

# HUM 101: CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS–I (2024/25 Fall)

## Course Description

HUM 101 is the first course in a two-semester, interdisciplinary survey series, team-taught by faculty. It consists of mandatory lectures and discussion sections. Each week, students attend a main lecture on Mondays at 17:00 in Ayhan Şahenk Hall, where a guest lecturer, an expert in the field, introduces the week's subject. This is followed by smaller in-class discussion groups. The lectures, organized both chronologically and thematically, provide a general framework for understanding the assigned text(s), while the discussions allow for deeper analysis and critical engagement.

## Course Objectives

1. Introduce students to the diverse people, places, ideas, and experiences that span the breadth of human history.
2. Begin an exploration of the humanities disciplines—history, religion, literature, philosophy, cultural studies, and more—by understanding human beings in their full complexity, without prioritizing one ability, emotion, or faculty over another.
3. Develop an appreciation for connecting historical ideas with contemporary realities through dynamic engagement with philosophy, music, religion, and art.
4. Foster vibrant, meaningful discussions that encourage deeper insight, understanding, empathy, and compassion for both ourselves and the world around us.

## Student Assessment

The final grade for this course will be determined as follows:

1. **Class Participation and Discussion (25%)**
  - Regular attendance and active contribution to small group discussions, as well as the main lectures, are essential.
2. **Assignments (75%)**
  - **Assignment 1:** Due at the end of Week 5 (25%)
  - **Assignment 2:** Due at the end of Week 9 (25%)
  - **Assignment 3:** Due at the end of Week 13 (25%)

## Course Practicals

1. **Duration:** 13 weeks
2. **Weekly Contact Hours:**
  - 1-hour main lecture in Ayhan Şahenk Hall
  - 3 hours of lecture and small group discussions
3. **Course Materials:** All readings and resources will be provided on Moodle in PDF or EPUB format.

## WEEKLY READING LIST

### WEEK 1—The Cosmos and Beyond: Creation Accounts

Lecture: Nagihan Haliloğlu (Boğaziçi University)

- “Popol Vuh” (Mayan) (p. 10-11 in *Sacred Texts of the World: A Universal Anthology*, ed. by Ninian Smart and Richard D. Hecht, Macmillan, 1982) (book in moodle).
- “Biblical creation narrative: Genesis 1 and Isaiah 42-43” (p. 49-51 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “Creation in the Qur’an” a) Sajda 32:1-11  
(<https://www.altafsir.com/ViewTranslations.asp?Display=yes&SoraNo=32&Ayah=0&toAyah=0&Language=2&LanguageID=2&TranslationBook=10> );  
b) Baqara 2:30-37  
(<https://www.altafsir.com/ViewTranslations.asp?Display=yes&SoraNo=2&Ayah=0&toAyah=0&Language=2&LanguageID=2&TranslationBook=10> ).
- “Enuma Elish” (Akkadian) (p. 6-9 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “Japanese creation narrative from *Kojiki* and *Nihongi*” (p. 320-322 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “The Cosmic Parents and Twin Brothers” (Zuni, Native American) (p. 341 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “An Earth-Diver Narrative from Siberia (Siberian-Altai)” (p. 345 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “Hainuwele, the Maiden of Ceram” (West Ceram, Indonesia) (p. 345-347 in *Sacred Texts of the World*) (book in moodle)
- “Fulani creation story” (Mali) (p. 2 in *World Religions: Primary Sources*, authored by Michael J. O’Neal and J. Sydney Jones, ed by Marcia Merryman Means, Thomson and Gale, 2007) (book in moodle)

### WEEK 2—Life as the Great Voyage: Gilgamesh

Lecture: TBA

- *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Tablet I (p. 22-29)  
Tablet III (p. 35-38)  
Tablet X (p. 60-66)  
Tablet XI (p. 66-74) Page numbers are from *The Norton Anthology of World Literature*, Volume 1, ed. by Martin Puchner, New York and London: Norton, 2021. (book in moodle)
- *The Life of the Buddha According to the Pali Canon*, Translation from the Pali, selection of material and arrangement by Bhikkhu Nanamoli, USA: BPS Pariyatti, 1992–p. 5-29 (book in moodle)

### WEEK 3—Life: Of War & Peace

Lecture: TBA

- Homer, *The Odyssey*, Book V, 203-227. (Pdf in moodle)
- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*  
[Pericles' Funeral Oration](#) (2.35-2.46)  
[Diodotus, son of Eucrates](#) (3.41.1-3.49.1) (pdf in moodle)

### WEEK 4—Knowledge: The Greek Divide

Lecture: TBA

- Plato, *Republic, Allegory of the Cave* (VI 507b-509c) (pdf in Moodle)
- *Phaedrus, Chariot Allegory* (245c-257b) (pdf in Moodle)
- Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics*, (VI.1-8) (pdf in Moodle)

### WEEK 5—Human Nature

Lecture: TBA

- Confucius, *The Analects*, Book III and IV (in *The Analects of Confucius*, tr. by Burton Watson, New York: Columbia Uni. Press, 2007) (pdf p. 26-34– book in moodle)
- Laozi, *The Tao Te Ching*, On Wisdom:  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef\\_ANdUhl4Q](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef_ANdUhl4Q) (1 hour listening).

