This course provides us with an opportunity to discuss some of the classic questions that humankind has wrestled with over the millennia, such as - what is our place in the Universe? Is the Universe an impersonal one? What is our relationship to the sacred and profane? How does the individual relate to the community? Is there such a thing as free-will, or are we mere puppets in a divinely scripted play? Why do bad things happen to good people? In examining these questions by reading a selection of works from philosophers, other writers, and natural & social scientists, we will aim not to solve these eternal problems, but to show how our views have changed over time. Chronologically speaking, we will cover the period from ancient times to the 17th Century.

Aims:

1. Broadening of your cultural background and historical awareness
2. Cultivation of multi-disciplinary perspectives
3. Development of frameworks for self-directed learning and working within a pluralist world
4. Improvement of skills in close reading, critical discussion and evaluation & construction of oral and written arguments.

Texts:

The following works are required for purchase and are available at the ASU Bookstore:


Assignments:

- Papers (2) 40%
- In-class Examinations 5%
- Final Examination 10%
- Reading journal 10%
- Participation 35%
  - In-class (20%), Online (10%), Peer-Review (5%)
Electronic Resources:

A class web site is at http://jmlynch.myftp.org/classes/171/ and will feature online required readings. In addition, there is a class mailing list which all students must subscribe to. Please send the message SUBSCRIBE LYNCH-L YOUR NAME to LISTSERV@ASU.EDU to subscribe and use an e-mail address that you check regularly. Students who have not enrolled in the mailing list by Friday 30th August will be removed from the class roster.

Assignments:

In-Class Examinations: (5%)

Assigned readings are subject to unannounced quizzes held at the beginning of class. Quizzes will be graded on a pass/fail basis. A missed quiz counts as a failed quiz, and quizzes cannot be made up. Students who pass every quiz will receive a final quiz grade of 5; those who miss or fail one quiz will receive a 4; two, a 3; three, a 2; and so forth. Approximately five quizzes can be expected.

Reading Journal: (10%)

You must come to each class having read the assignment carefully. Casually skimming will not be helpful to you in discussing these works and will inhibit you from developing strong paper topics. In order to ensure your commitment to discussion, I would like you to keep a journal in which you write a short response to each reading. Your response can take the form of questions or observations about the work and must be at least half of a page in length. The journals will be examined a number of times at random during the semester. Incomplete journals will result in a grade of zero for that examination.

Participation: (35%)

A: The student in this grade range participates extensively in the majority of class and online discussions. She arrives in class each day thoroughly prepared with comments and questions on the assigned reading. At least occasionally she initiates the discussion, without waiting for the instructor to do so; in particular she regularly initiates online discussions. When towards the end of a discussion the instructor asks for further comments, she almost always has some. She does not, however, try to dominate the class. Instead she listens carefully to the remarks made by fellow class members, and responds as readily to these as she does to the instructor’s questions.

B: The student in this grade range participates in most discussions, although not as fully or reliably as the student described above. She gives evidence of having done the reading. At least part of the time she helps the discussion along by raising her own questions. She pays attention to the comments of her peers.

C: The student in this grade range participates only intermittently, perhaps only every second or third class. She is more willing to discuss broad, general questions than to engage in concrete analysis of an assigned text. She is sometimes unprepared, and lacks interest in the ideas of other members of the class.

D: This student seldom contributes to class and online discussions.
Papers: (15 + 25 = 40%)

Papers should be 1250 to 1500 words in length and must present a clearly organized and persuasive argument relating to the material we have read. You must develop an opinion about the work and use evidence from the text to substantiate your claims. As this course aims to have you think critically about primary sources, no secondary material may be utilized in your papers, as these will be judged on the quality of your ideas, the form in which you present those ideas, and your use of textual evidence.

Failure to submit a paper by the due time and date will result in the loss of one grade point for that assignment per day, or part thereof.

The following rule is being implemented:

On finished papers, you can have no more than an average of two of the following errors per page; (i) Spelling, (ii) Proper sentence sense (no words omitted, scrambled, or incomprehensible), (iii) Incorrect tone (this is formal academic writing), (iv) Stylistic errors, and (v) Proper paragraph content & structure (these will be explained early in the semester). Thus, for a five page paper you will be allowed ten individual errors. If you have more than ten errors, you automatically fail the assignment. As soon as you amass eleven errors, I will stop reading your paper. A failure results in zero marks for the assignment. To avoid this, proof read your paper carefully before submitting. Do not rely on "spell check" or "grammar check" on your computer!

