

# RETELLING THE ODYSSEY

ENG223 Fall 2012



## ENG 223: Themes in Literature Courtney Danforth

**Course Description:** Themes and ideas significant in literature. May be repeated for a maximum six credits. Prerequisite: Satisfactory completion of ENG 101 or permission of Department Chair or Instructor.

**Course objectives/learning outcomes:**

- Use critical reading and writing skills to engage and analyze literary texts.
- Demonstrate the ability to connect and contextualize literary works.
- Demonstrate an awareness that literature reflects the diversity of human experience through universal themes.

**Disabilities:** Please read the CSN Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) statement and consult the CSN Disability Resource Center at <http://www.csn.edu/pages/2566.asp>. Your instructor is committed to providing the accommodations to which you are entitled.

**CSN Student Conduct Code:** <http://tinyurl.com/8e44g5m>

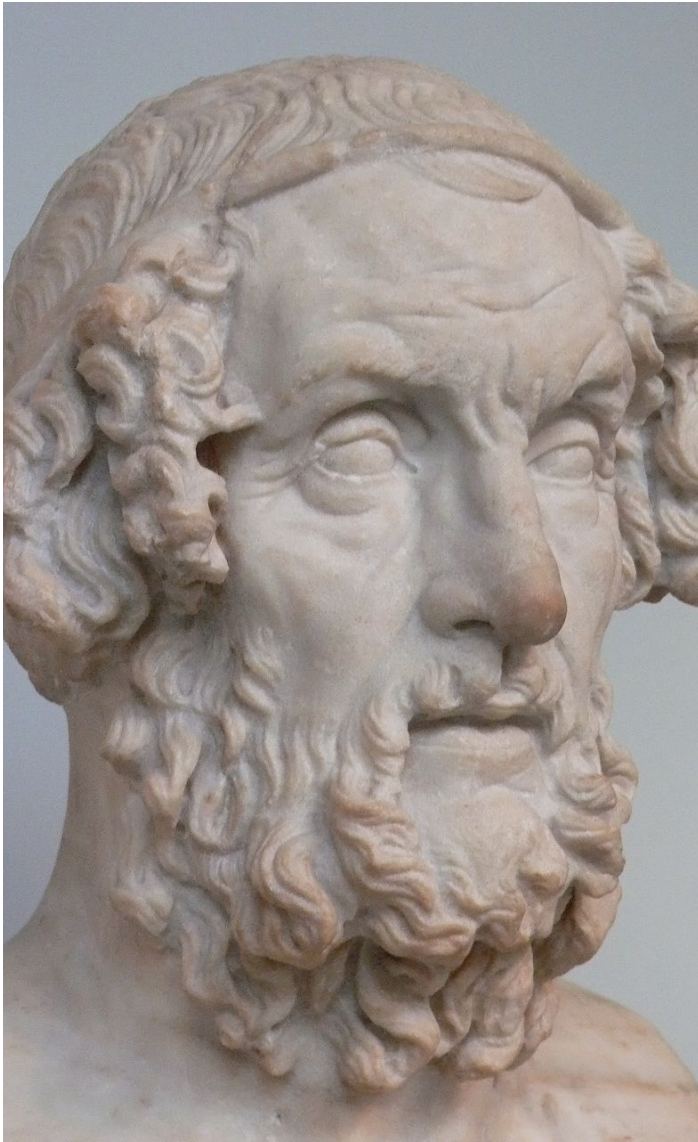
**Meeting times:** This is a 3 credit course meeting from 27 August 2012 to 11 December 2012. As a 3 credit course, students are expected to allocate an average of 9 hours each week. Three of those hours will be in the classroom and the rest will be spent reading, preparing assignments, and studying. It is up to each student to plan a suitable weekly schedule that meets the demands of the course. Students are able to work ahead of the planned schedule insofar as they are able and our learning community will allow.

**Instructor information:** Courtney Danforth, best reached during this course via the email function inside of ANGEL and after the course at [courtney.danforth@csn.edu](mailto:courtney.danforth@csn.edu). Please call me "Courtney" or "Professor Danforth".

