



HUMA 1301: The Great Questions Seminar  
76390-008

TTh 12pm - 1:20pm  
HLC 2217

*Your Faculty Leader*

Theodore (Ted) Hadzi-Antich Jr.  
Department Chair/Associate Professor, Government

thadzian@austincc.edu  
512-223-7148

Office Hours

TTh 1:30pm - 5pm  
MW by appointment

HLC 4000, room 4.2310.51



## Schedule of Readings

Week	Tuesday	Thursday	Due by Friday
1	1/22 Welcome to College! Course Syllabus and Overview	1/24 <u>Unit 1:</u> <u>Adversity, Struggle, and Joy</u> Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Book 1	1/25 Pre Course Assessment
2	1/29 Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Books 2- 4	1/31 Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Book 5- 8	2/1 Journal #1
3	2/5 Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Books 9-12	2/7 Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Books 13-18	2/8 Journal #2
4	2/12 Read: Homer's <i>Odyssey</i> : Books 19-24	2/14 <u>Unit 2: The Mathematical</u> <u>Beings: (Critical and</u> <u>Quantitative Thinking)</u> Read: Plato's <u>Meno</u> 70a- 84c	2/15 Study Question #1
5	2/19 Read: Plato's <u>Meno</u> 84c-End	2/21 Read: Euclid, Book I (Definitions, Postulates and Common Notions)	2/22 Journal #3
6	2/26 Euclid, Book I Propositions 1-4	2/28 Sappho Selections	2/29 Journal #4
7	3/5 Euclid, Book I Propositions 5- 8 and 11	3/7 Euclid, Book I Propositions 13-15, 26, 27	3/8 Journal #5
8	3/12 Euclid, Book I Propositions 28, 29, 31, 32, 34	3/14 Classical Chinese Poetry	3/15 Journal #6



9	3/18 Spring Break	3/20 Spring Break	3/22
10	3/26 The Bible and St. John of The Cross: Revelation and Verse	3/28 Euclid, Book I Propositions 35, 36, 37, 38, 41	3/29 Journal #7
11	4/2 The Qur'an and Rumi: Revelation and Verse	4/4 Euclid, Book I Proposition 46 and 47	4/5 Study Question #2
12	4/9 Bhakti Poetry	4/11 <u>Unit 3: Civic Life</u> <i>Prince</i> : Dedicatory Letter Chapter 4	4/12 Journal #8
13	4/16 <i>Prince</i> : Chapters 5-11	4/18 <i>Prince</i> : Chapters 12-14	4/19 Journal #9
14	4/23 <i>Prince</i> : Chapters 15-19	4/25 <i>Prince</i> : Chapters 20-26 and Letter to Francesco Vettori	4/26 Journal #10
15	4/30 Making Connections	5/2 Making Connections	5/3 Study Question #3
16	5/7 Making Connections	5/9 Making Connections and Conclusion	5/10 Post Course Assessment

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# HUMA 1301: The 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.

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

You can follow Great Questions on:

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

Facebook (<https://www.facebook.com/thegreatquestions>)

### **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. Demonstrate an appreciation of art in its different forms (visual, aural, etc.) throughout history.
2. Demonstrate a general knowledge of assigned time periods and their major artistic and cultural accomplishments.
3. Demonstrate an understanding of how context affects the text (form) and subtext (meaning) of human artistic creations.
4. Form a personal explanation of why (or whether) the study of Humanities is necessary for education and societal growth.

### **Discipline 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.

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2. Evaluate works of art and associate them with their cultural context.
3. Analyze the relationship between the arts and human values.

### **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.

### **Student Success Learning Outcomes**

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.

### **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.

Thanks to a generous grant from The Teagle Foundation, **The ACC Library has many editions of the required texts.** If you are having difficulty locating or cannot afford to purchase these texts, please bring this syllabus with you to your ACC campus library where a librarian can help you locate these texts, which you can borrow for free.

#### **Homer’s Odyssey**

**Translated by: Emily Wilson**

**Publisher: Norton**

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**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.

### **Euclid's Elements**

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

**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

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thing.

### **Poetry, Revelation, Mathematics and Love: The Human Search for Truth**

This packet containing selections from Sappho, classical Chinese poetry, The Bible, St. John of The Cross, The Qur'an, Rumi and Bhakti poets is available to you free of charge and will be distributed on the first day of class as a packet.

