

## COURSE SYLLABUS FORM

American University of Beirut  
Faculty of Arts and Sciences  
Department: Civilization Sequence Program

**Course Number and Title: CVSP 201, Ancient Near East and Classical Civilizations**

### 1. Course Learning Outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, the student can expect to have acquired:

#### a. KNOWLEDGE AND COMPREHENSION:

- the ability to recognize, appreciate, and describe the fundamental elements in the Ancient Mesopotamian, Greek, and Roman worldviews that continue to influence us today; this would include their visions of the basic aspects of our human existence: human nature, socio-political theories, understanding of the physical universe, theories of the divine, and generally the overall meaning of life and the values that these civilizations considered to be crucial in seeking to live life to the fullest.
- more specifically, the student will be better able to understand and describe such varied outlooks on life as tragedy and rationalistic history and philosophy as s/he develops the ability to recognize and interpret ideas in a broad range of primary texts from the Ancient Near East and Classical World (epic, drama, history, philosophy, political theory...).

#### b. SKILLS, COMPETENCIES AND ATTITUDES:

an improved ability:

- to **think critically** about the topics and ideas under study;
- to **analyze** complex original texts in English;
- to **construct** and **discern** valid and invalid arguments;
- to **apply** ideas and methodologies to our contemporary world situation;
- to **evaluate** both by comparison with different views from within the course, as well as with respect to the student's own ideas and perspective;
- to **discuss and debate** divergent views with their fellow students and the instructor, in an atmosphere of **mutual respect** and the **freedom** to pursue and express one's personal point of view;
- to **ground** one's views in the texts by developing scholarly methodology and responsibility;
- in writing skills in English.

### 2. Resources Available to Students

The emphasis in all CVSP core courses (201 – 208) is on developing the student's ability to deal with **primary texts** (written by the authors themselves: see schedule below). Thus no particular resources other than the works under study are a set part of the courses. Individual instructors will help guide the student in the judicious use of secondary sources.

### **3. Grading Criteria**

- a. Written work: **normally**, two ‘midterms’ and a Final Exam are graded on a basis of 20% for each of the midterms and 40% for the Final Exam.
- b. Oral presentations, drop quizzes, class attendance and participation **normally** are the basis for the remaining 20% of the Final Grade.
- c. Teacher discretion: individual instructors may choose to vary the above criteria. In every case, they must announce any diversion from the above clearly and in writing to the students at the outset of the semester.

### **4. Schedule** (as attachment)

Note: the CVSP reserves the right to alter specific readings for any given semester. This is part of the dynamism of ongoing evaluation and improvement of course offerings. Such changes will always be in line with the general stated course objectives as described in # 1 above.

### **5. Course Policy**

Academic integrity and honesty are central components of a student’s education. Ethical conduct maintained in an academic context will be taken eventually into a student’s professional career. Academic honesty is essential to a community of scholars searching for and learning to seek the truth. Anything less than total commitment to honesty undermines the efforts of the entire academic community. Both students and faculty are responsible for ensuring the academic integrity of the University. (*AUB Student Handbook*, p. 33)

For definitions of cheating and plagiarism as well as the consequences for such, see the AUB “Student Code of Conduct” as found in the *Student Handbook* (esp. pp. 85-86 and 88) and on the AUB website. <http://pnp.aub.edu.lb/general/conductcode/158010081.html>

At minimum, anyone caught in violation of academic integrity will receive, as per the “Student Code of Conduct,” a failing grade of forty points for the assignment in question. Should the violation deserve greater punishment, it will be referred to the Dean and the Dean’s Administrative Committee.

CIVILIZATION SEQUENCE PROGRAM CVSP 201: READING AND LECTURE SCHEDULE		
WEEK	LECTURE	ASSIGNMENT
1	<i>Gilgamesh</i>	<i>The Epic of Gilgamesh</i> (George Transl.) pp. 1-22; pp. 39-62; pp. 75-100.
2 & 3	<i>The Odyssey</i>	<i>The Odyssey of Homer</i> (Lattimore Transl.), Book I, pp. 27-38; Book V, pp. 88-101; Book VI, pp. 102-110; Book VIII, lines 445-end; Book IX, pp. 137-151; Book XI, pp. 168-184; Book XII, pp. 185-188 (lines 1-126); Book XIII, pp. 198-209; Book XIV, pp. 210-215, 219-222 (lines 1-190, 360-456); Book XVI, pp. 240-248 (lines 1-320); Book XIX, pp. 282-297; Book XXI, pp. 309-313 (lines 1-142); pp. 316-320 (lines 269-434); Book XXII, pp. 321-334; Book XXIII, pp. 335-344; Book XXIV, pp. 357-359 (lines 453-548)
4	<i>Sophocles</i>	Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i> , in <i>The Three Theban Plays</i> , trans. Robert Fagles (Penguin Classics).
5 & 6	<i>Thucydides</i>	A separate sheet will be distributed
7	<i>Socrates</i>	Plato, <i>The Last Days of Socrates</i> , Intro. Harold Tarrant (Penguin): <i>The Apology</i> , pp. 37-67
8 & 9	<i>Plato</i>	Plato, <i>The Republic</i> (Penguin), 357a-375a; 427d-457b; 471c-487a and 502c-521b.
10	<i>Aristotle</i>	Aristotle, <i>Nicomachean Ethics</i> (Penguin), pp. 63-81, 86-110, 115-141 and 328-338.
11	<i>Lucretius</i>	Lucretius, <i>On The Nature of The Universe</i> , Intro. John Godwin (Penguin), pp. 10-13, 16-18, 38-45, 63-69, 71-72, 77-78, 87-94, 107-108, 158-160.
12 & 13	<i>Virgil</i>	Virgil, <i>The Aeneid: A New Prose Translation</i> , (Penguin), Book I, pp. 3-28; Book II, pp. 30-55; Book IV, pp. 80-104; Book V, p. 122-131 (line 607 to end; Book VI, pp. 140-147, 150-161 (lines 268-478, 560-902); Book VII, pp. 162-183 (to line 641); Book XII, pp. 302-332.

Classes meet three times a week: one common lecture and two discussion sessions.