

**WRIT 026.304: Critical Writing Seminar in Classical Studies:
War, Remembrance, and the *Iliad***

TR 4:30-6:00

Williams 315

Alison Traweek

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Office hours Mon/Weds 2-5, Mark's Cafe (Van Pelt Library basement)

Course description

As a critical writing seminar, this course provides an introduction to college-level academic writing, and culminates in the production of multi-draft research paper. As a freshman seminar, it offers an introduction to the discipline of classical studies.

Homer's *Iliad*, written around 700 BCE, is one of the oldest poems of the Western canon, and remains one of humanity's greatest poems of war. It tells the events of several key weeks towards the end of the ten-year siege of Troy, particularly focusing on the experiences of Achilles, the most passionate and brutal of the Greek heroes. In this class, we will read excerpts from this foundational poem alongside James Tatum's *Mourner's Songs*, which uses the *Iliad* as a lens for thinking about how every war inspires both mourning and celebration, and how art - poetry, monuments, actions - can memorialize both. Students will be invited to engage closely with the poem itself as well as to use the poem as an analogue for understanding more contemporary issues.

NB this seminar can count towards a major or minor in classical studies; see Ralph Rosen for more information.

How this class works

This is not a lecture class where you will be passively soaking up knowledge, but rather a place for discussion, collaboration and debate. We will spend our class time thinking together about how interpretation and argumentation work, and will examine our own writing and the writing of our peers with an eye to figuring out how to make our scholarship as effective as possible.

Informed participation is the key to a productive semester. Read your texts actively and critically, and come to class ready to debate. Not all students participate in the same way, however, and the most important contributions to a discussion are not always those that are made first, or most frequently, or most insistently. Within the bounds of your own personal style, I demand that you take risks and think out loud. Apart from occasional mini-lectures, I will act primarily as a guide and referee to make sure that our discussions stay on track and respectful. Beyond that, you are in charge of the direction of discussion, and the more engaged you are, the more interesting and rewarding the class will be for all of us.

Readings

The readings for this course fall into three groups: the first is the primary texts, the subject of our course; the second is the secondary text, an academic work related to our primary texts; and the third is a selection of writings about reading and writing. The first provides the subject matter for your own writing, the second provides a model for academic writing in the discipline and on the subject, and the third offers instruction on how to write effectively.

The following text is required, and will be available in the Penn Book Center, 34th and Sansom. If you choose to get your book elsewhere, please be sure to order the same edition by using the ISBN given below.

- James Tatum, *The Mourner's Song: War and Remembrance from the Iliad to Vietnam*. University of Chicago Press. 9780226789941.

A digital coursepack with a selection of readings from the *Iliad* will be made available at the start of the semester.

You are also required to obtain the following, which are not on order at any bookstore but are easily available online from Amazon and elsewhere by using the ISBN / AISN provided:

- Christine Hult and Thomas Huckin, *The New Century Handbook*, 4th ed. Pearson Longman, 2008. 0205553680.

Anticipated assignments (subject to change)

Outline of the research text
Outline of at least four scholarly articles
Abstract of at least one scholarly article
At least 6 propositions
Skeletal outline, prose, rhetorical outline and peer review of 6 exercises/essays
Statement of research interest
Skeletal outline, prose, rhetorical outline and peer review of 2 syntheses
At least 2 drafts of justificatory paper and outline
At least 2 drafts of explanatory paper and outline
Peer reviews of a classmate's justificatory and explanatory essays
Scholarly article presentation
2 cover letters
Custom proofreading sheet
Midterm and Final portfolios

Note on Assignment Submissions

Most assignments are due by 11:59PM on dates listed on the schedule; anything submitted after the deadline will earn a 0. Please bring two hard copies of assignments or your laptop to class in

order to facilitate your peers' and professor's reviews. All assignments must be submitted to the Canvas site, where individual assignment links are provided.

