the major differences between these two art forms, differences that extend from inherent features of their media (recited poetry vs. enacted drama) to their producers and consumers.

This course is neither a full-blown introduction to ancient epic nor a proper survey of modern film. Rather, it thematizes masculinity on two fronts in order to address the following kinds of questions: How do death and violence relate to male identity? How does the masculine define itself against or in contrast to the feminine? How are shades and nuances between masculinity and femininity recognized or treated? For a given society, what is honor in the scale of values and where is it located? How does a heroic masculine individual stand in relation to his society? What is the importance of lineage and legitimacy to the concept of the hero? What issues surround the matter of paternity? Is paternity synonymous with patriarchy?

However, this course *will* serve to highlight the specific aesthetic qualities of the cinematic art in relation to traditional dramatic and literary art forms. This aesthetic focus is not merely incidental, since many artistic innovations in the cinema have been introduced precisely in films with ancient settings. Since "epic" productions like the two versions of *Ben Hur* are vastly expensive and labor-intensive undertakings, the student will also come to appreciate the political, social, and financial peculiarities of the cinema in addition to its inherent aesthetic qualities.

Since much of the class will involve viewing and discussing the films, *attendance is essential to a good grade*. Grades are based upon four written assignments, which are sheets of questions that you should be working on as we work through the syllabus. Due to time constraints, there are no in-class examinations. Some films will be shown only in highlights for discussion, others will be necessarily cut down to fit within our timeframe. However, the films used in class will be available for your full viewing in the LAC (AH, third floor) and most are commonly available at video stores.

BOOKLIST

- Mason, Gilbert. *Gilgamesh*. Mariner Books, 2003. ISBN 0618275649.
- Lombardo, Stanley (translator). *The Essential Homer*. Hackett, 2000. ISBN 0872205401.
- Fitzgerald, Robert (translator). Vintage, 1990. ISBN 0679729526.
- Petronius, *Satyricon*. Penguin, 1986. ISBN 0140444890.

Class Schedule

1/23 Introduction

The Tradition of Epic in Antiquity

- 1/30 The Oldest Existential Crisis: *Epic of Gilgamesh*
2/6 Honor, Shame, and Warfare: *Iliad*
2/13 The Domestic Hero: *Odyssey*
2/20 Virility and Nationalism: *Aeneid*
2/27 Masculinity and Performance: *Satyricon*

The Growth of the Cinematic Heroic Idiom

- 3/6 Early Film: *Cabiria* (1914), *Ben Hur* (1925)
3/20 Fascist Heroism: *Scipio Africanus* (1937)
3/27 Roman Hollywood and Christian Values: *The Robe* (1953) and *Demetrius and the Gladiators* (1954)

Three Great Classics

- 4/3 Having It Both Ways: *Ben Hur* (1959)
4/10 Heroism from the Left: *Spartacus* (1960)
4/17 Estranging Antiquity: *Fellini Satyricon* (1969)

Antiquity after Braveheart

- 4/24 *Gladiator* (2000)
5/1 *Troy* (2004)

Sample questions from question sheets:

Answer the following questions in a minimum of one 400-word paragraph. Answers are graded according to coherence and conciseness, but detail is important, so try to use a few key and representative quotations or examples.

1. In the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, how is Enkidu important to the development of Gilgamesh as a man? What does this say of the Gilgamesh's "heroic narcissism"?
2. Where and how do women and goddesses figure into the narrative of *Gilgamesh*? Do they represent important features of Gilgamesh's world? If so, what do they represent?
3. In what ways does the Homeric Achilles in the *Iliad* not conform to the character arc of a typical Hollywood hero? What aspects of his behavior seem problematic from a modern point of view? If one were to turn the *Iliad* into a Hollywood script, what things would have to be changed to make it a hit?
4. Why is it that Hector is a more complete figure than Achilles in the *Iliad*? What does this say about masculinity in its social setting? In what ways is his death central to the conclusion of the *Iliad* (think from his duel with Achilles all the way to his burial)?
5. In addition to Achilles and Hector, what other kinds of masculinity are exhibited in the *Iliad*? What traits do the Greek heroes have in common? What traits distinguish them as individuals?
6. In the *Odyssey*, what is the narrative effect of having the first books deal so extensively with scenes in which the main hero plays no part? What is going on in these books, and how does it reflect upon Odysseus?
7. What is so important about Odysseus' confrontation with the Cyclops in the *Odyssey*? How is it different from any other of the adventure stories? How does it reflect on the later books of the poem?
8. What is significant about Penelope's declaration of the bow contest? How is it a fitting challenge to the manhood of the suitors vis-à-vis Odysseus? Why is it unusual for Penelope to make such a gesture? How is this contest a fitting means for Odysseus to reveal his true identity and put his house in order?
9. What unusual feature of narrative makes Aeneas a very different kind of hero from Achilles or Odysseus? How does this affect the whole story of his wanderings? How does it affect the story of his romance with Queen Dido of Carthage?
10. How does the plot of the *Satyricon* reflect upon heroic masculinity in a parodic way? What is imperiling about sexuality in the *Satyricon*?