**Machiavelli's The Prince**  
**Translated By: Harvey C. Mansfield**  
**Edition: 2nd 98**  
**Publisher: University of Chicago Press**  
**ISBN: 9780226500447**

For many years Old Nick was an English phrase that was used to refer to the devil. This phrase is a reference to Niccolo Machiavelli, Old Niccolo. In The Prince, Machiavelli points the way toward a social and moral revolution that emphasizes and utilizes human being's appetites and fears. His work raises questions about our deepest human nature. Through the study of this work, we will address enduring questions related to our social and political lives while following the twists and turns of Machiavelli's elaboration on historical events.

### **Assessments**

#### **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 each class. Your presence is requested and required. Participation is also 30% of your course grade.

Each student will come to each class with their thoughts written out about at least one study question. These assignments should be 250 words or less in order to facilitate classroom discussion.

#### **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 Assignment:**

You must complete three Study Question Assignments on **\*\*starred\*\*** study questions. 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:



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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.

### **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 also 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.

### **How is it Going? Reflection 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/Attendance — 30%  
3 Study Question Assignments — 10% each or 30% total  
3 Making Connections — 10% each 30 % total  
10 Journal Posts — 1% each or 10% total

100 - 90 A

89 - 80 B

79 – 70 C

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69 – 60 D  
below 60 F

### Class Policies

#### **Attendance:**

You are expected to attend each class and to arrive on time. A large portion of your grade is based upon participation, so you really need to be here.

Each student will come to each class with their thoughts written out about at least one study question -- 250 words or less. These may be handwritten or typed.

A student at Austin Community College is expected to attend classes in order to progress satisfactorily toward completion of course objectives. Because objectives can vary from department to department and from course to course, the instructor shall inform the student in writing of specific course policies and objectives at the initial class meeting. A student who is not in compliance with course policies or meeting course objectives in the syllabus may be withdrawn from the course at the discretion of the instructor. I am required to report attendance after the first two weeks of class. If you have not attended class you will be reported as not having attended. This may affect your financial aid in the future.

#### **Lateness:**

Since a large portion of your grade in this class involves class participation you must arrive on time to class prepared to discuss the material.

#### **Cell Phones:**

Cell phone use in class is strictly prohibited.

#### **Personal Computers:**

Please do not bring a computer to class unless you have a special need for one (in which case you should explain that need to your professor on the first day of class).

#### **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 withdrawal is April 29, 2019. If you do not withdrawal 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

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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.

### **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 very 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.

### **Academic Freedom**

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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.](#) For help setting up your ACCeID, ACC Gmail, or ACC Blackboard, see a Learning Lab Technician at any [ACC 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.

### **Safety Statement:**

Austin Community College is committed to providing a safe and healthy environment for study and work. You are expected to learn and comply with [ACC environmental, health and safety procedures and agree to follow ACC safety policies](#). Additional information on these can be found at . Because some health and safety circumstances are beyond our control, we ask that you become familiar with the Emergency Procedures poster and Campus Safety Plan map in each classroom. Additional information about emergency procedures and how to sign up for ACC Emergency Alerts to be notified in the event of a serious emergency can be found at.

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Please note, you are expected to conduct yourself professionally with respect and courtesy to all. Anyone who thoughtlessly or intentionally jeopardizes the health or safety of another individual will be immediately dismissed from the day's activity, may be withdrawn from the class, and/or barred from attending future activities.

### **Concealed Handgun Policy:**

The Austin Community College District concealed handgun policy ensures compliance with Section 411.2031 of the Texas Government Code (also known as the [Campus Carry Law](#)), while maintaining ACC's commitment to provide a safe environment for its students, faculty, staff, and visitors.

Beginning August 1, 2017, individuals who are licensed to carry (LTC) may do so on campus premises except in locations and at activities prohibited by state or federal law, or the college's concealed handgun policy.

**It is the responsibility of license holders to conceal their handguns at all times.** Persons who see a handgun on campus are asked to contact the ACC Police Department by dialing 222 from a campus phone or 512-223-7999.

*Refer to the concealed handgun policy online at <http://www.austincc.edu/campus-carry>*

### **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.](#)

### **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**

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Office: Highland Campus New Building 4000, upstairs 4.2310.36

Office Phone #: 512-233-7153

Email: gpotts@austincc.edu

### Assignments/Assessments

#### Study Questions for Class Discussions and Written Assignments

*A study question preceded by \*\* may be used for a study questions writing assignment. See Blackboard for details and Calendar for due dates.*

#### The Odyssey

##### Books 1-4

1. \*\* “Sing in me, Muse, and through me tell the story of that man skilled in all the ways of contending”

This is a book about a man who has many skills and who is able to adapt in difficult situations. Odysseus is a versatile man. What are the virtues of versatility in difficult pursuits? What goals do you have that require versatility? As we read this text, keep an eye out for the ways in which Odysseus demonstrates his versatility.