Grading Policy

Final grades are based on:

- Participation and appropriate engagement in class;
- Timely submission of all assignments;
- Quality of assignment submissions;
- Quality of work based on portfolio assessment.

Note that grades are not negotiable, and will not be discussed over email. Final grade changes are made only in the event of a mathematical error.

Grading breakdown

Coursework (including Midterm Portfolio): 45%

Final Portfolio: 45%

Participation: 10%

Failure in any category of the final portfolio assessment means a failure on the portfolio and retake of the writing seminar. Wrong, empty, corrupt, or missing midterm and final portfolios will drop one full grade per 24 hour period from due date and time.

Please note that technology issues are not a valid excuse for late or missing assignments; students are encouraged to avail themselves of the many computer labs around campus in the event of personal computer problems.

The participation grade is based on active presence in class; unexcused absences, serial late arrival, inappropriate use of laptops, and any use of phones during class will count against this.

Course Policies

Attendance is mandatory. Attendance includes being present in the class when the session begins, and refraining from using laptops for non-class-related purposes. The use of cell phones is not permitted in class at any time.

Students who miss a class must make a reasonable effort to contact their instructor in advance. No later than their return to class, students must report the absence and the reason it occurred using the Course Absence Report system (CAR) in Penn InTouch. Be sure to submit documentation materials to your advisor in the event of an excused absence other than a religious holiday.

With few exceptions, no distinction is made between excused and unexcused absences. The following are regarded as excused absences:

1. Absences resulting from religious holidays;
2. Absences resulting from legal obligations, e.g., jury duty;
3. Documented family or medical emergencies.

Participation in class activities—including collaborative activities and peer reviews—comprises 10% of the final grade. This in-class work cannot be made up, and missed classes will result in a zero for in-class work unless the student discusses it with the professor in advance. All assigned written work, including peer reviews, must be submitted on time. Extensions may be offered with instructor discretion and in extraordinary circumstances. This extension policy does not, however, apply to the mid-term or final portfolios, which must be submitted by the program-wide deadlines.

A student's failure to provide an accurate statement of their reason for absence will be regarded as a violation of academic integrity and reported to the Office of Student Conduct. Regardless of the reason for absence, students are responsible for learning what happened in class before their return; usually, this is best effected by contacting a colleague in the class to find out what was missed. Students who anticipate missing one or more classes should contact the instructor ahead of time, just as they should make arrangements to meet with their instructor immediately upon returning from an absence.

Regular and punctual attendance is essential. I will start and end class exactly on time; I expect you to show me the same courtesy of timeliness. Failure to do so will be reflected in the participation grade.

Late assignments will not be accepted for credit, and will not receive feedback. If you turn in late assignments and want feedback, you may visit the Writing Center.

Writing Support

Students are encouraged to make generous use of the Writing Center while enrolled in their writing seminars as well as thereafter. Tutors in the Writing Center were nominated by their writing instructors for their outstanding work; the ten finalists chosen each semester from across the schools and disciplines are not only superb writers and peer reviewers, they are also well-versed in the assessment criteria of the writing seminars. In turn, they complete a semester of coursework and fieldwork devoted to writing pedagogy, co-taught by the director of the writing program and the associate director of the writing center. Students who use the Writing Center are thus assured of carefully selected, knowledgeable writing tutors.

Appointments and drop-in hours are available from Sundays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, visit http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/writing_center/

Students with Disabilities

Please let me know if you anticipate any issues that might affect your performance in the class, for example related to the format or requirements of the course; or if you need to make any special arrangements or have emergency medical information you wish to share with me.

If you require disability-related accommodations, such as a note-taker, extended time on timed writings, or captioning, please register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Disabilities may include learning, psychiatric, or physical disabilities. ODS can assist you with finding out if you qualify for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.

*Office of Disability Services
Stouffer Commons, Suite 300
3702 Spruce Street*

Phone: (215) 573.9235

Email: sds@mail@zimbra.upenn.edu

Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm

For additional resources, visit http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/cs_resources.php