**CSN Disruptive & Abusive Student Policy:** <http://tinyurl.com/8dvcrew>

**CSN Academic Integrity Policy:** <http://www.csn.edu/pages/904.asp>





**Grades:** There are 675 points available in the course (and some extra credit). The grading scale is as follows:

645-675 points: A	459-489 points: C
614-644 points: A-	428-458 points: C-
583-613 points: B+	397-427 points: D+
552-582 points: B	366-396 points: D
521-551 points: B-	335-365 points: D-
490-520 points: C+	0-334 points: F

**Policies on late assignments and/or makeup work:** Late assignments are not accepted and makeup work is not offered except for extraordinary circumstances.



**Required texts:**

1. Armitage, Simon. *The Odyssey*. NY: Norton, 2006. (9780393330816)
2. Atwood, Margaret. *The Penelopiad*. Edinburgh: Canongate, 2005. (9781841957982)
3. Borg, Rene and Shigetugu Yoshida, dirs. *Ulysses 31*. 1981. (provided)
4. Burton, Tim, dir. *Big Fish*. 2003 (provided)
5. Cavafy, Constantine. "Ithaka" (provided)
6. Coen, Joel, dir. *O Brother, Where Art Thou?*. 2000. (provided)
7. Dickey, William. "Telemachus" (provided)
8. Fagles, Robert, Trans.. *The Odyssey*. NY: Penguin, 1996. (9780140268867)
9. Gluck, Louise. "Telemachus' Fantasy" (provided)
10. Hinds, Gareth. *The Odyssey*. Somerville, MA: Candlewick, 2010. (9780763642686)
11. Konchalovskiy, Andrey, dir. *The Odyssey*. 1997. (provided)
12. Mason, Zachary. *The Lost Books of The Odyssey*. NY: Picador, 2007. (9780312680466)
13. Minghella, Anthony, dir. *Cold Mountain*. 2003 (provided)
14. Parker, Dorothy. "Penelope" (provided)
15. Pastan, Linda. "The Sirens" (provided)
16. Tennyson, Alfred Lord. "Ulysses" and "Lotus-eaters" (provided)

**Withdrawal Policy:** You must withdraw yourself to get a W on your transcript. If you do not, I will record the grade you earn.

**Attendance Policy:** Students are expected to check in to the course at least once each day, Monday-Thursday.

**Instructor Academic Integrity Policy:** All violations will be reported to the campus administration. In-course consequences range from failure of the assignment to failure of the course. As long as you are disciplined in your research, reading, and record-keeping, and clearly indicate all responsibilities and sources, you should be fine. However, it can be confusing to know what qualifies as plagiarism and how to avoid it. Make sure you know what you're doing. For help, see: [http://www.plagiarism.org/plag\\_article\\_plagiarism\\_faq.html](http://www.plagiarism.org/plag_article_plagiarism_faq.html).

# Course Schedule

This syllabus is subject to change as deemed appropriate by the instructor with advance notification.