2. What significance may there be in beginning the epic with attention to the absence of Odysseus, and why does it begin close to the end of that absence? (Stanford)
3. Throughout this book mortals often blame the gods for their difficult situations. Is this a misunderstanding among mortals about the place of gods in their lives?
4. Why does Athena not reveal where Odysseus really is when she first meets Telemachus? She knows!
5. What may Penelope’s suitors represent?
6. What is a father? What is a son? What does it mean to be a son of one whom you’ve never met? To be that one’s father?
7. \*\* How may the specter of Odysseus’ greatness prevent Telemachus from attempting great deeds himself, and what does he do to overcome this? What image or psychological barriers may be preventing you from accomplishing your great deeds, and what quest must you take to overcome them?
8. This book is about homecoming in many ways. Is it possible to go home after so long of an absence? What does it mean to belong somewhere?
9. Why do hosts in The Odyssey wait so long to inquire about the identities of their guests? (As we continue read the text this will become a recurring trope.)

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10. Do gods find joy in their possessions?
11. What is the relationship between the sea and human beings?
12. What is the connection between one's appearance and one's being in this text?
13. What does it mean for a human to be "godlike"? Why are so many mortals in this story described in this way?
14. What is the influence of memory on the present? How can the memories of the past shape how one experiences the present?
15. Why is the memory of Odysseus more troubling for Menelaus than the memory of his own brother's tragic death?
16. Why do gods have need of men and their sacrifices? What is the relationship between human beings and the gods?
17. Is being under the god's influence merely an excuse for poor behavior or an explanation for human passions that are so powerful as to not be fully under our control, and so excusable on account of their power?
18. "About that man I have nothing coherent to tell you" (830) Why do the gods have a difficult time understanding Odysseus?
19. Think about the role of women in the text in two ways: a) their literal function in advancing the narrative and b) the manner in which they are used to represent something else. (Stanford)
20. What is the difference in the way different female characters are portrayed? Servants, queens, goddesses? Is there a distinction between male and female characters in each of these different sets of characters?

### Books 5-8

21. \*\* When we first meet Odysseus in Book V he is marooned on Calypso's island, almost at the end of his journey. Again, why begin near the end? What do you make of the description of Calypso's garden? How do the goddess and hero represent the roles of host and guest? Why won't or can't Odysseus stay? Discuss a time in your life when you wanted to make a change. How did you get there, and how will you reach your goals now? (Stanford)
22. Why is Odysseus not able to enjoy his time with Calypso? Has there been a time in your life when you were stuck, perhaps in something that seemed like it should be attractive from the outside, but your soul was full of "sobs and groans and grief"? Have you ever

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- felt your life wasting away as you longed for something else? What would it (or did it) take for you to brave the “terrifying and catastrophic prospect” of making a change?
23. Does true human love require mortality? Is there some essential way in which human love and mortality are linked? (After all, Calypso offered Odysseus immortality and yet Odysseus chose to face great peril in order to return home to his wife.)
  24. Why does Calypso choose to live alone when most gods do not? Why is Odysseus her only chosen companion?
  25. Compare Odysseus's circumstances with Calypso to his experience with the Phaeacians in Book 6. What has changed? Consider his journey from Calypso's island to the court of Alcinous. How does Nausicaa help to make this transition? (Stanford)
  26. How may the lands of the Phaeacians and Calypso represent two different lives Odysseus could choose to live but did not? What is unsatisfying about these places for Odysseus?
  27. Why does Demodocus recount the story of Ares and Aphrodite? What is the significance of this story at this place of The Odyssey?
  28. What may the significance be of Demodocus' blindness?
  29. What does Odysseus find so aggravating about the athletic competitions aside for them being a diversion from his long awaited homecoming?
  30. Why is Odysseus not compelled to a “dance off”? Why can he be tempted to compete with others in athletic competition but does not join the dancing?
  31. There is a powerful metaphor near the end of Book 8 of a woman wailing over her dead husband. What is the meaning of this? How does Odysseus fit into this metaphor?
  32. Do gods ever wonder about their purpose in life as human beings do?

