Course description. The four semesters of Core Humanities explore some of the world's finest and most influential works of literature, philosophy, religion, and the arts. The semesters follow a historical sequence so that the great works can be studied as an evolving conversation about the enduring questions of human life. Our goal is to discover what the greatest works of the past have to say to us here, right now—to empower and deepen what the Chinese sage Confucius called human-heartedness.

The first semester introduces two foundational components of the Western tradition: the culture of the ancient Greeks, and the world of the Hebrew Scriptures. We also consider ancient Mesopotamia, to which the Hebrews and Greeks were deeply indebted.

Other topics that will be considered this semester include heroism and power; friendship; death and grief; sexuality and love; the city, and the journey home. Key issues include the experience of the divine; the impact of war; the role of human reason; the search for justice, and the concept of beauty in the literary and visual arts.

Grades will be determined by your seminar professor according to the University's standard grading system, in which A = 4.0, A- = 3.7, and so forth. Final grades will be based on a combination of written work, examinations, and class participation, in the following proportions:

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<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Midterm exam</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar papers</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Seminar attendance and participation</td>
<td>15%</td>
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The final examination will be set by the faculty as a whole; the midterm will be set by individual seminar instructors. Examinations will be based on the lectures, seminars, and readings. They will include factual, short essay, and long essay questions.
**Writing** is an essential component of the Core Curriculum and is coordinated closely with the Boston University Writing Program. Each seminar will require approximately 18 pages of writing over the course of the semester. All seminars will require at least one close reading or thesis-argument paper about a single work (4-5 pages). Other writing assignments will be developed by individual seminar leaders. At least one of the writing assignments will focus on selected works of Near Eastern and Classical art in the Museum of Fine Arts.

**The Core Writing Fellows** are available for help throughout the semester. Fellows are graduate students who have been trained in grammar and compositional skills and are familiar with the works read in the Core. To make an appointment, contact the Writing Fellow for your particular seminar, or book an appointment by calling 617-353-5404; signing up in the Core Office, CAS 119; or using the online reservation form at www.bu.edu/core/writing.

**Learning and testing accommodation.** Boston University complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. If you are a student who needs academic accommodations because of a documented disability, you should contact your seminar leader and present your letter of accommodation as soon as possible. If you have questions about documenting a disability or requesting academic accommodations, contact the Office of Disability Services at access@bu.edu and 617-353-3658. Letters of accommodations should be presented as soon as possible to ensure that student needs are addressed from the start of the course. Learn more at http://www.bu.edu/disability/policies-procedures.

**On the Core website**—http://bu.edu/core—students will find faculty office hours, reading lists, supplemental course material, a department activities and academic calendar, syllabi, tutor appointment forms and writing FAQs, and other resources. We hope you will also take advantage of the Core Blog at blogs.bu.edu/core, where you can stay up to date with Core events and participate in a wide-open conversation with Core lecturers and faculty about the issues of the course. Please note that your instructor may create an additional Blackboard course site for the members of your discussion seminar.

**Academic Conduct.** All members of the University are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity; we have the same expectations of each other in this course. Seminar leaders take the issue of plagiarism seriously and expect all the work you do in this course to be your own. If you have questions about what plagiarism and how it differs from the appropriate use of other people’s work, consult the **Academic Conduct Code** at http://bu.edu/academics/cas/policies/academic-conduct or speak with your instructor.

**Required textbooks** are available at the BU Bookstore and are on reserve in Mugar Library:

1. *Gilgamesh* trans. David Ferry 9780374523831

**LECTURE SCHEDULE**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th><em>Gilgamesh</em></th>
<th>[a THURSDAY] Brian Jorgensen (emeritus Director of the Core Curriculum)</th>
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<td>Sept. 3</td>
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<th>Week 2</th>
<th>Introduction to the Hebrew Bible</th>
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<td>Sept. 8</td>
<td>Rabbi Ariel Burger (Adult Learning Initiative, Harold Grinspoon Foundation)</td>
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NB: All lectures are on Tuesdays, except September 3rd & 17th
Welcome to Campus Reception for all Core students and alumni: 3:30-5:30 PM, CAS 119

Annual All-Core BBQ: 2 – 5 PM, BU Beach

The Book of Genesis
Sept. 17 [a THURSDAY] Abigail Gillman (Department of Modern Languages & Comparative Literature)

The Book of Exodus
Sept. 22 Jonathan Klawans (Department of Religion)

Introduction to Greek Culture, and Homer’s Odyssey Books 1-12
Sept. 29 Stephanie Nelson (Director of the Core Curriculum; Department of Classical Studies)

Penelope in the Odyssey
Oct. 6 Steve Esposito (Coordinator of CC 101; Department of Classical Studies)

No lecture; follow a Monday schedule on Tuesday, October 13th

The Political World of Fifth-Century Athens
Oct. 20 Jay Samons (Department of Classical Studies)

Art and Politics on the Periclean Acropolis
Oct. 27 Fred Kleiner (Department of the History of Art & Architecture; Department of Archaeology)

Midterm Exam (50 minutes, in discussion seminar)

Sophocles’ Ajax
Nov. 3 Steve Esposito (Coordinator of CC 101; Department of Classical Studies)

Euripides’ Hecuba
Nov. 10 Kyna Hamill (Assistant Director of the Core Curriculum)

Plato’s Republic: An Introduction
Nov. 17 Drew Hyland (Trinity College, Department of Philosophy)

Plato’s Republic: The City and the Soul
Nov. 24 Greg Fried (Suffolk University, Department of Philosophy)

Thanksgiving Break

Plato’s Divided Line and the Cave Allegory in The Republic Books 6-7
Dec. 1 Allen Speight (Department of Philosophy)

The End of Plato’s Republic; and An Overview of the Whole
Dec. 8 Steve Esposito (Coordinator of CC 101; Department of Classical Studies)

LAST DAY OF CLASSES

STUDY PERIOD

FINAL EXAM: 9-11 AM