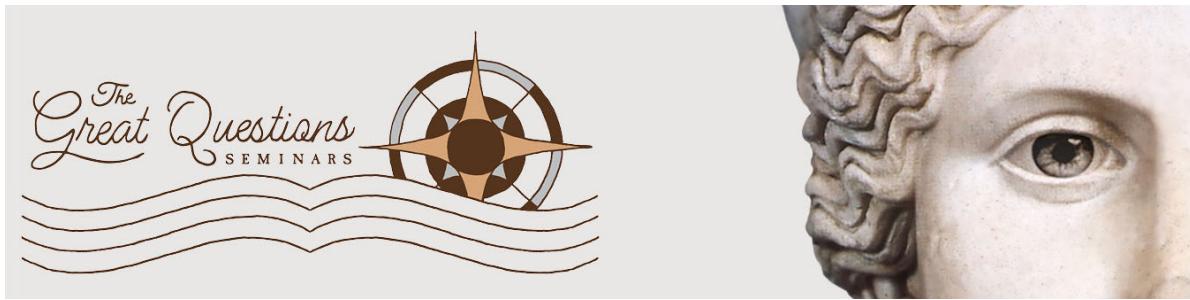


## Huma 1301 Great Questions Seminar



### Syllabus

The Great Questions Seminar is an introduction to the great questions of humankind.

This seminar is your initiation into the academic life of the college and your invitation to a seat at the table, centuries-long and shared by college and university students from all over the world.

This course welcomes you as a member of this grand community of learners through an interdisciplinary study of representative samples of literature, art, mathematics, and music of various periods and cultures from prehistory to the Renaissance. It is the study of the interrelationships among the arts and how philosophies emphasize an understanding of human nature and the values of human life.

This is a discussion-based class. Unlike a lecture-based class where students listen to the professor talk, take notes and have an opportunity to ask questions, this discussion-based class puts you in the driver's seat. In this class your professor's job is to help direct and encourage class discussion, not to lecture. In this classroom you are responsible for your own learning; your professor is here to help. You should view your professor in this class as a partner on this exciting academic journey. We will be learning and growing together.

This course is divided into three units:

- Unit 1: Adversity, Struggle and Joy
- Unit 2: The Human Search for Truth, Part 1 (Creation and Devotion)
- Unit 3: The Human Search for Truth, Part 2 (Passion)

*Welcome to the life of great questions and higher education;  
your place at the table is ready.*

Please keep up with the Great Questions at Austin Community College

Online at [www.austincc.edu/thegreatquestions](http://www.austincc.edu/thegreatquestions)

Instagram (<https://instagram.com/thegreatquestions/>)

## **Huma 1301 Great Questions Seminar**

### **Course Rationale**

The study of the humanities from a comparative and interdisciplinary perspective affords the student the opportunity not only to acquire a deeper appreciation of particular works of art but also to gain a larger perspective on the work of art as an expression of the human spirit in a particular time and place.

### **Course Objectives/Outcomes**

As a result of having taken this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify a variety of significant works of art from various times and places in human history.
2. Analyze works of art within their cultural context.
3. Evaluate the relationship between the arts and human values.

As a result of having taken this course, students will be able to:

1. Set goals to support personal motivation and achievement.
2. Adopt a growth mindset toward personal education and career goals which fosters hard work, grit, a desire for continual improvements, and persistence in the face of failure.
3. Distinguish between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation and examine how intrinsic motivation encourages lifelong learning.
4. Apply principles of metacognition to increase self-awareness of the learning process and personal strengths and weaknesses as a learner.
5. Enhance emotional intelligence, thereby improving interpersonal, leadership, and self-management skills.

### **General Education Objectives/Outcomes**

As a result of having taken this course, students will be able to:

1. Communication Skills: Develop, interpret, and express ideas and information through written, oral and visual communication that is adapted to purpose, structure, audience, and medium.
2. Critical Thinking Skills: Gather, analyze, synthesize, evaluate and apply information for the purposes of innovation, inquiry, and creative thinking.
3. Personal Responsibility: Identify and apply ethical principles and practices to decision-making by connecting choices, actions and consequences.
4. Social Responsibility (Civic and Cultural Awareness): Analyze differences and commonalities among peoples, ideas, aesthetic traditions, and cultural practices to include intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.

