

STUDENT WARNING: This course syllabus is from a previous semester archive and serves only as a preparatory reference. Please use this syllabus as a reference only until the professor opens the classroom and you have access to the updated course syllabus. Please do NOT purchase any books or start any work based on this syllabus; this syllabus may NOT be the one that your individual instructor uses for a course that has not yet started. If you need to verify course textbooks, please refer to the online course description through your student portal. This syllabus is proprietary material of APUS.

American Public University System  
American Military University | American Public University

# LITR231

---

## Course Summary

**Course :** LITR231 **Title :** Leadership in World Literature: Antiquity to the Early Modern Period

**Length of Course :** 8

**Prerequisites :** ENGL210 for English majors or ENGL110 for non-English majors

**Credit Hours:** 3

---

## Description

### Course Description:

Have you ever wondered what the mummified remains in royal Egyptian tombs once thought about love? Or about the feats of heroism on board ancient shipwrecks now preserved at the bottom of the sea? What does the theater of Dionysus tell us about the first democracy? We will read in translation from an array of cultures and authors from the Ancient World to the Early Modern period to try to answer these and other questions. Representative selections are drawn from Classical Greece, Asia, the Middle East, Western Europe, Africa, and Native America. Drawing from the major genres of epic poetry, drama, lyric verse, religious texts, and prose fiction, we will explore ideas regarding leadership, conflict, heroism, friendship, love, politics, and religion that still impact us today. We will consider what "world" literature means and why the struggles, concerns, and lives of those long dead are still important today and for our futures. (Pre-requisite: ENGL210 for English majors or ENGL110 for non-English majors)

### Course Scope:

At the end of LITR231, students will:

- Recognize the literature of different cultures and time periods around the world.
  - Identify the cultural and political forces that contextualize and inform ancient literatures through the Early Modern Period.
  - Compare and contrast themes and symbols in literatures of different eras and regions of the world.
  - Produce a final project that investigates points of connection between literary works of different periods and cultures.
- 

## Objectives

After successful completion of this course, you will be able to:

CO-1: Translate own personal responses to literary works into written responses that others can understand;

CO-2: Infer cultural ideals and values of leadership from literary works;

CO-3: Develop a sense of the larger group's understanding of literary works through discussion;

CO-4: Organize analysis of literary works and personal responses to literary works into effective and clear close-reading essays.

# Outline

## Week 1: Defining Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 1, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Complete the reading
- Introduce ourselves and get to know one another
- Get to know the organization of the classroom and syllabus
- Read and engage with all information on course policies and requirements
- Engage with the basic expectations of the course in terms of writing requirements and processes

### Reading(s)

- Week 1 Lesson
- "Middle East, Near East, Greece" (pages 5-7)
- *Epic of Gilgamesh* (pages 80-105)
- Aesara of Lucania
- Course policies and documents such as the syllabus

### Assignment(s)

Week 1 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

## Week 2: Continuing to Define Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 2, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to Aurelius' *Meditations* and Xenophon's "The Education of Cyrus" not only as precursors to our own culture, but also as products of their own cultural and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the texts information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written.
- Get started on the Final Project

### Reading(s)

- Week 2 Lesson
- Marcus Aurelius: The *Meditations* Books 9 and 11
- Xenophon "The Education of Cyrus" Book 1

### Assignment(s)

- Week 2 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday
- Week 2 Assignment: Final Project Proposal, due Sunday

## Week 3: Musings on Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 3, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to Shakespeare's "This Sceptered Isle Speech" from the play *Richard II*, Sun Tzu's *The Art of War*, Machiavelli's *The Prince*, and Montaigne's "Observations on the Means to Carry on a War According to Julius Caesar" not only as precursors to our own culture, but also as products of their own cultural and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the texts information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written.

### Reading(s)

- Week 3 Lesson
- Richard II: "This Sceptered Isle Speech" from Shakespeare.
- Sun Tzu: *The Art of War* (pages 355-361; stop at "Book of Songs")
- Machiavelli: *The Prince* (pages 245-256)
- Montaigne: Book the Second CHAPTER XXXIV: "Observations on the Means to Carry on a War According to Julius Caesar"

### Assignment(s)

Week 3 Assignment: Essay 1, due Sunday

## Week 4: More Musings on Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 4, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to Euripides' play *Medea* not only as precursors to our own culture, but also as a product of ancient Greek cultural and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this tragic play presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the text information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written.

