

Vesalius College

Course description

Course title: The Epic

Course code: LIT 244E

Teacher responsible: Patricia Costa, Ph. D., Associate Professor of Literature Studies at Vesalius College

Course description: The course LGS 244/344 focuses on the epic as a major genre in the Western literary tradition. Class readings begin with *Gilgamesh* (circa 2000 BC) and end with John Milton's seventeenth-century epic, *Paradise Lost*. Attention focuses on understanding individual works while developing a critical sense of epic conventions and themes, and of how the genre evolved over time and in different cultural contexts until its eventual exhaustion.

Course objectives: After completing this course successfully, the student will

- gain familiarity with a number of major literary works in the epic tradition;
- be able to define the epic and trace its evolution in Western literature from ancient times until the eighteenth century;
- develop further the skills and techniques of textual analysis presented at the 100-level ;
- refine his/her analytical and critical writing skills in a variety of assignments;
- enlarge his/her critical vocabulary for advanced literary studies;
- acquire intermediate through advanced skills in accessing and analyzing critical literary reference materials in academic libraries and electronic media;
- practice oral presentation skills.

Grade weighting scheme:

Written Assignments-----	Subtotal = 60%
Response journal and participation	20%
Oral presentation	20%
Research Paper *	20%
*10-12 pages including bibliography, with writing conference.	

Examinations-----	Subtotal = 40%
Mid-term examination	20%
Final examination	20%
TOTAL-----	= 100%

Used course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:

Gibaldi, Joseph. MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers. 6th ed.
New York: The Modern Language Association of America, 2003.

The Norton Anthology of World Masterpieces. 7th Ed. Ed. Sarah Lawall.
Vol. I. New York : W.W. Norton & Company, 1999.

The LIT 244 Epic Reader (to be purchased in class)