## Huma 1301 Great Questions Seminar

### Required Readings

A note on translations: The editions and ISBNs listed below are strongly recommended. The course materials and corresponding assignment instructions are designed to align with the editions listed as “required” by the ACC bookstore. If you use a different edition from any of these, you should expect to have to adjust your approach to match the syllabus expectations.

#### **Homer's Odyssey**

**Translated by: Emily Wilson**

**Publisher: Norton**

**ISBN: 9780393356250**

The Odyssey is Homer’s epic poem of Odysseus’ journey home after 10 years of war in Troy. We will follow along on Odysseus' epic journey, all the while analyzing his ultimate goal, the factors that motivate him to undertake such a journey, and the ways in which he is able to keep going even in the face of temptations and obstacles. Throughout our discussions, you will be encouraged to reflect on your own educational journey in a similar light. This story has inspired men and women for the past 3,000 years to set high goals for themselves and develop a plan to achieve them. It has helped countless people see that even when one suffers detours and setbacks like Odysseus, reaching one’s goals is still possible.

#### **Plato’s Meno**

**Translated by: GMA Grube**

**Publisher: Hackett**

**ISBN: 9780915144242**

Plato’s Meno deals with the timeless struggle of how to learn something new. Sometimes people think that if they don’t understand something right away that it is just not in them to learn it.

They may say something like, “I’m not a math person” or “I’m not smart enough” and then give up on trying. In the Meno, Socrates confronts a boy who has a similar reaction when working on a difficult mathematical problem and gets him to overcome his false assumption that he cannot learn by guiding him through the process of solving it. After a discussion with Socrates, the boy experiences a shift in mindset from assuming he is not intelligent enough to solve the problem to realizing the solution was in him all along, and that by engaging with the problem and persisting in the face of uncertainty he could indeed unlock the knowledge needed to find the solution.

Throughout the text, Plato challenges us to think about our thinking. How do we know when we know something? How do we know when we still need to do more work before we can know it? In the Meno, Socrates teaches that all real learning begins when we recognize that we don’t know.

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### Euclid's Elements

**Euclid's Elements Book One with Questions**

**By Dana Densmore**

**Publisher: Green Cat Press**

**ISBN: 9781888009460**

Euclid's text is a model for how to think clearly and logically. Through the study and demonstration of his geometrical proofs, we will learn the structure of logical arguments and what it means to prove something. This text will help us apply principles of metacognition to our studies by introducing us to the experience of what it is like to really know something. After you understand an entire proof of Euclid's, you will feel what it is like to really know that something is true. His proofs provide a window onto the beauty of truth and will inspire us to want to open it further. Studying this text will provide you with a benchmark by which you can judge how well you know other things. You should ask yourself about future topics of study, "is this as clear to me as a Euclid proof?" Applying this question is a great way to gauge how well you understand a thing.

### The Heart of Chinese Poetry: Fifty-Seven of the Best Traditional Chinese Poems in a Dual-Language Edition

**Translated and Edited by Greg Whincup**

**Publisher: Anchor; First Edition edition (September 16, 1987)**

**ISBN: 038523967X**

These selections of Chinese poems represent over 1,000 years of poetic tradition in China. According to Prof. Greg Whincup, "Poetry is the heart of Chinese culture. Inasmuch as we are all members of one human race, Chinese culture is our culture. The heart of Chinese poetry beats in us, too." Through these readings, you will learn not just about Chinese poetry but also about the culture, history and language of China, whose soul is poetry.

### **Additional Required Readings**

Additional required selected readings for Unit 2 on Creation and Devotion and Unit 3 on Passion are available on Blackboard. They are in .pdf format.

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### **Course Work**

#### **Participation:**

This course is all about participation. Thoughtful and consistent participation is a very important part of the class. Each student is expected to be an active participant. Your presence is requested and required. This is the single most important component of the course. The class does not work unless each student is an active participant in the course. If you were not usually the one to talk in class discussion in the past, don't worry, this is a supportive group where you will get an opportunity to practice participating. Participation is also 30% of your course grade.

#### **Study Questions for Class Discussion:**

Each reading assignment will include several study questions to help direct your reading of the text. Careful thinking about the study questions while you are reading and before coming to class will help you form your thoughts and make class conversation easy and enjoyable.