A: An A paper is outstanding in every way: in the originality of its thought, in the persuasiveness of its argument, and in the clarity and power of its writing. There are no grammatical and spelling errors, and none of the significant errors that we will discuss early in the semester. The thesis goes beyond what has been discussed in class and everything in the essay relates to that thesis. Each paragraph has a topic sentence. On average, five to ten percent of the papers in any given assignment will deserve an A grade; I will leave you to work out how many that is within a class of 20 students.

B: A B paper is approximately what is to be expected of a student in an honors course. The prose is generally clear and readable, but there are some grammatical problems and some sentences may be awkward. The essay shows serious thought beyond class discussions, and for the most part is well organized.

C: An essay in this range is neither especially bad nor distinctively good, It may have a promising thesis but the argument is unconvincing or confusing. It may show little or no original thought.

D: D papers have serious weaknesses in content and style. There is no clear thesis and no movement beyond class concepts. The writing style is difficult to read.
Policies and Procedures:

**Attendance**: Missing four classes will result in a 50% reduction of your in-class participation score. Missing five classes will result in immediate failure of the course. Missed quizzes cannot be made-up. Notify me in advance if you know you are going to be missing from a class and I will try and accommodate you.

**Student-lead discussions**: All students are required to lead a discussion as part of their participation grade. This will be discussed at the first class.

**Grade Appeals**: Grades can only be contested in writing (not by e-mail) and not before the next class period. Please enclose all relevant material (i.e. the paper as I returned it to you) with your appeal which should engage the comments and criticisms I have made and avoid claiming that because you worked hard, you deserve an ‘A’.

**Plagiarism**: As a student, you are expected not to engage in any form of plagiarism, which according to the ASU Student Code of Conduct, "means representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own." Note, that for an act to count as plagiarism, the representation does not have to be intentional. With the advent of the Internet, it has become easier for students to plagiarize. However, somewhat ironically, it has become easier for instructors to detect this form of dishonesty. The faculty of the Barrett Honors College have initiated the use of Plagiserve.com to detect plagiarism. This service "the most advanced service designed to assist educators in detecting academic dishonesty ... has an extensive local database of 70,000 student term papers, essays and Cliff Notes [and] searches over 1.3 billion pages when checking originality of [a] paper." As such, the service has a high probability of detecting fraud, and we have already caught plagiarists using this. You will be required to submit printed and electronic copies (see below) of all papers. Upon detection of plagiarism, you will automatically fail the assignment, and I will initiate – at my discretion and depending on the extent of the dishonesty – one of the punitive measures outlined below in accordance with ASU policy:

- Assignment of a grade of XE which "denotes failure through academic dishonesty and may not be appealed through the grade appeal process"; or
- Assignment of a failing grade, in the course in which the conduct occurred or in which the offending paper, project, or examination was submitted (grades reduced under this policy may not be appealed through the grade appeals process).

Thus, as a minimum, you will fail this course. Remember, you are a member of the Barrett Honors College. The bottom-line is, DON'T PLAGIARIZE!

**Further Action**: Students are directed to the Barrett Honors College’s Procedure on Student Academic Grievances at http://www.asu.edu/honors/docs/GradeAppeal.doc.

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2. [http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial/integrity.html](http://www.asu.edu/studentlife/judicial/integrity.html)
Paper Topic for Assignment #1

Consider the following definition of mythic systems;

“A mythological [system] consists of a usually complex network of myths that are culturally important, imaginal stories, conveying by means of metaphorical and symbolic diction [and] graphic imagery … the primal, foundational accounts of aspects of the real, experienced world and humankind’s roles and relative statuses within it. Mythologies may convey the political and moral values of a culture and provide systems of interpreting individual experience within a universal perspective.” [William G. Doty, Mythography, 1986, p. 11]

How do the mythic narratives we have studied so far reflect these characteristics? What do the texts reveal about how the authors (and their audience) thought about their world and their place in it? How do the texts reveal similarities and differences between the cultures?

*Your paper should be between 1250 and 1500 words in length, double-spaced with 1” margins. Put your total word count on the last page and do not exceed the maximum.*

Two copies of a draft of the paper should be brought to class on Friday September 20th for peer review. One will be given to me and another to a reviewer. Reviews should be returned to the author on Monday and the final version is to be submitted to me in class on the 27th. When submitting your paper, give me the final version and the review as returned to you.

An electronic version of the paper should be submitted by 3pm on Friday September 27th. Save a text copy of your paper (Use Save As and select type as "Plain Text") as INITIALS-SURNAME.txt (e.g. "jm-lynch.txt"). Browse to http://jmlynch.myftp.org/papers/lynch2.php and use the Browse button to select the file you have created. Hit "Send File" to submit a copy to my server.

