



RENG307 – Ancient Romance Novels Master Course Syllabus

Course Overview (QM Standards 1.2)

Course description: In this course students read ancient romance novels and analyze them for cultural understanding of the ancient and modern worlds. Romance novels were the most popular form of literature in the ancient world. Nonetheless, they had the same low status as romance novels today. By looking at these ancient stories we can investigate two phenomena: why what people like is not what is seen as important; how definitions of ‘love’ and ‘romance’ have changed over time. Since love is seen as a primary human emotion, seeing how expressions of love differ from one culture to another can reveal otherwise hidden social structures. By analyzing ancient romance novels along the axes of culture and emotion, we will more deeply understand both the ancient and modern worlds.

Course Goals:

1. The student will be able to articulate core values of a society
2. The student will be able to identify differences between two societies and construct arguments about those societies
3. The student will be able to develop a framework for assessing and critiquing argument by analyzing internal consistency of arguments and textual support of those arguments
4. The student will be able to identify and discuss continuities and differences between ancient attitudes towards love from the ancient world and today.
5. The student will be able to identify a learner’s personal taste and express how those tastes fit into the learner’s social context
6. The student will be able to write a textual analysis of a limited number of texts and revise it based on new information.

Pre-Requisites (QM Standard 1.6)

There are no course prerequisites for this course other than being an RBA (Regents Bachelor of Arts) student.

Minimum Technical Requirements and Online Resources (QM Standards 1.5 & 1.7)

In addition to a web browser (preferable Firefox) that is Blackboard compatible, you will need the other WVROCKS supported technologies outlined in the student policies section. You should know how to access and use Internet, WVROCKS, and Microsoft Office programs, and you will need to have consistent access to these technologies. You should know how to use email with attachments. You will also need a flash drive.

Online Resources: This course makes use of many online resources. I have made every effort to make sure the links I have are up-to-date. However, due to the changing nature of the web, you may find that a resource is temporarily unavailable or has been removed. If this should happen, please send me an email and I will find an alternative resource or modify the assignment accordingly.

Instructor Information (QM Standards 1.8 & 5.3)

Individual instructors complete this information.

Virtual Office Hours

I am available in my virtual office by appointment only. Send me an email to set up an appointment.

Personal Commitment

My personal commitments to you as a participant include:

- I will reply to course mail messages within 24 hours;
- I will read all discussion postings and will reply where appropriate within 3 days
- I will acknowledge my receipt of every course mail message immediately upon reading it. If I am unable to respond to the request or concern at the time of initial reply, I will give you an estimated time for my next reply.
- If I am going to be away from the course space for more than a day or two, I will send a message to you indicating the length of my absence.
- I will regularly update information regarding due dates in the course announcements.

Optional/Required Course Materials (QM Standard 4.6)

Chariton: *Chaereas and Callirhoe*

Achilles Tattius: *Leucippe and Clitophon*

Longus: *Daphnis and Chloe*

Heliodorus: *An Ethiopian Romance*

You do not need to get a specific edition of these works, any will do. You can find free, online editions of all of them on WikiSource or Archive.org. If you find these translations difficult to understand, you may wish to pick up Reardon's *Collected Ancient Greek Novels*. It has more modern translations, and has been in print for a long time so you can find used copies on Amazon or Half.com for about \$15.

Grading Policy (QM Standard 3.2)

The total amount of points to be earned for the course is 1000. These points are earned via two types of assessments including: module assignments and discussions.

- A – 90 - 100
- B – 80 - 89
- C - 70 - 79
- D - 60 - 69
- F - <60

Course Schedule and Weekly Outline

This course is organized in three units:

1. Unit 1 consists of reflection on contemporary society. It has three subsections.
 - 1.1. You will engage in class discussion in which you explain what cultural information is necessary to understand the joke of an article from the satirical website The Onion. You will also do a 150 word response to another student critiquing the argument by addressing an internal

- inconsistency or extending the argument through more information
- 1.2. You will look at the top 10 movies by box office and the movies nominated for Best Picture by the AMPAS. You will discuss what your favorite movies were on each list and come up with a theory of what makes a movie popular vs. critically acclaimed. The initial post will be 300 words. You will do a 150 word response to another student critiquing the argument by addressing an internal inconsistency or extending the argument through more information
 - 1.3. You will define what love is, explain why you picked those particular terms then provide an example that fits the your definition. In a response-post you will take 4 other student definitions and identify overlaps and differences. You will then use these differences to identify differences in how members of the class are viewing the world.
2. Unit 2 consists of analysis of two novels
 - 2.1. You will read “What you need to know to understand these novels” (Blackboard)
 - 2.2. You will read Chariton: Chaereas and Callirhoe
 - 2.3. You will read Achilles Tatius: Leucippe and Clitophon
 - 2.4. You will engage in a discussion set in which you will talk about two pieces of each novel that seem modern, and two which seem weird. You will then hypothesize what these four things says about the respective societies, the ancient and today. You will do a 150 word response to another student critiquing the argument by addressing an internal inconsistency or extending the argument through more information
 - 2.5. You will write a 3 page paper in which you will make an argument about what you can tell about the society that produced these novels based on their popularity. You will address at least two of the following list: what is good about a man, what is good about a woman, what is bad about a man, what is bad about a woman, politics, warfare, rural vs. urban, how a character shows love, what the significance of sex is, what the significance of marriage is, how foreigners are treated, how slaves are treated, the role of the gods.
 3. Unit 3 consists of analysis of two novels
 - 3.1. You will read “What you need to know to understand these novels” (Blackboard)
 - 3.2. You will read Longus: Daphnis and Chloe.
 - 3.3. You will read Heliodorus: An Ethiopian Romance.
 - 3.4. You will engage in a discussion set in which you will go back to the definition of love you came up with in Discussion 1.3, and comment on how well this definition works with the two novels we read in this unit. You will then hypothesize what the similarities may say about the respective societies, the ancient and today. You will do a 150 word response to another student critiquing the argument by addressing an internal inconsistency or extending the argument through more information.
 - 3.5. You will revise your original 3 page paper by adding 2 pages of additional information based on our other two novels. You will also write a half page reflection where you discuss what changed – did your thesis have to change? Were your ideas reinforced? Did your points gain nuance?

Unit	Activity/Assignment	Points	Due Date
1	Discussion 1.1: What’s the Joke?	100	End of week 2
	Discussion 1.2: Oscars vs The People	100	End of week 2

Unit	Activity/Assignment	Points	Due Date
	Discussion 1.3: What is love?	100	End of week 2
2	Discussion 2: What's Weird? What's Modern?	100	End of week 4
	Paper part 1	250	End of week 5
3	Discussion 3: What is Love? (Take 2)	100	End of week 7
	Paper part 2	250	End of week 8