#### **Study Question Essay:**

You must complete three Formal Study Question Assignments on **\*\*starred\*\*** study questions over the duration of the semester. See Course Calendar for due dates. Assignments are submitted via Blackboard. Assignments must be between 450-500 words, *exclusive of quotations*. You should select a passage from the assigned reading that you think addresses one of the starred (\*\*\*) study questions.

Then, you should reproduce this passage, paraphrase it in your own words and explain why that passage addressed the study question. Finally, answer any additional parts of the questions. So, your assignment should take the following form:

1. A quotation from the assigned reading, which helps answer the study question.  
*(please also list chapter, page and/or line number)*
2. A paraphrase, in your own words, of the quotation you selected
3. An explanation of why that passage in the text addresses the study question.
4. Your response to the personal reflection portion of the study question.

Please review the grading rubric on Blackboard to see how your faculty leaders will grade your assignment. This should be used to help guide your drafting of the assignment.

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### **Making Connections:**

Throughout this semester, each student will complete three “Making Connection” assignments in preparation for course meetings and discussions. In preparation for “Making Connections” days you will (1) explore a list of great works that humans have created, (2) select a work that interests you, and (3) conduct research to learn about the work. On “Making Connections” days, you will have an opportunity to share what you have learned with your classmates, and learn about what they have discovered.

These assignments are designed to encourage students to explore works of cultural significance and broaden their cultural and historical knowledge base.

### **Faculty Meetings:**

Students will meet privately with their professor twice each semester. Remember, your faculty leaders are not just here to guide you in this course, but to help you understand how to navigate ACC as well. They will help introduce you to ACC resources and make sure you have the support you need to be successful.

One meeting will take place in the first 3 weeks of the semester and another in the second half of the semester. Each meeting will last between 10-15 minutes.

### **Student Success Journal:**

Your journal entries are viewable by you and your professor - feel free to ask for advice and guidance about anything related to your first semester at ACC. You will create journal entries throughout the semester, so consider this a conversation with your professor and yourself. These are intended to be reflective and are not formal writing assignments. Use the prompts provided as a starting point, and make sure you write at least a good paragraph or two (at least 200 words).

### **Your Grade**

- Class Participation/Discussions — 30%
- 3 Study Question Assignments — 30%
- 3 Making Connections — 30 %
- 12 Journal Posts — 10%

**Scale:**      100 - 90 = A  
                  89 - 80 = B  
                  79 - 70 = C  
                  69 - 60 = D  
                  below 60 = F

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### **Class Policies**

#### **NOTE:**

In addition to the common policies outlined below, your professor may have additional policies or amendments that will be provided on Blackboard. Please be sure to review those as well, and if you have any questions, to check with them concerning class policies.

#### **Return of Work:**

The Philosophy, Religion, and Humanities department expects its professors to return work to students in a timely manner. On formal, graded work (formal study question essays and making connections presentations) completed on time, you should expect to see your grades and any feedback a *maximum* of three weeks after the due date of date of presentation or submission.

#### **Blackboard:**

Blackboard is the portal for which you will access course information. Grades, lectures, assignments, discussions, readings, and journals are all accessed through Blackboard.

If you do not already know how to access Blackboard, begin with the student login instructions at:  
<http://itdl.austincc.edu/blackboard/stlogin.htm> .

#### **Withdrawal:**

I will not withdraw you from the course. If you wish to drop the course for whatever reason, you must take action. Please refer to the ACC Website for current withdraw and drop dates.

<https://www.austincc.edu/students/calendars/academic-calendar>

The last day to withdraw is APRIL 26, 2021 for 16 and 14 week sections.

If you do not withdraw by that date you will not be able to drop the course. Please note that per state law, students may not withdraw (receive a W) from more than six courses during their undergraduate college career.

It is the responsibility of each student to ensure that his or her name is removed from the roll should he or she decides to withdraw from the class. The instructor does, however, reserve the right to drop a student should he or she feel it is necessary. If a student decides to withdraw, he or she should also verify that the withdrawal is submitted before the Final Withdrawal Date. The student is also strongly encouraged to retain their copy of the withdrawal form for their records. Students who enroll for the third or subsequent time in a course taken since Fall, 2002, may be charged a higher tuition rate, for that course. State law permits students to withdraw from no more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career at Texas public colleges or universities. With certain exceptions, all course withdrawals automatically count towards this limit. Details regarding this policy can be found in the ACC college catalog.