### Books 9-12

Here Odysseus begins to tell the story of how he arrived at this point in in his life.

33. \*\*“Where shall a man find sweetness to surpass his own home and his parents? In far lands he shall not, though he find a house of gold.” – Book IX,

Is this the way Odysseus always feels? How should we address strong and conflicting desires in ourselves? Discuss conflicting desires in yourself and your strategy for managing them so that you can achieve your goals.

34. Why did Odysseus not stay among the lotus-eaters?



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35. After Odysseus and his men have their fill of goats and wine, why does he lead them further into the island? Why does Odysseus need to see the Cyclops, and why does he feel the need to ultimately reveal to him his true name?
36. \*\* The word "monster" is a remnant from the Latin verb "to demonstrate". This may be an indication that the monsters of our imagination demonstrate or reveal something to us. What counts as a monster in this text? What can we learn from what we may find "monstrous" about ourselves? (Stanford)
37. In Odysseus's travails with Polyphemus in Book 9, Odysseus must say his name as part of the guest-host encounter. Note how and when he does so. Consider the rest of the voyage and the homecoming in relationship to saying or knowing the name of Odysseus. What's in a name? (Stanford)
38. How does the idea of an afterlife and death influence the way these characters live?
39. Are the shades in the underworld (Book 11) monsters or humans? Why do we see shades of women and mothers first?
40. Why does it make sense that Odysseus is told of his own death in Hades? In what way might a long life be preferable to immortality?
41. \*\* How does Odysseus contrive to hear the sirens song unharmed, and why does he risk death here while he did not risk addiction on the isle of the lotus-eaters? How are the temptations of beautiful sirens, or even seeing the Cyclops, different from the temptations of intoxicating drugs? How do you prioritize which goals are worth taking risks for?

### Books 13-18

42. Why does Homer provide so much information about Theoclymenus' origins? What does nearly six generations of genealogical knowledge add to our understanding here? Why is this necessary?
43. What is the meaning of homelessness in this book? Can one be homeless even if they have a place to live?
44. \*\* Why does Odysseus allow himself to be disguised when he arrives back to Ithaca? When is it, if ever, appropriate to pretend to be someone whom you are not and disguised? Have you ever put on such a disguise by pretending to be someone who you are not? Is it possible to be truly undisguised with another person or even oneself?
45. When, precisely, does Odysseus return home? Do we know that it is Odysseus who has returned and not someone remarkably like him? In this epic, would it matter if the recognized Odysseus were not actually Odysseus? (Stanford)
46. Consider the function of servants in the text. In what ways are they important? What do

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you make of the violence of Odysseus's reaction to his nurse? (Stanford)

47. "There is nothing feebler that the earth sustains than a human being, of all the things that draw breath and creep or crawl on earth" (Book 18, 130) Why does Odysseus say these words and what does this reflection mean for one's life?

### Books 19-24

48. What do you make of Odysseus' varied accounts of his past and travels? Do the stories he tell reveal anything about his character that we don't get from Books 9-12?
49. How do the descriptions of Odysseus in Book 6 compare to those in Book 22?
50. What are the elements of recognition? When do you think Penelope knows her husband? (Stanford)
51. In Chapter 23, Penelope's joy and relief in holding her husband again are expressed with the analogy of the emotion felt by shipwrecked men who have finally reached the shore. This passage clearly points to the idea that Odysseus and Penelope's suffering should be interpreted as similar (or at least parallel) in significance. In what ways is this true?
52. Why would Penelope want to take back her husband, who had enjoyed his love making with a goddess "staying by her side all night"? Is there something stronger than fidelity binding these two together?
53. What is sleep and its significance in The Odyssey?
54. Is the slaughter of the suitors just? If so why does Odysseus fear vengeance?
55. What is the significance of Odysseus's plan to leave Ithaca once more? Why end with the meeting of the suitors and heroes in the underworld in Book 24? (Stanford)

\*\*Stanford Questions

<http://web.stanford.edu/group/areaone/cross/quarter2/homer/index.html#od1>

### Meno

1. Answer me again then from the beginning . . ." (79e)[1]. Have the interlocutors accomplished anything by this point in the dialogue? If so, what has the progress been? (Remember Socrates' desire to make progress, expressed at 74b.)
2. What is virtue? Why, according to Socrates, must we answer this question first (71b)?
3. Evaluate the various definitions of virtue that are proposed. What progress is made in each new formulation, and how does it fall short? Consider these passages and the questions following:
4. - 73c: In what respect are all virtues the same?
5. - 73d: What is excluded from this definition? Why bring up shape (73e)?
6. - 77b: "to desire beautiful things and have the power to acquire them."

