

CLT 3930 Special topics in Classical Literature

It's Alive! Pygmalion, Living Statues and Ancient Robots in Greek and Latin Poetry and their Reception in Modern Arts, Technology and Literature

Time and Location

MWF Period 2 (8:30 AM - 9:20 AM)

Contact Information

Dr. Flora Iff-Noël

f.iffnoel@ufl.edu

Office hours: F 9:30-11:30 and by appointment

Phone: 352 273 3695

137 Dauer Hall

Course objectives and goals

What is the difference between art and nature? Between reality and fiction? Intelligence and Artificial Intelligence? Exploring the different uses of the Greek term *thauma* ("wonder" but also "puppet, automaton"), we will jointly consider illusionist artworks that seem alive when described poetically and actual automata that were built in Hellenistic and Roman times. We will read translations of Ancient Greek and Latin authors such as Homer, Hesiod, Ovid and Propertius (no knowledge of Ancient Greek or Latin is required) and trace the evolution of these themes into modern and contemporary literature, artworks and artefacts (e.g. E.T.A. Hoffman, Oscar Wilde, Philip K. Dick; literature, opera, dance, painting, sculpture, robotics).

Through this course you will develop your close-reading skills, your capacity to analyze artworks and to theorize art and technology in order to prepare you for further studies in Ancient Greek and Latin Civilization, Art, and Comparative Literature.

Texts

- Oscar Wilde, *The Picture of Dorian Gray*, Penguin Classics, 2003, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0141439570 [**required**]
- Philip K. Dick, *Do Androids Dream of Electric Sheep?*, Del Rey, New York, 1996, paperback, ISBN-13: 978-0345404473 [**required**]
- Ovid, *Metamorphoses* [**optional**]
- All the other required readings will be distributed in class and available on Canvas.

Weekly course schedule of topics and assignments

| | | |
|---------------|------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 1 | Aug. 21, 23 | Introduction: Pygmalion; nature vs. art; real vs. fake |
| Week 2 | Aug. 26, 28, 30 | <i>Thaumata</i> : the wonders of Homer |
| Week 3 | Sept. 4, 6 | Hesiod's Pandora |
| Week 4 | Sept. 9, 11, 13 | Quiz 1 ; Plato and Aristotle: the philosophical take |
| Week 5 | Sept. 16, 18, 20 | Greek ekphrastic epigrams and painting |
| Week 6 | Sept. 23, 25, 27 | Quiz 2 ; Greek ekphrastic epigrams and sculpture |
| Week 7 | Sept. 30, Oct. 2 | Hellenistic automata; |
| Week 8 | Oct. 7, 9, 11 | Hellenistic automata; Quiz 3 ; |

| | | |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Week 9 | Oct. 14, 16, 18 | “Womanaufacture” in Latin Elegy |
| Week 10 | Oct. 21, 23, 25 | Ovid’s <i>Metamorphoses</i> and its reception in arts |
| Week 11 | Oct. 28, 30, Nov. 1 | Quiz 4 ; 19 th century living artworks and automata: E.T.A. Hoffmann and the ballet <i>Coppélia</i> |
| Week 12 | Nov. 4, 6, 8 | P. Mérimée, T. Gautier, O. Wilde |
| Week 13 | Nov. 13, 15 | O. Wilde; Quiz 5 |
| Week 14 | Nov. 18, 20, 22 | P. K. Dick; I. Asimov; <i>Bladerunner</i> ; <i>The Bicentennial Man</i> : literature, cinema and Artificial Intelligence |
| Week 15 | Nov. 25 | Quiz 6 |
| Week 16 | Dec. 2, 4 | Final reflections on art, technology and nature |

Course requirements and grades

Students will be expected to participate actively in class discussions. In this regard, it is necessary to read and analyze in depth the assigned texts prior to come to class. In order to foster good participation, cell phone use is prohibited during class, and eating or drinking should be kept at a minimum.