- T 28 Aug
- Course welcome.
  - Begin [Study Guide](#) Assignment.
  - Read over the syllabus, click around in ANGEL, flip through the books, and learn how the course will work.
- R 30 Aug
- [Orientation Quiz](#) due.
  - In class, watch [The Odyssey](#) and continue [Study Guide](#) assignment.
  - Complete draft of Study Guide and revise.
  - Begin to prepare [Armitage Retelling Report](#).
  - Read Armitage beginning to 100.
  - Watch [Cyclops](#).
  - Watch [Circe the Sorceress](#).
- T 4 Sep
- NO CLASS MEETING (watching films independently)
  - [Study Guide](#) due.
  - Watch [The One-Eyed Scylla and Charybdis](#)
  - Watch [The Country of the Dead](#)
  - Watch [The Homecoming](#)
  - Watch [The Slaying of the Suitors](#)
- R 6 Sep
- In class, watch [Odysseus: Curse of the Sea](#) and read [Cavafy](#).
- T 11 Sep
- [Cavafy Retelling Report](#) due
  - Read Armitage 201-266
  - Begin to prepare [Fagles Retelling Report](#)
  - In class, begin to watch [Konchalovskiy](#)
- R 13 Sep
- Read Fagles 77-106
  - Begin to prepare [Hinds Retelling Report](#)
  - In class, continue watching Konshalovskiy
- T 18 Sep
- [Armitage Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Armitage Test](#)
  - Read Hinds (whole book this week)
  - In class, complete watching Konchalovskiy and read/hear [Franz Ferdinand](#)
- R 20 Sep
- [Konchalovskiy Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Franz Ferdinand Retelling Report](#) due
  - In class, watch [Ulysses 31](#) and read [Tennyson](#)
- T 25 Sep
- [Ulysses 31 Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Hinds Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Hinds Test](#)
  - In class, watch [Odysseus: Warrior's Revenge](#) and read [Dickey](#)
- R 27 Sep
- NO CLASS MEETING (independent prep for film assignment)
  - Watch shorts from previous course
  - [Tennyson Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Dickey Retelling Report](#) due
- T 2 Oct
- Read Fagles, 211-318
  - In class, watch [O Brother, Where Art Thou?](#)
- R 4 Oct
- In class, finish watching O Brother, Where Art Thou? and read [Gluck](#)
  - Keep reading Fagles!
- T 9 Oct
- [Gluck Retelling Report](#) due
  - [O Brother, Where Art Thou Retelling Report](#) due
  - Read Fagles 319-409.
  - In class, watch [A Critical Guide to the Odyssey](#) and read/hear [Suzanne Vega](#) and [This Mortal Coil](#)
- R 11 Oct
- [Vega Retelling Report](#) due
  - [This Mortal Coil Retelling Report](#) due
  - In class, brainstorming for the [Retelling Project](#)
- T 16 Oct
- Read Fagles 409-end this week
  - In class, watch [Cold Mountain](#)
- R 18 Oct
- In class, watch Cold Mountain
  - Draft your retelling proposal
- T 23 Oct
- [Fagles Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Fagles Test](#)
  - Read Atwood xiii-98
  - In class, finish Cold Mountain
- R 25 Oct
- [Cold Mountain Reteling Report](#) due
  - In class, film [proposal](#) workshop--bring a draft of your proposal!
- T 30 Oct
- [Retelling Proposal](#) due
  - Read Atwood 99-end
  - Draft your [screenplay](#)
  - In class, read [Pastan](#) and [Parker](#); read/hear [Led Zeppelin](#)
- R 1 Nov
- [Pastan Retelling Report](#) due
  - [Parker Retelling Report](#) due
  - NO CLASS MEETING: spend this time (and more) to plan your filming--sets, costumes, actors, schedules, storyboards, etc.)

# Course Schedule (con't)

This syllabus is subject to change as deemed appropriate by the instructor with advance notification.

T 6 Nov

- [Led Zeppelin Retelling Report](#) due
- [Atwood Retelling Report](#) due
- [Atwood Test](#)
- Read Mason ix-103
- Revise Screenplay
- In class, watch [Big Fish](#)

R 8 Nov

- Revise your screenplay.
- Research, choose, and plan access to video editing tools to edit/produce your film
- In class, finish watching Big Fish and troubleshooting your film plans

T 13 Nov

- NO CLASS MEETING (shooting film)
- [Big Fish Retelling Report](#) due
- Read Mason 104-end this week.

R 15 Nov

- In class, Screenplay workshop and read/hear [Cream](#)
- Complete shooting of your film

T 20 Nov

- Revised [Screenplay](#) due
- [Cream Retelling Report](#) due
- [Mason Retelling Report](#) due
- [Mason Test](#)
- In class, film production workshop
- Begin editing your film

R 22 Nov

- NO CLASS MEETING (Thanksgiving)

T 27 Nov

- Edit film
- In class, critique session of rough cut films--bring whatever you have finished to screen for reactions/advice

R 29 Nov

- In class, editing consultations
- Complete the final editing of your film (titles, credits, etc)

S 2 Dec

- DUE DATE ONLY--[Film](#) due

T 4 Dec

- Introduction due
- In class, screenings
- Write up your screening responses

R 6 Dec

- In class, screenings
- Write up your screening responses

F 7 Dec

- DUE DATE ONLY--[Screening Responses](#) due
- [Test Review Day](#)--all five tests will be open for your exam review today

T 11 Dec

- [Final Exam](#) due by 4pm.