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7. \*\* 80b “both my mind and my tongue are numb, and I have no answer to give you. Yet I have made many speeches about virtue before large audiences on a thousand occasions, very good speeches as I thought, but now I cannot even say what it is.” Here Meno experiences “aporia.” Aporia is a Greek term that comes from the word ἄπορος (apors), which means lacking a way or road (a-pors). You experience “aporia” when you think you know something only to find out that you do not. It is a sense of being lost and in unfamiliar territory, without a way. For Socrates, the experience of aporia is essential in learning. Describe a time when you have felt like you were without a way in your studies? According to Socrates, while that feeling is painful, it is essential for our intellectual growth. How can you adopt this growth mindset in your studies?
8. Outline the argument for recollection. What principles does Socrates assume as known, and how does he proceed from these? If all knowledge is recollection, what does that mean for you when you try to learn something difficult and new? How might this theory of knowledge help bring you through the experience of aporia? Consider the following passages:

“They say the human soul is immortal” (81b).

“There is nothing which it has not learned” (81c).

“Searching and learning are, as a whole, recollection” (81d). Why does Socrates spend so much time on the geometrical question? What is at stake in this exercise? Account for what gives rise to this part of the discussion.

9. \*\* 84 b Here is the moment of “aporia” for the slave boy. While the experience of aporia is difficult and painful, it is also a “better position” to be in when seeking knowledge about something. Socrates says the slave boy is better off now than he was before, despite now being so perplexed. In what way are we better off when we are perplexed? Has Socrates taught the slave boy anything? (Notice the claims at 82e and 84d.)
10. \*\* What theory of learning does Socrates offer in answer to Meno’s problem about searching for something unknown (learning something new)? Explain how you can apply this to learning something new. (from <http://philosophy.wlu.edu/gregoryp/class/old/fall05/102/RQMeno.html>)
11. Socrates says about the slave boy, “He will perform in the same way about all geometry, and all other knowledge” (85e). Consider the similarities and differences between geometry’s demonstrative method and other methods of acquiring knowledge. Do certain methods lend themselves to teaching by questioning, and others not?
12. What is the difficulty in maintaining that virtue can be taught? Consider that if virtue is a kind of knowledge, then we would expect to find people who teach and people who learn virtue (89d). Evaluate the case for each of the following being teachers: the sophists (91b-c), Athenian gentlemen (92e), Themistocles, Aristides, Pericles (93c–94c).
13. Why does the discussion turn to knowledge and true opinion at the end of the dialogue?
14. Why does Socrates bring up the statues of Daedalus (97d)?
15. Socrates claims to know that “right opinion is a different thing from knowledge” (98b). What exactly does he mean? How does he support this belief?
16. How can correct opinion guide action correctly (98b, 99a)? What is the significance of

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this relation in the dialogue? □ Consider Socrates' claim that virtue is a "gift from the gods" (100b). Why does Socrates believe that? Is the claim true?

*Many study questions above are from or largely based on: <http://artsofliberty.org/study-guide-platos-meno>*

### Euclid

Before delving into his text, read this lovely sonnet, written by an admirer of Euclid's text over 2000 years after its publication. That's right, this is a poem about math! That is how good of a mathematician Euclid was; people still write poems about him.

Euclid alone has looked on Beauty bare.  
Let all who prate of Beauty hold their peace,  
And lay them prone upon the earth and cease  
To ponder on themselves, the while they stare  
At nothing, intricately drawn nowhere  
In shapes of shifting lineage; let geese  
Gabble and hiss, but heroes seek release  
From dusty bondage into luminous air.  
O blinding hour, O holy, terrible day,  
When first the shaft into his vision shone  
Of light anatomized! Euclid alone  
Has looked on Beauty bare.  
Fortunate they Who, though once only and then but far away,  
Have heard her massive sandal set on stone.  
-Sonnet from *The Harp-Weaver and Other Poems* by Edna St. Vincent Millay (1923)

"Euclid alone has looked on **Beauty** bare." Has he? What does it mean to look on Beauty bare? What is Beauty and how can mathematics be beautiful?

