

# **Intellectual Heritage I: The Good Life A Good Life, Death, and the Afterlife?**

## **Course Information**

Semester: Fall 2019

Course number and section: IH 851 Section 004

Course meeting days and times: MWF, 8 a.m. to 9 a.m.

Course meeting building and room: Anderson Hall 205

Course website: <https://templeu.instructure.com/>

## **Professor Information**

**Professor: Dr. Jeffrey R. Vadala**

**Office: Anderson 213D**

**Office hours: Monday 9-10 am and Thursdays 9-10 am and by appointment**

**Email: To be announced**

This course will explore major concepts from throughout human civilization. Students will read important works of world literature, philosophy, and religion, from ancient epics to contemporary literature. The texts are read with a critical eye and focus regarding different cultural beliefs about the afterlife and in reflection what they also say about living a “good life.” We will ask questions like: What’s right and wrong? What do we value, and why? What makes for happiness? How is what’s good for me defined by my relation to others? What is the purpose of life?

## **Student Learning and Assessment**

### **GenEd Goals**

This course helps you hone a number of GenEd learning competencies, particularly:

- Communication skills
- Contextualized learning
- Critical thinking
- Ethical reasoning
- Interdisciplinary thinking

### **Intellectual Heritage Program Goals By the end of the semester, you should be able to:**

1. Read in its entirety an unfamiliar and problematic written text (one that is theoretically, historically, or culturally challenging)
2. Recognize abstractions, large ideas, and implications associated with difficult written texts
3. Make connections across disciplines, history, and cultural boundaries
4. Construct positions, arguments, and interpretations through textual analysis and evaluation
5. Produce thoughtful writing that reflects a persuasive position and the conventions of academic discourse.

## **Required Materials**

You will need to acquire the following texts (see schedule for reading order):

The Epic of Gilgamesh. Trans. Andrew George. Penguin. ISBN 978-0140449198.

The Holy Bible, New Revised Standard Version. Zondervan. ISBN 9780310902386.

The Trials of Socrates, by Plato. Hackett. ISBN 0872205894.

Dante's Inferno (The Divine Comedy: Volume I, Hell) by Dante Alighieri

Popol Vuh: The Definitive Edition of The Mayan Book of The Dawn of Life and The Glories of Gods and Kings, by Dennis Tedlock ISBN-10: 0684818450

The Plague by Albert Camus, ISBN-10: 0679720219

No Exit and Three Other Plays Paperback by Jean-Paul Sartre  
ISBN-10: 0679725164

### **Weekly Quotations – worth 20% of the final course grade**

Before class every week, you will post quotations from our class texts that you found interesting or confusing to our Canvas site discussion board. These questions must be posted a full 24 hours before Monday's class. In 3-4 sentences, following your quotation, you must post a question about the quotation, articulate what you think this quotation means, and briefly state why it is important to the themes we discuss in class. This assignment helps you meet IH Program goal 1 as well as honing your critical thinking and close reading skills. This assignment is graded pass/fail. In class, we will discuss and read the questions you have posed related to the quote. With this in mind, your questions should be designed to stir debate and discussion. Good questions begin with "why" or "how." A rubric for these portion of the class will be provided online.

### **Participation – worth 20% of the final course grade**

This portion of your grade reflects your participation in in-class activities such as games, debates, discussions and your final project presentations. I expect everyone to demonstrate their engagement with the texts by discussing them aloud with the entire class on a regular basis. If you are introverted, you may have to push yourself to speak up; if you are extroverted, you may have to reign yourself in. You should bring the class text with you each day because I expect your comments and questions to include specific reference to and quotation from the day's reading. You may also reference the aforementioned online quotation submissions. Learning how to follow an intellectual discussion closely with an eye to jumping in yourself to make useful, text-centered contributions requires considerable mental agility, listening skills, and communication skills, and is much more work than sitting back and listening, which is why I require your active, vocal participation.

### **Midterm exam – worth 20% of the final course grade**

The midterm exam will be online and consist of short-answer questions. Students write several short (one paragraph) responses to a variety of prompts about the texts we have read up to that point in the semester and/or information from lectures.