*The Human Event Writing Center*

The Barrett Honors College is piloting a new component of Honors 171 and 172: The Human Event Writing Center. Directed by BHC faculty and staffed by BHC writing tutors who themselves have successfully completed both Hon 171 and 172, the HEWC will offer small group workshops and individual tutoring on writing academic essays for your Hon 171 and 172 courses. Its goal is to help you improve your lifelong writing and critical thinking skills, so we hope you will take full advantages of its services. Beginning September 9th, tutors will be available in Best-C 114B for 25 minute appointments Monday-Thursday from 1:00-5:00 p.m. and Friday from 10:00 a.m. -3:30 p.m. Evening appointments in the adjacent Honors College Computing Lab are available by appointment only T-Th evenings. Go to http://www.public.asu.edu/~jacquies/hewc.html for updated tutoring and workshop schedules, appointment information, academic background on our staff, and internet links related to academic essay writing.
Schedule of Classes:

Week 1

- M 8/26: Introduction to the course
- W 8/28: Guidelines for participation and paper writing
- F 8/30: Enuma Elish (Online)

Week 2

- M 9/2: No class due to Labor Day
- W 9/4: Genesis (Norton 51-58)
- F 9/6: Job (Norton 71-88)

Week 3

- M 9/9: Gilgamesh (Norton, 18-47)
- W 9/11: Homer: Iliad (Norton 104-120)
- F 9/13: Debate – The Joys of Monotheism

Week 4

- M 9/16: Plato: Republic (Online)
- W 9/18: Plato: Republic (Online)
- F 9/20: Peer Review of Paper #1

Week 5

- M 9/23: Plato: Euthyphro (Plato, 7-27)
- F 9/27: Plato: Crito (76-96)

Week 6

- M 9/30: Plato Phaedo (109-123, 182-185)
- W 10/2: Thucydides: History of the Peloponnesian War (Online)
- F 10/4: Aristotle: Poetics (Norton 747-750 & Online)

Week 7

- M 10/7: Sophocles: Oedipus Rex (Norton, 599-640)
- F 10/11: Aristotle: Ethics [Online, Book X]

Week 8

- W 10/16: St Augustine: Confessions (Norton 1005-1035)
- F 10/18: St Thomas Aquinas: Summa Theologica (Online)

Week 9

- MWF: Cicero: On the Nature of the Gods (One part per day)
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<th>Week 10</th>
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<tr>
<td>M 10/28</td>
<td>Islam: <em>The Qu’ran</em> (Online)</td>
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<td>W 10/30</td>
<td>Taoism: <em>Tao Te Ching</em> (Online)</td>
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<td>F 11/1</td>
<td>Buddhism (Online)</td>
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<th>Week 11</th>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/4</td>
<td>Hinduism: <em>Bhagavad Gita</em> (Online)</td>
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<tr>
<td>WF</td>
<td><em>No class – instructor at conference.</em></td>
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<td><em>Peer Review of Paper 2 on Wednesday; return by Friday.</em></td>
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<th>Week 12</th>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/11</td>
<td><em>No class due to Veterans Day</em></td>
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<td>W 11/13</td>
<td>Erasmus: <em>In Praise of Folly</em> [Norton, 1682-1705]</td>
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<td>F 11/15</td>
<td>Machiavelli: <em>The Prince</em> [Norton, 1709 - 1722]</td>
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<td><em>Paper #2 due in class</em></td>
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<th>Week 13</th>
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<td>M 11/18</td>
<td>Dante: <em>Inferno</em> [Norton 1303-1404; Canto I-XI]</td>
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<td>W 11/20</td>
<td>Dante: <em>Inferno</em> [Canto XII-XXII]</td>
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<td>F 11/22</td>
<td>Dante: <em>Inferno</em> [Canto XXII-XXXIV]</td>
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<th>Week 14</th>
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<tr>
<td>M 11/25</td>
<td>Shakespeare: <em>King Lear</em> [Act I – II]</td>
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<tr>
<td>W 11/27</td>
<td>Shakespeare: <em>King Lear</em> [Act III – V]</td>
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<td>F 11/29</td>
<td><em>No class due to Thanksgiving</em></td>
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<th>Week 15</th>
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<td>M 12/2</td>
<td>Montaigne: <em>Of Cannibals</em> [Norton 1933 - 1942]</td>
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<td>W 12/4</td>
<td>Milton: <em>Paradise Lost</em> [Norton 2210 - 2220; Book 8] + Earlier Arguments (Online)</td>
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<td>F 12/6</td>
<td>Milton: <em>Paradise Lost</em> [Norton 2220 - 2245; Book 9]</td>
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<th>Week 16</th>
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<td>M 12/9</td>
<td><em>Final Examination</em></td>
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