***Extensive study questions for Euclid are located in the book.***

### Machiavelli: The Prince

1. What is Machiavelli's judgment of The Romans in comparison with King Louis? What differences does he notice between them? What were the errors of Louis?
2. Is Italy more like France or the state of the Turks?
3. What does Cesare Borgia (Valentino) do in taking and holding Romagna that Machiavelli finds so impressive and why does Machiavelli think he was ultimately not as successful as he could have been?

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### Chapters 5-11

4. What is Machiavelli's estimation of gratitude?

\*\*5. Research a historical or biblical event that Machiavelli discusses in these pages and explain how well Machiavelli attends to the facts and try to account for at least one discrepancy. How would you rewrite your own history and why?

6. Why should Princes seek popular support?

7. What is Machiavelli's understanding of the relationship between Duke Valentino and Pope Alexander? Who is really in charge and what does Machiavelli want us to understand from reflecting on this?

### Chapters 12-14

8. What does Machiavelli mean by "arms"?

9. What is Machiavelli's understanding of the power of writers?

### Chapters 15-19

10. How does the beginning of Chapter 15 mark a break with classical political thought?

\*\*11. ..."one needs to be a fox to recognize snares and a lion to frighten wolves." What does this quote mean in the context of Machiavelli's advice? What does it mean to you and how could you apply to your life?

12. Machiavelli seems to think it is best for a ruler to be both loved and feared. However, he explains, if a ruler can command only one, it is safer for him/her to be feared. How might this relationship and prioritization of love and fear play a role in your life? Does it have any relevance for someone who is not a Prince?

13. How might love and fear play a role in being a professor? How can one be feared without being hated?

14. Chapters 16-19 largely consist on a reexamination of the virtues. How does Machiavelli's understanding of the virtues depart from the Christian understanding of them? What is his understanding of the classical virtues of Moderation, Wisdom, Justice and Courage, and the Christian virtues of Faith, Hope, Love, Charity, Chastity, etc.?

### Chapters 20-26 and Letters to Vettori

15. What is Machiavelli's understanding of patriotism and its grounds?

16. What is the relationship between Chapter 25 and 15?

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17. Machiavelli says that he writes to be “useful to whoever understands it” (XV). He also says that one must learn both to be good and to be able to not be good in order not to come to ruin. How might it benefit you as a student to be able to not be good as well as to be good?

18. In what ways does Homer seem to agree with Machiavelli’s claim that one must both learn to be good and to be able to not be good?

\*\*19. Explain what Machiavelli means when he says some things that appear to be virtue may lead to ruin, while other things that appear to be vice may lead to security and well-being (XV). Can you think of any examples where this might be true in your own life? How might this notion apply to time management?

20. How does Machiavelli characterize his life and pleasure in the letter to Francesco Vettori?

\*\*21. How widely applicable is Machiavelli’s message that ideals can fail us? Think of some modern day examples (in your own life or elsewhere) where trying to live up to ideals may actually make you less successful.

22. What might be some ways in which it is appropriate and prudent to judge the least bad option as a good option? What might be the downfall of such an approach to life?

## Making Connections Assignment Instructions

### \*\* Overview \*\*

*The Odyssey* reflects many facets of our humanity; however other great works throughout history also deal with recurring human concerns. This assignment allows students to explore great works from different cultures throughout history and discuss their relevance and impact.

For Making Connections assignments you will:

(1) explore a list of great works that humans have created

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- (2) select a work that interests you
- (3) conduct research to learn about the work and the culture that created it
- (4) present your research to the class and participate in a class discussion of how your research relates to course materials and previous discussions.

### **\*\* Instructions \*\***

Please check the syllabus for “Making Connection” due dates.

Each “Making Connections” (MC) assignment has three stages:

#### **(1) Sign up for a topic.**

Review the list of approved topics for each MC by browsing the Topic List and identify at least three selections that stand out to you. Research them online and choose one to present to class. If you have troubles finding a topic, your professor and/or a reference librarian can be helpful at this stage.

Sign up for your topic through your professor. Duplicate topics are discouraged.

The topic list is not static. We will be adding to it as we explore and research history every semester. If you have a suggestion for an item that is not included, please feel free to propose it to your professor.

#### **(2) Once you are signed up for a topic, go to an ACC Library and meet with a reference librarian.**

Working with the librarian, and using only resources available through the library or free online resources the librarian suggests, prepare answers to questions 1-8, under section “The Questions” below.

#### **(3) Complete the Making Connections worksheet and prepare your Google Slide.**

Please refer to the Making Connections worksheet on Blackboard for completing the assignment and bring it with you to refer to during the discussion.