**Final exam – worth 20% of the final course grade**

The final exam follows the same format as the midterm except that the final exam is cumulative and as such builds on all other assignments to that point in order to help you hone your skills in all IH Program learning goals and all GenEd learning goals listed above.

**Project -- 20% of the final course grade**

For this project, you will create a multimedia presentation in the format of your choosing. Your goal will be to creatively visualize and describe and compare two of the philosophies in relation to the course themes. For this project, I want you to be creative, critical, and reflective in regard to the content we have discussed in class. You will have the option of using video tools, virtual reality, imaging editing, audio, and other formats that can be approved by the instructor. Along with your multimedia piece, you will submit (online) a short 2-3 page paper explaining how your multi-media project implores viewers or listeners to understand the themes which you have chosen to represent. More details and a rubric will be provided in class and online.

Grading Policy I strive to return graded work in two weeks' time. I will post participation grades at the middle and end of the semester.

If you would like to question or challenge a grade, you need to follow certain guidelines in order to be respectful of my time, effort, and expertise.

- Please wait at least 24 hours after receiving your grade to speak with me about it. I put time and thought into your grade; I would appreciate it if you did the same. Please frame your queries and comments with specific reference to the relevant grading rubric. Please check to ensure that you have accessed any comments I left for you on Canvas as well as the graded version of the rubric. Instructions on how to access graded rubrics are on Canvas's site at this link: <https://community.canvaslms.com/docs/DOC-10491-421267891>.

- Please do remember that while the work for this class can be challenging, your job in this class is to improve your skills and gain new ones, not to coast on your current strengths. Please take seriously the skills on which each assignment asks you to work.

I do not give extra credit assignments. You need to do the best you can on these assignments.

**This is the grading scale I use. I do not round up.**

A = 94-100 B+ = 87-89 C+ = 77-79 D+ = 67-69 F = 0 to 59 A- = 90-93 B = 84-86 C = 74-76 D = 64-66 B- = 80-83 C- = 70-73 D- = 60-63

**Course Resources**

Access your course materials and view your grades on Canvas (<https://templeu.instructure.com/>)  
Receive help with your writing on Temple University Writing Center

(<http://www.temple.edu/writingctr/>) • Obtain 24/7 technology assistance o Computer Services Helpdesk (<http://www.temple.edu/helpdesk>) • Obtain tutoring o Beginning in the third week of the semester, the Intellectual Heritage Program offers tutoring for Intellectual Heritage Program classes. The tutoring schedule will be posted by the third week of the semester on the Intellectual Heritage website (<http://www.cla.temple.edu/ih/Courses.html>).

### **Other Resources**

Temple has resources to help if you are stressed, anxious, depressed, or suffering from trauma or mental health issues, big and small. Most of those resources can be found at the following sites:  
o Tuttleman Counseling Services (<https://counseling.temple.edu>) o Temple Psychology Social Phobia Clinic (<https://sites.temple.edu/anxiety/>)

If you are hungry or otherwise in need, you can contact the CARE Team (<https://careteam.temple.edu>) in the Office of the Dean of Students for support. • Emergency expenses? The CARE Team administers an Emergency Student Aid Fund (<https://careteam.temple.edu/emergency-student-aid-0>). TAUP (Temple's faculty union) administers a FAST (Faculty and Students Together) fund as well (<https://taup.org/fast-fund/>). • Hungry? The Cherry Pantry (<https://studentaffairs.temple.edu/cherry-pantry>) has food – and basic toiletries, too. • Need a safe and stable place to live? The CARE Team has helpful resources for housing (<https://careteam.temple.edu/housing-resources>).

Finally, please feel free to speak to me privately if you are comfortable doing so. It may be that together we can come up with some other way to get you the help that you need.

**Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting Requirement** Please be aware that as a faculty member, I am also considered a mandatory reporter. I hope that you will feel able to share personal information with me if you wish to do so (and only if you wish to do so), and I will consider all such conversations private to the extent that I am legally allowed to do so. However, as a mandatory reporter, if you share information with me about sexual misconduct or criminal behavior in general, I must share that information with the University. If you wish to speak with someone more confidentially, please contact Tuttleman Counseling Services ([counseling.temple.edu](https://counseling.temple.edu)) at 215.204.7276.

You can report any alleged violations to the Title IX Coordinator in the Office of Equal Opportunity Compliance at 215.204.3283. Reports to law enforcement can be made to the Temple University Police Department at 215.204.1234 (1-1234 from a campus phone). Additional resources are available at this link: <https://sexualmisconduct.temple.edu>.

### **Course Policies**

#### **Academic Freedom and Student and Faculty Rights**

The University has adopted a policy on Student and Faculty Academic Rights and Responsibilities (Policy #03.70.02) that is intended to protect both students and faculty. You may read it in its entirety at [http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy\\_no=03.70.02](http://policies.temple.edu/getdoc.asp?policy_no=03.70.02).

### **Academic Honesty**

When you cheat or plagiarize, you cheat yourself of the opportunity to learn. If you cheat or plagiarize, you will receive a zero for that assignment and you may also fail the course or be reported to the University Disciplinary Committee. Temple University's official statement on academic honesty may be read in full here: <http://bulletin.temple.edu/undergraduate/about-temple-university/studentresponsibilities/>.

### **Class Cancellations**

At times, I may not be able to come to campus – Temple University may have canceled classes due to snow, for example. If I cannot come in to teach, because of snow or for any other reason, you will be required to complete an online assignment instead.

### **Courteous Conduct**

Please be courteous in emailing me. This means you should take the time to address me by name (Professor Peak or Dr. Peak) and sign your own, and that you should strive to avoid an angry or passive-aggressive tone.

Please remember that I am busy and cannot always respond to you right away. I will do my best to respond to your emails within the next business day, during regular business hours. At the beginning, middle, and end of the semester, I receive an unusually high volume of email and my responses may, therefore, take slightly longer.

In the event that you decide to behave disruptively or disrespectfully during class (for example, by sleeping in class or talking or whispering while others are talking), you will receive a zero for your participation grade for that day and a warning email from me. Should you behave problematically a second time, you will receive another zero and another warning. A third offense will automatically lower your participation grade to an F, and any further offenses will result in my lowering your final course grade one full letter grade for each incident. You may also be asked to withdraw from the course or risk the failure of the course.

### **Disability Accommodations**

This syllabus and our course website are both designed to be fully accessible, using the guidelines laid out on Temple's Accessible Technology page (<https://accessibility.temple.edu/how-materials/accessible-materials/accessiblesyllabus-template>).

Any student who has a need for accommodation based on the impact of a documented disability, including special accommodations for access to technology resources and electronic instructional materials required for the course, should contact me privately to discuss the specific situation by the end of the second week of classes or as soon as practical. If you have not done so already, please contact Disability Resources and Services (DRS) at 215-204-1280 in 100 Ritter Annex to learn more about the resources available to you. I/we will work with DRS to coordinate reasonable accommodations for all students with documented disabilities. If for any reason there are aspects of this course that prevent you from learning or exclude you, please let me know as soon as possible. We might be able to develop strategies to meet both your needs and the requirements of the course—for example, if you have anxieties about participating in class, we

can meet and discuss ways to make that experience less fraught. Further information is available at <http://disabilityresources.temple.edu/>

### **Incomplete Grades**

Incomplete grades are given only in unusual and grave circumstances, such as severe and documented illness. If you think you qualify for an incomplete grade, you need to make arrangements with me before final grades are due.

### **Late and Make-Up Work**

You may only make up an exam in the event of unusual and grave circumstances, such as severe and documented illness. You need to contact me as soon as possible to discuss scheduling your make-up exam. Make-up exams will consist of questions different from those on the regular exam.

Late assignments will lose 5 points for each 24-hour period they are late, starting as soon as they are late. You may not make up smaller assignments such as notebook entries, quizzes, or discussion board posts.