# Summary of Due Dates

This syllabus is subject to change as deemed appropriate by the instructor with advance notification.

30 Aug	Orientation Quiz
11 Sep	Cavafy Retelling Report
18 Sep	Armitage Retelling Report
18 Sep	Armitage Test
20 Sep	Franz Ferdinand Retelling Report
20 Sep	Konchalovskiy Retelling Report
25 Sep	Ulysses 31 Retelling Report
25 Sep	Hinds Retelling Report
25 Sep	Hinds Test
27 Sep	Tennyson Retelling Report
27 Sep	Dickey Retelling Report
9 Oct	Gluck Retelling Report
9 Oct	O Brother Retelling Report
11 Oct	Vega Retelling Report
11 Oct	This Mortal Coil Retelling Report
23 Oct	Fagles Retelling Report
23 Oct	Fagles Test

30 Aug	Orientation Quiz
25 Oct	Cold Mountain Retelling Report
30 Oct	Retelling Proposal
1 Nov	Pastan Retelling Report
1 Nov	Parker Retelling Report
6 Nov	Led Zeppelin Retelling Report
6 Nov	Atwood Retelling Report
6 Nov	Atwood Test
13 Nov	Big Fish Retelling Report
20 Nov	Screenplay
20 Nov	Cream Retelling Report
20 Nov	Mason Retelling Report
20 Nov	Mason Test
2 Dec	Film
4 Dec	Introduction
7 Dec	Screening Responses
11 Dec	Final Exam



# Assignments

**Orientation Quiz:** After reading the syllabus thoroughly, investigating your textbooks, and getting to know the course site in ANGEL, this quiz will help to make sure you understand how the course will progress. You will have two hours to complete the 20 question quiz and are free to use any resources you have available (“open book”). You may take this quiz at any time during the first week of the course. The purpose of this assignment is for you to get familiar with resources, tools, protocols, and expectations for the course.

- The Orientation Quiz is worth 10 points towards your course grade.

**Study Guide:** Ancient texts are challenging to readers. They come to us in fragments, partially reconstructed, often mixed up, filtered through multiple translations and multiple contexts and biases. They describe times and places far from our ordinary lives. They are revered and strongly influential in our cultural heritage. The *Odyssey* is all these things. Each of these challenges is fascinating and keeps many scholars busy but such challenges should not also prevent readers from enjoying an otherwise pretty ripping good story.

We will begin this course by preparing ourselves to read the *Odyssey*. We will spend the first few class meetings watching a fairly faithful film adaptation of the classic text. Meanwhile, make yourself a study guide so

you’ll know what to expect and what to look for as we begin to read. Your study guide will address: history, characters, timeline, setting, author, genre, theme, format, and symbol.

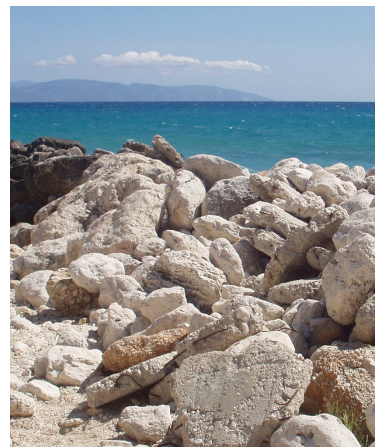
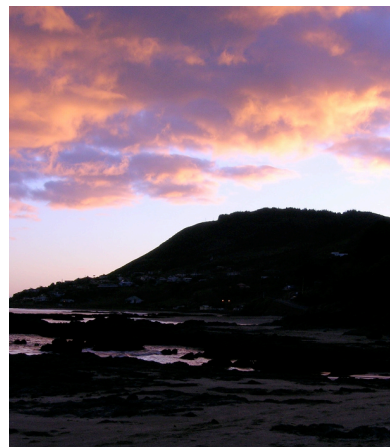
You should use the introductory material in your textbooks; “cheat” sources such as SparkNotes, GradeSaver, and CliffNotes; and reference sources including Wikipedia and the many encyclopedias accessed through Credo Reference to answer many of the sections of the study guide. Any information that is not wholly yours must be cited using MLA style.