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### **Incomplete Grades:**

An instructor may award a grade of I (Incomplete) if a student was unable to complete all of the objectives for the passing grade in a course. An I (Incomplete) cannot be carried beyond the established date in the following semester. The completion date is determined by the instructor but may not be later than the final withdrawal deadline in the subsequent semester. The department chair will approve change from I to a performance grade (A, B, C, D, or F) for the course before deadline. Consideration should be given to course load, job, and family obligations when carrying an I (Incomplete) into a new semester for completion. An Incomplete that is not resolved by the deadline will automatically be converted to an F. For complete details please refer the ACC Website.

### **Scholastic Dishonesty:**

A student attending ACC assumes responsibility for conduct compatible with the mission of the college as an educational institution. Students have the responsibility to submit coursework that is the result of their own thought, research, or self-expression. Students must follow all instructions given by faculty or designated college representatives when taking examinations, placement assessments, tests, quizzes, and evaluations. Actions constituting scholastic dishonesty include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, collusion, and falsifying documents. Penalties for scholastic dishonesty will depend upon the nature of the violation and may range from lowering a grade on one assignment to an "F" in the course and/or expulsion from the college. See the Student Standards of Conduct and Disciplinary Process in the Student Handbook.

Plagiarism refers to taking work (writing, ideas, or concepts) that belong to someone else and presenting them as your own. In the academic community, plagiarism is a profoundly serious matter. With the growth of the Web and increase in the amount of material available online, plagiarism has increased dramatically at colleges and universities across the U.S. All written assignments will be run through the plagiarism prevention program Safe Assignment. Please run your written work through once to catch errors in citing before the due date. This ensures everyone has a fair chance to fix common mistakes without penalty. Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class and will result in a zero for the assignment.

*With regards to the study questions, you will not need to do any research for this assignment outside of your own brain. As soon as you find yourself looking online for help with a study question, know that you are going in the wrong direction.*

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### **Academic Freedom:**

Students have the right to believe whatever they happen to believe and, within the appropriate constraints that follow from the organization of a course and its class meetings, to express those beliefs. Grades will never be based on the beliefs that a student maintains, but only on the quality of the philosophical work performed by a student in conjunction with the course.

Each student is strongly encouraged to participate. In any class that includes discussion and critical thinking, there are bound to be many differing viewpoints. These differences enhance the learning experience and create an atmosphere where students and instructors alike will be encouraged to think and learn. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with the instructor. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in all discussions. On sensitive and volatile topics, students may sometimes disagree not only with each other but also with the instructor. It is expected that faculty and students will respect the views of others when expressed in classroom situations. Therefore, be assured that students' grades will not be adversely affected by any beliefs or ideas expressed in class or in assignments.

Each person has the right to express his or her opinion. As a colleague of mine so aptly stated, "Our Bill of Rights not only guarantees us the right to express our opinions but also provides us the opportunity to learn from our fellow citizens as they express their own."

### **Student And Instructional Services:**

ACC strives to provide exemplary support to its students and offers a broad variety of opportunities and services. Information on these services and support systems is available here. Links to many student services and other information can be found at Current Students. ACC Learning Labs provide free tutoring services to all ACC students currently enrolled in the course to be tutored. The tutor schedule for each Learning Lab may be found here.

<http://www.austincc.edu/support-and-services/tutoring-and-academic-help/tutoring-services-and-schedules>

For help setting up your ACCeID, ACC Gmail, or ACC Blackboard, see a Learning Lab Technician at any ACC Learning Lab.

<https://www.austincc.edu/students/learning-lab>

### **Student Rights and Responsibilities:**

Students at the college have the rights accorded by the U.S. Constitution to freedom of speech, peaceful assembly, petition, and association. These rights carry with them the responsibility to accord the same rights to others in the college community and not to interfere with or disrupt the educational process. Opportunity for students to examine and question pertinent data and assumptions of a given discipline, guided by the evidence of scholarly research, is appropriate in a learning environment. This concept is accompanied by an equally demanding concept of responsibility on the part of the student. As willing partners in learning, students must comply with college rules and procedures.

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### **Use of ACC Email:**

All College e-mail communication to students will be sent solely to the student's ACCmail account, with the expectation that such communications will be read in a timely fashion. ACC will send important information and will notify you of any college related emergencies using this account. Students should only expect to receive email communication from their instructor using this account. Likewise, students should use their ACCmail account when communicating with instructors and staff. Instructions for activating an ACCmail account:

<http://www.austincc.edu/accmail/activation-and-login-assistance>

### **Email & Communication:**

I will communicate via email to your official ACC address only. In accordance with the Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA), NO GRADING information will be sent via email. You may check your grade status via Blackboard.

