

**Year:** Senior (12)  
**Course Code:** W236439

**Prerequisites:** English 3  
**Course Code (Short):** Hum9

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**Description:**

This course requires students to use art and literature to examine their perspective and role in society. Students will explore how conflicts (of race, community, religion, and identity) bring us to re-define self and role in society. Core questions include: How can art broaden our world view? What role does literature play in helping us understand who we are and our position in society? What conflicts endure, and how does one more actively engage our world? Students will analyze written and visual work from diverse cultures and genres to better grasp who we are, how we understand society, and how we might shape a better world.

Students will react, write, and present original critiques of all that they study so that they may appreciate the role the arts play in their lives. Students will study multiple genres including poetry, short stories, dramas, and novels, focusing on the analysis of characters, core themes and the close reading of language.

*Core texts: The Submission (Waldman), Art as Therapy (de Botton), "Now is the Time for Running" (Williams), Ramayana (Valmiki), Antigone (Sophocles).*

Students will be expected to read and write creatively and analytically. In class, emphasis is placed on daily participation and on leading discussions. Students will produce a variety of written work, including writing in a timed environment and traditional process pieces, where they will conference with the teacher, as well as peer edit. Daily observation and discussion of paintings, sculpture, photographs, music, and literature will be the norm.

WRITING EXPECTATIONS

- Research and analysis of visual/art
- Creation of an original myth
- Analytical/argumentative paper
- Research assignment: abnormal vs. normal
- Research and analysis essay

READING EXPECTATIONS

- Core texts in bold plus a range of short stories and poetry from the syllabus

PRESENTATION/DISCUSSION EXPECTATIONS

- Individual art presentation
- Discussion: writing and leading class discussion
- Group project/debate on modern American conflict
- Cumulative individual student presentations

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**Reading List**  
**Bold** are core texts

SEMESTER 1: Art Interpretation and Mythology

SUMMER READING: Novel: The Submission (Waldman)

**Purpose:** Students will think critically about the concept of a memorial. Who should have input when an artist and concept are chosen? Should the artist's vision be modified? Should the artist be held accountable for the decisions made in the creation of the work? Who should be able to access the memorial and how interactive should it be? Ultimately, students should engage in discussions about the purpose of ART and how objective or subjective it should be.

Unit 1. Art Interpretation

**EQ:** *How can art illuminate what is missing or unavailable in written word or text? How can art broaden understanding and interpretation of companion texts and histories?*

**Purpose:** *To orient students to visual art interpretation and teach the core visual literacy skills behind reading paintings and other modes of visual art (limited to painting, sculpture and photography). To build a universal approach to appreciating the human need for art, reading authors and dissecting authorial intent through a common language. Additionally, to help students see the common themes and origins of art across multiple mediums in order to create multi-modal arguments about ideas and their generation.*

Non-Fiction Text:

*Art as Therapy* (de Botton)

Selections: *The Seven Functions of Art* {1. Remembering; 2. Hope; Sorrow}; *What is the Point of Art?; What Counts as Good Art?*

Essays:

Getlein, Mark. "The Visual Elements: A Primer" Gilbert's Living with Art

Visual Art:

2 versions of "The Death of Socrates" (Jaques Louis David vs. Etienne Lavallee-Pousinn )

Joan Mitchell, "[Untitled 1992](#)"

The Water Lily Pond, Claude Monet (1899)

Rocky Reef on the Sea Shore, Casper David Friedrich (1825)

Children at a Puppet Show, Alfred Eisenstadt (1963)

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Unit 2. Origin Stories: The Enduring Questions of Humanity

***EQ:*** *How do origin stories help us understand and question our place in the world? What commonalities do world myths share and what can we gain from such study?*

***Purpose:*** *To understand the relationship between myth, religion, and morality. To help students read comparatively and devise common questions independently. To orient students to a wide variety of world myths and religions that help them foster empathy for world cultures, creation myths, and the common human experience. To build close reading and comprehension strategies for more difficult readings and further expand upon core analysis skills.*