You should plan to refer to your study guide many times throughout the course to help keep yourself straight on who’s who, where’s where, and what’s what. This document should become as important for this course as is its syllabus.

- The Study Guide is worth 50 points towards your course grade.

**Tests:** There are five tests--one on each book. Each contains forty questions (multiple choice, multiple answer, true/false, essay). You will have 75 minutes for each test. All tests are conducted in ANGEL; students are NOT required to travel to campus or to use the testing centre. You will not be allowed to backtrack to questions left unanswered. There will be a test review day before the Final Exam, on 7 December.

- Each of five Tests is worth 25 points each towards your course grade.





10	<b>Orientation Quiz</b>
100	<b>Study Guide</b>
200	<b>Retelling Reports (20 @10)</b>
125	<b>Tests (5 @ 25)</b>
200	<b>Retelling Project:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Proposal (25)</li> <li>• Screenplay (50)</li> <li>• Film (100)</li> <li>• Introduction (10)</li> <li>• Screening Responses</li> </ul>
50	<b>Final Exam</b>



## Assignments, con't

**Retelling Reports:** We will be reading five books and seven poems in this course, watching four films and one TV show, and listening to a handful of songs. For each of these retellings, you'll prepare a Retelling Report addressing: plot, characters, timeline, author, vocabulary, themes, and parallels. These reports will help you to study for the tests and prepare you to make your own retelling. Pay special attention to the similarities and differences among the various texts. It is this analysis that is the core focus of our course and you will need this information in particular when it comes time to create your own retelling project.

You should use the introductory material in your textbooks and reference sources including Wikipedia and the many encyclopedias accessed through Credo Reference to answer many of the sections of the study guide. Any information that is not wholly yours must be cited using MLA style. To refresh your understanding of MLA style citation, I recommend this site: <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

- Each of twenty Retelling Reports is worth 10 points each towards your course grade.



## Assignments, con't

**Retelling Project:** This course examines a constellation of tellings of a core story, the *Odyssey*. By the end of the course, you will have seen the story on film, on television, as a comic, as anime, set in Greece, set in the American South, in verse, in prose, in drama, in pre-history, in the recent past, from the perspective of Odysseus, Penelope, and Telemachus. For your final project, you will retell a portion of the story in a variation of your own choosing. Perhaps you'll choose to set the tale in Vegas or tell the backstory of Calypso or write Nausicaa's secret diary. Maybe you see it all as a series of job interviews or a cooking show or jury trial. Is it like *Jersey Shore*? Is it like *South Park*? Should it be a ballet? A rock opera? You decide. Your assignment is to reimagine and retell the *Odyssey*. Your project will include a proposal outlining your plans, approximately 1000 words of text in the form of a screenplay, a 5 minute film, an introduction to your film during the screening, and written responses to your classmates' films.

In thinking about your project, you should consider which part/s of the story most interest or appeal to you, what questions you have while reading, and what you wish was different about the story. For the film, you might choose to do live-action, or animation, or a slideshow, or a newscast, or visual poetry, or documentary, or just about anything you like. Find an example of a style you like and make your film like your example. It is possible to complete this project without leaving your desktop computer. It is also possible to shoot a three camera sitcom. I have some equipment to loan, and you likely already have some of your own. We will show your film to an audience during a screening festival in the last week of class and release your film as a video podcast to share with the world.

- The proposal is worth 25 points towards your final grade.
- The screenplay is worth 50 points towards your final grade.
- The film is worth 100 points towards your final grade.
- The introduction is worth 10 points towards your final grad.
- The screening responses are each worth 5 points towards your final grade.

**Final Exam:** In the last week of the course, you will take the final exam. There are 100 questions. You will have 2 hours to complete the exam. You will not be allowed to backtrack to questions left unanswered. The exam includes multiple choice, short answer, and true/false questions covering the readings, films, class discussions, and other course material.

- The final exam is worth 50 points towards your course grade.

