

**Humanities 500**  
Professor G. McMahon  
Professor M. McMahon

**Spring 2003**  
Horton 408  
862-3023

## **CRITICAL METHODS IN THE HUMANITIES**

Welcome to this course. The course is designed as a seminar and therefore focuses on reading of primary sources and discussion in class. Every class will depend on your participation as we discuss primary texts. We will understand your participation in class as an index of your enthusiasm for the material and of your willingness to be partially responsible for your own education. It will therefore constitute a significant portion of your class grade.

There are three aspects of this course. The first will involve reading our primary text; we will devote several weeks to a careful reading and class discussion of the *Aeneid*. We will then focus on other literary and artistic works which develop themes from this text. After exploring some of these primary texts deriving from the *Aeneid*, we will spend the third part of the course exploring the critical legacy of these texts, creating a bibliography of secondary literature. Course requirements will include ten short response papers on weekly reading or watching/listening assignments, as well as a research paper in some area of scholarly critique of the *Aeneid* or *Dido and Aeneas*.

For the common readings you will turn in a short paper in class on the reading for that week; the nature of each essay is indicated in the syllabus. The other major component of your grade will be your seminar paper. We will discuss this assignment in more detail when we meet in class.

Our expectations for the course include introducing you to the genres of epic poetry, opera, and dance, sharing with you our enthusiasm for these cultural monuments, and reminding you of the centrality of critical thinking and its universal applicability in all fields. We look forward to our cooperative investigation and to learning from you.

**BOOKS:**      **PRIMARY SOURCES:**

Vergil, *The Aeneid*  
Ovid, *Heroides*  
Purcell, *Dido and Aeneas*, full score Dover edition

**SECONDARY SOURCE:**

Harris, *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas*

**WEEK 1 (January 22)**

- Subject Matter: Introduction to *The Aeneid*
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* I and II

**WEEK 2 (January 29)**

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* I and II
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* III and IV

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## WEEK 3 (February 5)

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* III and IV
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* V and VI

## WEEK 4 (February 12)

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* V and VI
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* VII and VIII

## WEEK 5 (February 19)

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* VII and VIII
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* IX and X

## WEEK 6 (February 26)

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* IX and X
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: *Aeneid* XI and XII

## WEEK 7 (March 5)

- Subject Matter: *Aeneid* XI and XII
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Reading for next week: Ovid, *Heroides*

## WEEK 8 (March 12)

- Subject Matter: *Heroides*
- Paper - 4 pg. comparative essay on *Heroides*, comparing Dido's grievance and statement thereof, with any of the other women in *Heroides*
- Reading/Watching for next week: Read score of Henry Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*;  
Watch *Dido & Aeneas* opera in Multimedia Room in Dimond Library

**MARCH 17-21 SPRING BREAK**

## WEEK 9 (March 26)

- Subject Matter: Introduction to opera, Purcell's *Dido and Aeneas*
- Paper - 2 pg. major question paper due in class
- Watching: Watch opera again, watch dance version of *Dido and Aeneas*

## WEEK 10 (April 2)

- Subject Matter: Discussion of opera and dance version
- Paper - - 4 pg. comparative essay on operatic and terpsichorean versions of *Dido & Aeneas*
- Reading: Harris, *Henry Purcell's Dido and Aeneas*

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## WEEK 11 (April 9)

- Subject Matter: Harris, *Henry Purcell's* Dido and Aeneas
- Discussion of seminar paper assignment and seminar presentation
- Paper - 5 pg. critical essay on Harris due in class

## WEEK 12 (April 16)

- Individual conferences with instructors - outline and topic question due

## WEEK 13 (April 23)

- Individual conferences with instructors - bibliography due

## WEEK 14 (April 30)

- Individual conferences with instructors - first draft due

## WEEK 15 (May 7)

- SEMINAR PRESENTATIONS
- SEMINAR PAPER DUE

## COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- |   |           |     |
|---|-----------|-----|
| -Papers   | 10 x 5% = | 50% |
| -Class participation  |           | 20% |
| -One 15-20 pg. seminar paper<br>on a topic on the <i>Aeneid</i> to be chosen<br>in consultation with instructor |           | 20% |
| -Formal presentation of paper in class  |           | 10% |

**Multimedia Center Hours/ Dimond Library**

Monday - Thursday	8am - 11pm
Friday	8am - 8:30pm
Saturday	10am - 7:30pm
Sunday	2pm - 11pm