Western Canon 1: Final Project Options

For the final project, you’ll be writing around 1,500 to 3,000 words, or doing the equivalent amount of work in another medium. See below of your final grade.

Due dates:

1. Proposal. A 250-word summary of what project you plan to complete PLUS a 250-word sample of this project. -
   1. If you choose to change, you MUST submit a new proposal.
   2. 5% of your final grade.
2. Draft due (2 weeks before due date) / comments on the drafts of others.
   1. By this point, you should have a complete “draft” done; however, it may not be polished.
   2. You’ll also be commenting on the work of three of your classmates.
3. Project due one week before end of semester

**An (IMPORTANT) note on grading:** There are a lot of options here. However, it’s important to remember I’ll be grading you on the extent to which you *demonstrate knowledge of class material.* So, make sure that you are referencing specific material pretty often within your project.

Please choose one of the following options.

1. **Epic poetry/Fiction option.** Write an “epic” poem (of at least 200 total lines, or 1,000 total words) based on either (a) current news story or (b) some event in your life. This should be based on Gilgamesh, the Homeric Epics, the Aeneid, the Inferno, etc.. The poem should:
   1. Feature a hero, whose actions are talked about in *the third person.* (This is important!).
   2. Have a central conflict, which is resolved by the end of the poem. (The hero can win or lose, die or survive—it’s just important that something *happens*.)
   3. Include at least 7 of the 12 stages of the “Hero’s Journey” model (from lecture). **At the end of the poem, write a 300 to 500 word explanation/analysis of which stages you’ve included.**
   4. You must include some sort of supernatural entities that we’ve discussed in class! (Basically, whenever you don’t know why something good/bad happened, you should consider attribute=ing it to these beings, along with some sort of explanation as to *why* they did it). You’re free to use the Sumerian gods, the Greek or Roman gods, the God of the Torah or Gospels, the beings from the “Arabian Nights,” etc.
   5. For this option, you don’t \*need\* to write in prose.
2. Write at least FIVE lyric poems or song lyrics (of at least 150 total lines). These poems should all \*somehow\* be based on class material. You MUST at least the following poems:
   1. An imitation of one of the poems from the Torah. (For example: Write an original psalm, or a new “verse” for the Song of Solomon).
   2. An original version of Sappho’s “Love Song” (fragment 31).
   3. An imitation of either a Rumi or Horace poem.
   4. A poem featuring some of the gods/magical beings we’ve talked about during class.

**At the end of each poem, write a 50-75 word explanation of how class material shaped your poem.**

1. Write a Platonic dialogue about the question: “What does it mean to be a great work of art?” There should be at least two characters who *disagree* on the answer to this question. In arguing with each other, they *must* use regular examples from class readings/lectures to back up their points. The dialogue should be at least 1,000 words.
2. Visual Art Option.
3. Theater Option.
4. Literary Analysis Option: Comparison and Contrast TWO items with the following categories
   1. Religious Texts: Torah, New Testament, Qu’ran, Greek Mythology
   2. Women: Torah (Eve), Gilgamesh (Ishtar), Medea, Dido
   3. Visions of the Afterlife: Odyssey, Aeneid, Inferno

## Short Project Grading Rubric

Each project is worth 10 points. Your grade will depend on how well you do each of the following:

To what extent does your project demonstrate knowledge of relevant course material (4 points)?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *1* | There are no meaningful references to course material. |
| *2* | There are some brief references to course material, but they are superficial, and don’t show in-depth knowledge of the content. |
| *3* | The essay engages with course material. However, at least SOME significant and relevant details are either omitted or are described inaccurately. |
| *4* | The essay shows in-depth knowledge of the course material. |

1. To what extent does your essay offer an original and coherent response to course material (4 points)?

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| *1* | The essay lacks |
| *2* | There are some brief references to course material, but they are superficial, and don’t show in-depth knowledge of the content. |
| *3* | The essay engages with course material. However, at least SOME significant and relevant details are either omitted or are described inaccurately. |
| *4* | The essay shows in-depth knowledge of the course material. |

* 1. In an argumentative essay, does your argument make sense? Do you offer convincing evidence for it?
  2. In a creative work, does your selection of details contribute to the “whole”?

1. To what extent does your essay’s **style** and **grammar** make it easy for a reader to follow (2 points)?)

The grading criteria are as follows:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Grade | Description |
| *0* | No answer submitted, or evidence of plagiarism. |
| *1-4* | Significantly below minimal requirements, in terms of content (e.g., doesn’t address the question at all), or word count. |
| *5-6* | Fails to meet minimal requirements in terms of content (e.g., addresses a related question) or word count. Essays that simply report what you “believe” or “feel,” without providing an *argument* may receive this grade. |
| *7* | Meets minimal requirements in terms of both content (it clearly addresses the assigned question) and word count. However, there may be some significant errors or omissions when it comes to the explanation of relevant class material, or providing a detailed response to the question. |
| *8* | Fully meets both content and word count requirements, and provides satisfactory explanations of relevant arguments and concepts from class. There are no majorerrors in argumentation or explanatory gaps. |
| *9-10* | Goes *significantly* above the minimal requirements. The essay’s treatment of course material shows a full mastery of the relevant content, and provides a creative, well-thought out response to it. |

I will grade essays in the order they are submitted (first-come, first-serve). Grades go up in whole-number increments (there is no .5).