## ASSIGNMENT 1: Essay based on the readings (approximately 1,000 words)

### WEEK 6—Human Suffering and Sanctity

Lecture: TBA

- *The Bhagavad Gita*, Chapter 2, Verses 11-47 (*The Bhagavad Gita*. Oxford, 2004. pp. 6-10, PDF Reader Available:  
[https://archive.org/details/bhagavadgita0000unse\\_z4g8/page/6/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/bhagavadgita0000unse_z4g8/page/6/mode/2up) )
- Rumi, *Mathnavi*, Chapter 1, Verses 1 - 34 (in Jalal al-Din Rumi. *The Masnavi*. Tr. Jawid Mojaddedi. Oxford, 2004. pp. 3-6, PDF Reader Available:  
<https://archive.org/details/92ab-848bb-546f-0680916811d-74c-136/page/3/mode/2up>

### WEEK 7—The Self and Becoming

Lecture: TBA

- *Mencius*, pp. 275 - 290.  
<https://www.wcupa.edu/arts-humanities/languagesCultures/empathy/documents/unit1/Mencius-274-290.pdf>
- Muhammad al-Ghazali, *Deliverance from Error and the Beginning of Guidance*. Trns: W. Montgomery Watt. Ed: Islamic Book Trust, 2005. (Introduction and First and Final

chapters) pp. 3 - 12, 167 -187. PDF Reader Available:

<https://archive.org/details/alghazalideliver0000unse/page/14/mode/2up>

### **WEEK 8—Courage and Virtue**

Lecture: TBA

- Marcus Aurelius, *Meditations*, Book V (pdf in moodle)

### **WEEK 9—Redemption and Renewal**

Lecture: TBA

- Saint Augustine of Hippo, *Confessions*, Book 8 (p. 195-226 in *The Fathers of the Church: St Augustine, Confessions*, tr. by Vernon J. Bourke, Washington DC: Catholic University of America Press, 2008 (book in moodle)
- *The Divine Comedy* by Dante Alighieri (Paradiso, Canto 33 - see, <https://digitaldante.columbia.edu/dante/divine-comedy/paradiso/paradiso-33/>) and (<https://archive.org/details/divinecomedyofda00dantiala/page/600/mode/2up> pp. 600 - 603)

## **ASSIGNMENT 2: Essay based on the readings (approximately 1,000 words)**

### **WEEK 10—Science and Philosophy**

Lecture: TBA

- Averroes (Ibn Rushd), *On the Harmony of Religions and Philosophy* (Chapters 1 + 2) <https://antilogicalism.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/07/harmony-of-religion-philosophy.pdf>

### **WEEK 11—Revelation and Reason**

Lecture: TBA

- Moses Maimonides, *Guide for the Perplexed* (In *The Jewish Philosophy Reader*: Pages 220 - 241. [https://archive.org/details/jewishphilosophy0000unse\\_c8k7/page/224/mode/2up](https://archive.org/details/jewishphilosophy0000unse_c8k7/page/224/mode/2up)

- Ibn Tufail, *Hayy ibn Yaqzan*, sections 61-100 In *Ibn Tufayl's Hayy ibn Yaqzan: A Philosophical Tale*, Chicago, University of Chicago Press, 2015 (epub version in moodle).

### **WEEK 12—Travel**

Lecture: TBA

- Marco Polo (13th CE) (Encounter with China) (Everyman, 1929. Chapter 36 - 38, pp. 234 - 243. PDF Reader Available: <https://archive.org/details/marcopolo00polouoft/page/n5/mode/2up>

- Ibn Battūta (14th CE) (Encounter with China) (*The Travels of Ibn Battuta*. H.A.R Gibb. Hakluyt Society, 1979 pp. 888 - 898). PDF Reader Available:

<https://archive.org/details/travels-of-ibn-battuta/The%20Travels%20of%20Ibn%20Battuta-1325%E2%80%93Volume-III/>

- Ibn Fadlan pp.62 - 70 (Encounter with Vikings)
  - al-Gharnati, pp. 80 - 92 (Travelling North)
- Both readings are in *Ibn Fadlan and The Land of Darkness*. Penguin Classics, 2012. PDF Reader Available:

<https://archive.org/details/ibnfadlanlandofd0000ibnf/page/n5/mode/2up>

### **WEEK 13—Death**

Lecture: TBA

- Plato, *Death of Socrates* (pdf in Moodle)

**ASSIGNMENT 3: Essay based on the readings (approximately 1,000 words)**