Your grades will be based on 6 quizzes (including multiple choice questions and short essays; your lowest quiz grade will be dropped) and a Final Exam. There will also be a Creative Project in two parts: 1. just as ancient epigrammatists wrote short poems about existing works of art, you will write a short creative text about an artwork of your choice. 2. The resulting texts will then be exchanged among the students so that each student creates an artwork inspired by a classmate’s text. For instance, if student A writes a poem about the *Mona Lisa* by Da Vinci and student B writes a poetic dialogue on the *Birth of Venus* by Botticelli, student A can then create a collage inspired by student B’s dialogue and student B a short film inspired by student A’s poem. Possible art forms include drawing, painting, collage, sculpture, photography, music, short film, etc. Part 1’s first draft will be due by Oct. 7 and the final version by Oct. 23, Part 2’s first draft or equivalent will be due by Nov. 13 and its final version by Dec. 2, so we can create a short book and exhibit for our last class on Dec. 4.

- 6 quizzes = 30 %
- Homework, attendance and participation = 15%
- Creative project 1 = 15 %
- Creative project 2 = 15 %
- Final exam = 25 %

Class attendance and make-up works

Students are expected to attend class regularly. Make-up examinations are rarely given and only for extraordinary circumstances beyond your control, such as a grave illness. You must notify me in advance if possible and at the latest within 24 hours of a missed exam in order to arrange a makeup. I must have written documentation for any medical or other emergencies which result in a missed test.

Regular attendance and active participation are mandatory.

More than one absence will cause your final grade to be penalized by five points for each subsequent unexcused absence.

Arriving late or leaving early will count as 1/3 of an absence.

ADA requirements

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Grading scale

| | |
|----|----------|
| A | 93-100 |
| A- | 90-92 |
| B+ | 87-89 |
| B | 83-86 |
| B- | 80-82 |
| C+ | 77-79 |
| C | 73-76 |
| C- | 70-72 |
| D+ | 67-69 |
| D | 63-66 |
| D- | 60-62 |
| E | below 60 |

Course evaluation

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>.

Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>.

Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

Critical dates for quizzes and exams

- September 9: Quiz 1
- September 23: Quiz 2
- Creative Project, Part 1, first draft: Oct. 7
- October 11: Quiz 3
- Creative Project, Part 1, final version: October 23
- October 28: Quiz 4
- Creative Project, Part 2, first draft: Nov. 13
- November 15: Quiz 5
- November 25: Quiz 6
- Creative Project, Part 2, final version: Dec. 2
- December 12: Final exam (12:30-2:30 PM)

Honesty policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/process/student-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor in this class.

Campus Resources

Health and Wellness

U Matter, We Care: If you or a friend is in distress, please contact umatter@ufl.edu or 352 392- 1575 so that a team member can reach out to the student.

Counseling and Wellness Center: <https://counseling.ufl.edu/>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

Sexual Assault Recovery Services (SARS): Student Health Care Center, 392-1161.

University Police Department: 392-1111 (or 9-1-1 for emergencies).

<http://www.police.ufl.edu/>

Academic Resources

E-learning technical support, 352-392-4357 (select option 2) or e-mail to Learning-support@ufl.edu. <https://lss.at.ufl.edu/help.shtml>.

Career Connections Center, Reitz Union, 392-1601. Career assistance and counseling. <https://career.ufl.edu/>

Library Support, <http://cms.uflib.ufl.edu/ask>. Various ways to receive assistance with respect to using the libraries or finding resources.

Teaching Center, Broward Hall, 392-2010 or 392-6420. General study skills and tutoring. <http://teachingcenter.ufl.edu/>

Writing Studio, 302 Tigert Hall, 846-1138. Help brainstorming, formatting, and writing papers. <http://writing.ufl.edu/writing-studio/>

Student Complaints On-Campus: <https://sccr.dso.ufl.edu/policies/student-honor-code-student-conduct-code/>

On-Line Students Complaints: <http://distance.ufl.edu/student-complaint-process/>