### **Problem Resolution:**

If you are having a problem related to this course or related to me as your professor your first step generally should be to speak with me. If I cannot resolve the problem or satisfy your concern, or, if for some reason you would prefer not to address the issue with me, you can appeal to the Chair of the Department for help.

Please contact the Department Chair of Philosophy, Religion and Humanities:

**Grant H. Potts, PhD**

**Office: Highland Campus New Building 4000, upstairs 4.2310.36 -please schedule an appointment as the campus is still under COVID 19 operating parameters.**

**Office Phone #: 512-233-7153**

**Email: [gpotts@austincc.edu](mailto:gpotts@austincc.edu)**



# Course Calendar & Reading Schedule

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Due Sunday
1 1/19- 1/24	Orientation Quiz Introduction Post	<b>Unit One: Struggle</b> Read: Homer's Odyssey: Book 1 Discuss: Book 1 Study Questions	Journal #1
2 1/25 -1/31	Read: Homer's Odyssey: Books 2- 4  Discuss: Books 2-4 Study Questions	Read: Homer's Odyssey: Books 5- 8  Discuss: Books 5-8 Study Questions	Journal #2
3 2/1-2/7	Read: Homer's Odyssey: Books 9-12  Discuss: Books 9-12 Study Questions	Read: Homer's Odyssey: Books 13-18  Discuss: Books 13-18 Study Questions	Journal #3  Making Connections Topic Selection Due
4 2/8-2/14	Read: Homer's Odyssey: Books 19-24  Discuss: Books 19-24 Study Questions	Discuss: Concluding Thoughts	Study Question Essay #1
5 2/15-2/21	<b>Making Connections Presentation</b> <b>1 Due</b>  Discuss: Making Connections 1 Presentations	Discuss: Making Connections 1 Presentations	Journal #4
6 2/22-2/28	<b>Unit Two: Truth and Creation</b> Read: Plato's Meno 70a- 84c  Discuss: Meno 70a- 84c	Read: Plato's Meno 84c-end  Discuss: Meno 84-end	Journal #5



# Course Calendar & Reading Schedule

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Due Sunday
7 3/1-3/7	Read: Euclid, Book I (Definitions, Postulates and Common Notions)  Discuss: Euclid, Book I (Definitions, Postulates and Common Notions)	Demonstrate: Euclid Propositions 1-5	Journal #6
8 3/8-3/14	Demonstrate: Euclid Propositions 8, 13, 15, 29, 32	Demonstrate: Euclid Propositions, 35, 36, 41 and 47	Journal #7  Making Connections Topic Selection Due
Spring Break 3/15- 3/21	College Closed	College Closed	
9 3/22-3/28	Read: Creation Selections  Discuss: Quran Genesis 1, Chapters 1-4	Discuss: Popol Vuh Rig Vega	Journal #8  Study Question Essay #2
10 3/29-4/4	Making Connections Presentation 2 Due  Discuss: Making Connections 2 Presentations	Discuss: Making Connections 2 Presentations	Journal #9
11 4/5-4/11	<b>Unit Three: Devotion and Passion</b>  Read: Devotion Selections  Discuss: Psalm 14,23,51 Matthew 5-7	Discuss: Devotion Kabir St. John of the Cross Hildegard	Journal #10



# Course Calendar & Reading Schedule

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Due Sunday
12 4/12- 4/18	Read: Passion Selections Sappho Petrarch	Discuss: Sappho (Your poetry assignment)	Journal #11
13 4/19- 4/25	Read: Passion Selections  Discuss: Rumi	Discuss: Mirabai Nammalvar	Making Connections Topic Selection Due
14 4/26- 5/2	Read: Chinese Poetry 1-9, 12-16, 19 and 21  Discuss: Chinese Poetry	Discuss: Chinese Poetry 25, 29, 31, 33, 35-41 and 48-52.	Study Question Essay #3
15 5/3- 5/9	Chinese Poetry (Your Chinese Poem exercise)	Concluding Thoughts	Journal #12  <b>Making Connections 3 Presentations Due</b>
16 5/10 – 5/16	Discuss: Making Connections Presentations	Discuss: Making Connections Presentations	Assessment Essay