Fiction Texts:

Bible excerpts from Genesis: "Adam and Eve" and "Cain and Abel" (King James)  
"Paradise Lost" selections (Milton)

Reader: Multicultural Origin Myths

Greek creation myth Hesiod's ["Theogony"\(Nagy trans.\)](#); Iroquois myth; "The Sky Woman" ; Japanese myth: "Izanagi and Izanami"; Norse myth: "Loki, Balder, and Ragnarök"; African myth: "Bushmen Creation Story"; Hindu myth: "Creation, Death, and Rebirth of the Universe"; Greek myth: "Prometheus and Pandora"; Hindu myth: ["Ancient Indian Myths and Beliefs"](#)

Non-Fiction Texts:

Selections from *The Tibetan Book of Living and Dying* (Rinpoche)  
The Big Bang Theory as Origin Story (UChicago)

Visual Art:

Illustrations of *Paradise Lost* by Gustave Dore, William Blake, Michelangelo  
"The Buffalo Dance" painting by George Catlin  
"The Sacred Mountain" (Japanese painting)  
"The World Tree" (Norwegian painting)  
"The Voodoo Gods" (African painting)  
"The Avatars of Vishnu" (India/Hindu painting)  
"Shiva and His Family" (India/Hindu painting)  
"The Myth of Prometheus" painting by Piero di Cosimo  
"The Adoration of the Magi" painting by Giotto  
"The Isenheim Altarpiece" painting by Mathis Gothardt  
"The Fall of Man" painting by Tintoretto  
["The Garden of Earthly Delights"](#) (painting by Hieronymus Bosch)

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SEMESTER 2: Conflict and Re-creation

Unit 3: Conflict: The War of Answers

***EQ:*** *What are the enduring conflicts of humanity; where do they begin and what common questions or concerns lie at their root?*

***Purpose:*** *To help students understand the long history of worldly conflicts as presented in literature and other artistic mediums, and through analysis come to see the commonalities in our concerns over differences. To understand conflicts of various types and apply research skills in organizing and applying both historic and modern ideas. To deeply engage in exploration of multiple conflicts (mini-units) in order to examine their similarities and learn from their histories.*

Fiction Texts:

Excerpt from Hamilton's Mythology: "The Iliad"

*Sub-Unit A: Conflict of Warfare:*

*Reading:*

*Adichie short story: Cell One*

**Antigone, Sophocles (Core)**

**The Things They Carried, O'Brien (Core)**

Selection from "Consolation of Philosophy"

Essay: "Civil Peace" (Achebe)

*Visual Art:*

Jason Farago's article from *The New York Times*, July 28, 2022: ["The Role of Art in a Time of War"](#)

["The Third of May, 1808, 1814"](#) painting by Goya

["The Consequences of War"](#) painting by Rubens

["Massacre of the Innocents"](#) painting by Rubens

["Guernica"](#) painting by Picasso "The Consequences of War"

*Sub-Unit B: Conflicts of religion and spirituality*

*Reading:*

*Essay: [Atlantic, "Why Global Religious Conflict Won't End" \(2015\);](#)*

Selection from "Consolation of Philosophy"

Chapter: "Tolerating and Not Tolerating" from Living with the Gods: On Beliefs and Peoples by Neil MacGregor

*Visual Art:*

"The Creation of Adam" (Michelangelo)

scene from Mahabharata (Hindu watercolor illustration)

Silver token from the Golden Temple at Amritsar

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*Sub-Unit C: Conflicts of Culture and Identity*

*Reading:*

Essay: "On Dumpster Diving"

Short story: "[Where I'm From](#)" (Sugiura)

Selection from "Consolation of Philosophy"

*Visual Art:*

<https://www.nga.gov/learn/teachers/lessons-activities/uncovering-america/expressing-individual.html>

Voyage de Brasil, Jean de Levy (1578) (Consolations of Philosophy, p. 137)

["The Decisive Moment"](#) (photograph by Henri Cartier-Bresson)

The Agony in the Kitchen, Jessica Todd (2012)

