The purpose of this class, English 101, as you might have worked out from its title, is to introduce you to a variety of the major works and authors of World Literature. In effect, it will be a highly selective overview, since there isn’t enough time to cover everything.

We’re starting at the very beginning with Gilgamesh, the world’s first known piece of literature, in order to show you how early the major concerns of literature were established, i.e., right from the start; hopefully, our discussions for the rest of the semester will start here.

There will be two papers, a shorter one of 4-5 pp. and a longer one, later in the semester, of 6-8 pp. There will be an hour mid-term, an essay exam, between the two, but whether I give a final or not depends on the amount and quality of discussion in the class; that’s right: it’s a bribe. The final will consist only of those things we’ve read since the midterm. The papers and exams will count as 90% of your grade, with the other 10% determined by reading quizzes I give at irregular intervals to keep you honest about the reading; you’ll be able to drop the lowest, but you can’t screw up very many.

A set of suggestions for paper topics is posted to my website, along with this introduction and all the other handouts for the class. Remember that these are intended to help spark your thinking; they’re not something you must abide by. I’ll be happy to sit down with you in my office and help smoke out your own personal paper topic, either during my posted office-hours or during another time we find mutually convenient.

Finally, two things are necessary in order for this class to work: first, you must attend class regularly, and I’ll take roll consistently to see whether or not you do; second, you must not plagiarize, i.e., claim someone else’s writing or thinking as your own. I’ll try to encourage the first by making the class as pleasant as I can; I’ll try to discourage the second by being an absolute monster if I catch you at it. Please read the detailed class policies on the following page closely; I’ll follow them religiously.

Required Texts: *Gilgamesh, Medea, Hamlet, Temple of the Golden Pavilion, Four Majorr Plays of Ibsen, Madame Bovary, A Hundred Years of Solitude,* and *Things Fall Apart.*
Course Policies and Requirements

1. You can miss 2 class sessions without penalty during the semester; after that, you will need a written medical excuse from a doctor in order not to be penalized. For each unexcused absence beyond your two, I will remove 10 percentage points from your overall grade for the semester. In other words, if you have an 87% total GPA for the semester and you have a third absence and no excuse, you will receive a 77% for your semester grade; with a fourth unexcused absence, you will receive a 67%, and so on.

2. Attendance at edit sessions, with a completed rough draft in hand, is mandatory. If you do not attend the edit session, or if your rough draft is unfinished, I won't accept your paper.

3. I do not accept late papers.

4. Tape-recording lectures is fine with me.

5. You may bring visitors to class, provided they’re quiet (or contributing to the discussion, one of the two).

6. If you miss the midterm, I will be happy to work out with you a mutually agreeable makeup time and date; if you miss the final, I will do the same, but only if you have a valid medical emergency, authenticated with a doctor’s written excuse.

7. If you have a learning disability, please let me know, so that the University and I can give you a fair chance to get the work done. It's called an even playing field. I'm a little dyslexic myself, so I understand the frustration involved.

8. It is University policy that you have (or have access to) a computer with a modem and Internet connection, an email account, and a printer. In addition to all these, you must also download Adobe Acrobat Reader 5.0, which you can find at http://www.adobe.com/products/acrobat/readstep2.html, since all the handouts for this class will either be posted to my website or emailed to you as an attachment.