Your answers should be in your own words, but you should also track all sources used and credit them where necessary. You will also be making a Google Slide to share your item with the class. You will provide an image of the item and museum description (Example: Name, Artist, Year, Material, Location...information may vary depending on type of art chosen) The link for the class Google Slide Presentation is on Blackboard.

### **\*\* The Questions \*\***

I. General Information on the work:

1. What is the name of the work?

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2. What time period is it from?
3. Where was it created?
4. Who created it (and/or commissioned it)? (if known)
5. What genre and/or medium was the work? (i.e. Poetry, Philosophy, Theater, Architecture, Sculpture, etc.)

### II. Making Connections:

6. Describe the work in a paragraph of 3 to 5 sentences. For example, if it is a written work, what is its basic storyline? If it is another kind of work like a sculpture or building, describe its physical attributes (what is it made out of, what does it look like, does it tell a story?).
7. To whom was this important or significant when it was created? Another way to think about this is to consider what its purpose was at the time, who would have known about it, enjoyed it (or not), what meaning it would have had individually or culturally, or similar lines of inquiry.
8. What are some human values, ideas, or themes that came to mind as you learned about this work? These values or ideas can be directly embedded in the work (for example, motifs of heroism, love, or the relationship between mortals and gods) or implied by the work (for example, the strength of empire, the significance of tributes, or immortality, just to name a few.)

### III. Library Resources

Prepare a list of library resources that you consulted to complete this assignment. Format this list in MLA format. Note that any librarian or writing tutor can assist with this if you are unfamiliar with MLA.

## Making Connections Topic List

### EARLY CIVILIZATIONS

Literature/Theater/Philosophy/Music

1. Babylonian Creation Story: Enuma Elish
2. Epic of Gilgamesh
3. The Code of Hammurabi
4. Rig Veda
5. Egyptian Book of the Dead

### EARLY CIVILIZATIONS



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### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Cave paintings at Chauvet-Pont-d'Arc
2. Venus of Willendorf
3. Ziggurat at Ur
4. Mortuary Temple of Hatshepsut
5. Nasca Lines of Peru

### CLASSICAL / GREEK

#### Literature/Theater/Philosophy/Music

1. Thucydides' *History of the Peloponnesian Wars*
2. Sophocles' *Oedipus the King*
3. Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics* or *Poetics*
4. Sappho's poetry (fragments)
5. Vitruvius' *Ten Books on Architecture*

### CLASSICAL / GREEK

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Lion Gate at Mycenae
2. Myron's *Discobolus (Discus Thrower)*
3. The Parthenon, Athens
4. Praxiteles' *Aphrodite of Knidos*
5. Agesander, et al's *Laocoön and His Sons*

### ROMAN

#### Literature/Theater/Philosophy/Music

1. Virgil's *Aeneid*
2. Ovid's *Metamorphoses*
3. Juvenal's *Satires*
4. Josephus' *The Jewish War*
5. Seneca's *On Tranquility of Mind*

### ROMAN

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Trajan's Victory Column
2. Arch of Titus
3. The Colosseum, Rome
4. Pont du Gard, near Nîmes, France
5. The Pantheon

### CLASSICAL : GLOBAL

#### Literature/Theater/Philosophy/Music

1. The Dao De Jing
2. The Xuzi
3. Bhagavad Gita
4. The Yoga Sutras
5. The poetry of Nammalvar

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### CLASSICAL : GLOBAL

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Dhamek Stupa, India
2. Olmec Heads, Mexico
3. Bronze Bells, Zhong Dynasty
4. Nok Terracottas, Africa
5. Star Ushak Rug, Ottoman Empire

### MIDDLE AGES : EUROPE

#### Literature/Theater/Philosophy/Music

1. Hildegard of Bingen's *O Successores or Ordo virtutum* (Play of the Virtues)
2. Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy*
3. *Song of Roland*
4. St. Ambrose's "Ancient Morning Hymn"
5. Magna Carta, England, 1215 CE

### MIDDLE AGES: EUROPE

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. The Lancet Windows of Sainte Chapelle, Paris
2. The Bayeux Tapestry
3. The Book of Kells (Manuscript Illumination)
4. San Isidoro Crypt in Leon, Spain
5. Last Judgment, Autun Cathedral, France

### MIDDLE AGES: GLOBAL

#### Literature/Philosophy/Theater/Music

1. Murasaki Shikibu *The Tale of Genji*
2. Avicenna's *The Canon of Medicine*
3. Ibn Rushd's (Averroes) Commentaries on Aristotle and Plato