*Sub-Unit D: Conflicts of Gender and Sexuality*

*Reading:*

Essay: "The Miseducation of the American Boy" (Atlantic article)

Selection from "Consolation of Philosophy"

["Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"](#) (short story by Joyce Carol Oates)

["Shiloh"](#) (short story by Bobbie Ann Mason)

*Visual Art:*

["Self-Portrait with Cropped Hair"](#) (Kahlo)

["Ignorance=Fear"](#) (Haring)

["The Arnolfini Portrait"](#) (painting by Jan van Eyck)

Unit 4: Re-creation: Reconciling Differences of Opinion

**EQ:** *From conflict, how does one recreate one's identity and community?*

**Purpose:** *After conflict comes reconciliation. Students will explore how our many conflicts (of race, community, religion, and identity) bring us to recreate identity and the world we inhabit, while being comfortable with ambiguity and the unknown. This will help students debate with authors and ideas through informed means and produce original arguments about discovering commonalities among world cultures and ideas, as well as make connections to their lives and experiences.*

Novel: [Now is the Time for Running](#) (Williams)

Prose: *Ramayana* (Valmiki, modern prose trans.)

Short Story/Essay:

"Through the Tunnel" by Dorris Lessing (short story)

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"V: The Hero's Adventure" from *The Power of Myth* by Moyers-Campbell  
 Hero's journey history and application  
 (<https://libguides.qvsu.edu/c.php?g=948085&p=6836194>)

Visual Art:

Sita Sings the Blues (film)  
 "Scenes from the Ramayana" (Hindu painting)  
 "The Mandala" ([Encyclopedia Britannica](#))  
 Wall Street Nation, Sebastian Errazuriz (2012)  
 Musee d'Orsay Paris, 2011

**SELECTIONS:**

**A. Poetry:**

Title	Author	Note
"My Last Duchess"	Browning	
"To His Coy Mistress"	Donne	
"The Unquiet Grave"	English ballad	
"I Am Waiting"	Ferlinghetti	
"More Light! More Light!"	Hecht	
"La Belle Dame Sans Merci"	Keats	
"I Am the Rose of Sharon"	King James Bible	
"To His Coy Mistress"	Marvell	
"Tale of a Sprinter, in the winter of 1938"	Pagedar	
"Lord Randal"	Scottish ballad	
"After Auschwitz"	Sextor	
"Babi Yan"	Yevtushenko	

**B. Short Stories:**

Title	Author	Note
"In the Grove"	Akutagawa	
"Rashomon"	Akutagawa	
"By the Waters of Babylon"	Benet	
"The Guest"	Camus	
"The Rules of Love"	Capellanus	
"Tilting at Windmills," excerpt from <u>Don Quixote</u>	Cervantes	

Humanities, level 9

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Title	Author	Note
"The Voyage of Sinbad the Sailor Fourth"	Dawood, trans.	
"The Robber Bridegroom"	Grimm	
"Rhinoceros"	Ionesco	
"The Ones Who Walk Away from Omelas"	Le Guin	
"Until Gwen"	Lehane	
"Merlin: The Coming of Winter"	Malory	
"Where Are You Going, Where Have You Been?"	Oates	
"Lie Big"	Rothbart	
"Chivalry and Courtly Love"	Tuchman	

**C. Essays:**

Title	Author	Note
"The Myth of Sisyphus"	Camus	
"On Morality"	Didion	
"Civilization and its Discontents" excerpt	Freud	
"Stanley Milgram and Obedience to Authority"	Slater	
"What is Art?"	Tolstoy	
"Lover"		Excerpt from <u>Awakening the Hero Within</u> (Pearson)
"Creator"		Excerpt from <u>Awakening the Hero Within</u> (Pearson)
"Magician"		Excerpt from <u>Awakening the Hero Within</u> (Pearson)
"Warrior"		Excerpt from <u>Awakening the Hero Within</u> (Pearson)

**D. Film Clips:**

Title	Director	Year	Studio	Rating
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