### Reading(s)

- Week 4 Lesson
- Euripides' *Medea* (pages 245-284)

### Assignment(s)

Week 4 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

## Week 5: Male Minority Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 5, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to the Congolese oral epic *Mwindo*, Moses and excerpts from Exodus, Solomon and excerpts from 1<sup>st</sup> Kings, and Christ's Sermon on the Mount not only as precursors to our

own culture, but also as products of their cultural, time, and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.

- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the texts information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written or spoken.

### **Reading(s)**

- Week 5 Lesson
- *Mwindo*
- Moses: Excerpts from Exodus: Chapters 1, 3, 5-11 (pages 13-21)
- Solomon: Excerpts from 1st Kings: Chapters 1-3
- Christ: Sermon on the Mount (pages 6-9)

### **Assignment(s)**

Week 5 Assignment: Essay 2, due Sunday

## **Week 6: Women Minority Leaders**

---

### **Learning Objectives:**

During Week 6, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to the Book of Esther, the letters of Joan of Arc, Elizabeth I's "Speech at Tilbury", and Chaucer's "Wife of Bath Prologue and Tale" not only as precursors to our own culture, but also as products of their cultural, religious, and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the texts information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written.

### **Reading(s)**

- Week 6 Lesson
- Book of Esther
- Joan of Arc's Letters – March 22 1429; August 5 1429; November 9 1429; March 23 1430; March 28 1430
- Elizabeth I: "Speech at Tilbury"
- Chaucer's "Wife of Bath's Prologue and Tale" (pages 28-37)

### **Assignment(s)**

Week 6 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

## **Week 7: Fictional Leaders**

---

### **Learning Objectives:**

During Week 7, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to Cervantes' *Don Quixote* not only as a precursor to our own culture, but also as a product of Cervantes' cultural and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the text information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written or spoken.

## Reading(s)

- Don Quixote (pages 17-53)

## Assignment(s)

Week 7 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday

## Week 8: Finishing Up Fictional Leaders

---

### Learning Objectives:

During Week 8, we will aim to meet the following objectives:

- Respond to Dante's *The Divine Comedy* not only as a precursor to our own culture, but also as a product of Dante's cultural and social ideals, some of which may be different from our own.
- Consider how this literature presents ideas on leadership and what this means in terms of the wider culture of the time.
- Identify in the text information that we did not already know about the culture in question, and consider how this might change our understanding of the audience for whom the text was written or spoken.

## Reading(s)

- Dante's Inferno (Cantos III-VII, IX, XII, XVIII, XXXII)

## Assignment(s)

- Week 8 Discussion Participation, Initial post due Thursday and Peer replies due Sunday
- Week 8 Assignment: Final Project, due Sunday

# Evaluation

The grading will be based on the following:

- 6 Discussion Assignments
  - 1 Project Proposal
  - 2 Essay Assignments
  - Final Project
- 

# Materials

There are no textbooks required for the class. Instead, links to online sources will be provided in the weekly lessons.

### Websites

In addition to the required course texts there are a number of public domain websites that may be useful; when applicable, these websites will be linked in the lesson for the appropriate week.

Please abide by the university's Academic Honesty policy when using Internet sources as well, and note that web site addresses are subject to change. If you discover a broken link, please inform your instructor.

---

# Course Guidelines

This course delivered via distance learning will enable students to complete academic work in a flexible manner, completely online. Course materials and access to an online learning management system will be made available to each student. Online assignments are due by Sunday evening of the week as noted and include required class discussion, one project proposal, two close-reading essays, and one final project. Discussions also have mid-week (Wednesday)

due dates in order to help the class discussion develop in a timely fashion; see the individual discussions for that information. Assigned faculty will support the students throughout this eight-week course.

### **Writing Expectations**

As this is a 200-level Literature course, students are expected to have a solid background in grammar and mechanics, and to have a basic understanding of the elements of academic argument. Students who feel that they need to review these aspects of composition should consult with websites such as [Purdue University's Online Writing Lab](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) for information on grammar and mechanics and consult the instructor for information on argument structures and expectations.

### **Citation and Reference Style**

Attention Please: Students are required to follow MLA as the sole citation and reference style used in this course. The citation style as described at [Purdue University's Online Writing Lab](http://owl.english.purdue.edu/) (<http://owl.english.purdue.edu/>) will be our final word for MLA formatting questions.

### **Late Assignments**

Students are expected to submit classroom assignments by the posted due date and to complete the course according to the published class schedule. As adults, students, and working professionals I understand you must manage competing demands on your time. Should you need additional time to complete an assignment please contact me before the due date so we can discuss the situation and determine an acceptable resolution.

**All work submitted within one week of the original due date will receive a 10% late deduction. Work submitted more than one week late will only receive 50% credit.**