### MIDDLE AGES : GLOBAL

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Hagia Sophia, Turkey
2. Mo'ai Heads, Easter Island
3. Khajuraho Temple, India
4. Summer Mountains, Song Dynasty
5. Mosque at Djenne, Mali

### 14th-17th CENTURIES: EUROPE

#### Literature/Philosophy/Theater/Music

1. Marinella's *The Nobility and Excellence of Women*
2. Boccaccio's *Decameron*
3. Alberti's *On the Family*
4. Cervantes' *Don Quixote*
5. Dufay's *Missa L'homme armé*

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### 14-17th CENTURIES: EUROPE

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. Lorenzetti's *The Allegory of Good Government*
2. Michelangelo's *Pietà*
3. Ghiberti's "Gates of Paradise"
4. Raphael's *The School of Athens*
5. Bosch's *Garden of Earthly Delights*

### 14th-17th CENTURIES: GLOBAL

#### Literature/Philosophy/Theater/Music

1. *1001 Nights*, Arabia
2. Navajo Night Chant
3. *Matsukaze ("Wind in the Pines")* by Kan'ami
4. Benin Scarification Mask, Africa
5. Rumi's *Masnavi*

### 14th-17th CENTURIES: GLOBAL

#### Sculpture/Architecture/Art

1. The Forbidden City, China
2. Machu Picchu, Peru
3. Teotihuacan Temples, Mexico

## How is it Going? Reflection 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 100 words).

**Journal 1: Setting Goals.** What are your expectations of your first semester at ACC? What are you excited about? What are you nervous about? Set a goal for yourself this semester in this journal entry. What do you want to accomplish in the next 16 weeks? How will you accomplish it? Share your goals and fears for the semester in your journal so we can tackle them together!

**Journal 2: Academic Coaching.** Students have busy lives. Jobs, friends, family...they all have to be managed along with your school work. To aid you in this task, ACC has academic coaches available who specialize in how to organize your life for success. Visit an academic coach in any

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of the ACCelerator labs and discuss how you can keep on track this semester. Share your experience in your journal and make sure to follow-up with your coach throughout the semester.

**Journal 3: Making Connections.** In addition to putting together your own presentation on a great work of human culture, you had the opportunity to hear and experience other student's research on other great works. Reflect on what you learned from other students, the works they presented on, their ideas, and the class discussion. What works stand out to you and why? Do you find any works you think you want to explore further on your own? What are you learning about human culture and society from these presentations.

**Journal 4: Faculty Meeting.** How is class going? How is your life going? Schedule an appointment with your professor to establish what your goals are, what your issues might be and how you can tackle them together. Use this journal entry to make notes on what you want to discuss or to reflect on how the meeting went.

**Journal 5: Are you involved?** This is a great time to take advantage of ACC's Student Life Center. They offer seminars, snacks, support and lots of social activities and clubs. Stop by the Student Life office on your campus and see what they can do to make your life at ACC easier or attend an ACC cultural event. Share your experience in your journal.

**Journal 6: Staying on Track.** For this journal, consider your semester so far and see if you are on track with your goals. What is the most challenging thing you've encountered so far at ACC? What is your plan to overcome this challenge? What tools can you use to help you navigate this challenge? Have you checked back in with your Academic Coach or other resources?

**Journal 7: Looking Ahead.** Have you made plans for next semester? What about next year? Not sure where you are heading? No problem! ACC has resources to help you. Visit Career Services, your advisor and/or attend a Transfer Event and learn about opportunities with local colleges and universities. Share your experience in your journal.

**Journal 8: Making Connections.** In addition to putting together your own presentation on a great work of human culture, you had the opportunity to hear and experience other student's research on other great works. Reflect on what you learned from other students, the works they presented on, their ideas, and the class discussion. What works stand out to you and why? Do you find any works you think you want to explore further on your own? What are you learning about human culture and society from these presentations.

**Journal 9: Faculty Meeting.** The semester is drawing to an end. This is a good time to make sure you are up to speed on everything we have covered in class and to share any stories of success or of challenges with your professor. Share your notes or reflections in your journal.

**Journal 10: Your Journey.** Read your first journal and take time to consider your journey this semester. Have you met your goal? What have you discovered about yourself? Looking forward, what are your goals for your next semester? What challenges must you face in meeting your goals and how will you overcome them? How will you use what you learned from this class moving forward?

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