### **Technology**

You need to check Canvas frequently, as I often send important announcements this way. If you have a smartphone, I recommend that you download the Canvas app.

You are responsible for turning in your work on time. I will only consider your work turned in when I actually receive it, in a format that I can open (.doc, .docx, .pages, .rtf, or .pdf). In order to ensure that you can turn your work in on time, you need to back up all of your work to the cloud using a service such as Owlbox, Dropbox, or iCloud. It is your responsibility to make sure that you do not lose an assignment by backing up your work regularly.

If you experience a power outage, you need to travel to a location that does have power in order to turn in your work. Emailing me to tell me that you cannot turn in your work because you do not have access to the internet is unacceptable; if you have access to email, you have access to the internet. If your work has been properly backed up, you will be able to access it even from someone else's smartphone in order to upload it to Canvas or email it to me.

Temple University's Technology Usage policy includes information on unauthorized access, disclosure of passwords, and sharing of accounts. The Temple University Technology Usage Policy can be accessed at <http://policies.temple.edu/PDF/84.pdf>.

### **Schedule of Readings and Assignments**

This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced through Canvas. All readings/films should be completed before the beginning of class on the day listed. Works marked with an asterisk (\*) are posted to our Canvas site.

<u>Week 1 Starts:</u>	<u>8/26/2019</u>	
Monday		Introduction
Wednesday		Introduction and Epic of Gilgamesh tablets 1–5 (pgs. 1–15)
Friday		Epic of Gilgamesh (pgs. 15–30)
<u>Week 2 Starts:</u>	<u>9/2/2019</u>	
Monday		Epic of Gilgamesh (pgs. 31–45)
Wednesday		Epic of Gilgamesh (pgs. 46–60)
Friday		Epic of Gilgamesh (pgs. 60–99)
<u>Week 3 Starts:</u>	<u>9/9/2019</u>	
Monday		Background on the Maya
Wednesday		Popol Vuh part 1
Friday		Popol Vuh part 2
<u>Week 4 Starts:</u>	<u>9/16/2019</u>	
Monday		Popol Vuh part 3
Wednesday		Popol Vuh part 4
Friday		Maya Activity and Discussion
<u>Week 5 Starts:</u>	<u>9/23/2019</u>	
Monday		Divine Comedy - Inferno - Canto 1-10
Wednesday		Divine Comedy - Inferno - Canto 11-15
Friday		Divine Comedy - Inferno - Canto 16-20
<u>Week 6 Starts:</u>	<u>9/30/2019</u>	
Monday		Activity: Comparing the Afterlife
Wednesday		Activity: Reflecting - What does your afterlife mean for the good life?
Friday		The Trials of Socrates 1-25
<u>Week 7 Starts:</u>	<u>10/7/2019</u>	
Monday		The Trials of Socrates 26-61
Wednesday		The Trials of Socrates 62-83
Friday		Activity: In Class Trial
<u>Week 8 Starts:</u>	<u>10/14/2019</u>	
Monday		Activity: In Class Trial
Wednesday		Existentialism: Discussions (Reading and video to be assigned)
Friday		No Exit: in-class-play
<u>Week 9 Starts:</u>	<u>10/21/2019</u>	
Monday		No Exit: in-class-play
Wednesday		No Exit: in-class-play
Friday		No Exit - Discussion
<u>Week 10 Starts:</u>	<u>10/28/2019</u>	
Monday		Ecclesiastes and the search for meaning
Wednesday		Ecclesiastes and the search for meaning
Friday		The Absurd: Meaning and nothing Introduction to the Plague and Camus
<u>Week 11 Starts:</u>	<u>11/4/2019</u>	
Monday		The Plague pages to be determined
Wednesday		The Plague pages to be determined

Friday		The Plague pages to be determined
<u>Week 12 Starts:</u>	<u>11/11/2019</u>	
Monday		The Plague pages to be determined
Wednesday		The Plague pages to be determined
Friday		Comparing Contemporary and ancient perspectives on life, after life and death
<u>Week 13 Starts:</u>	<u>11/18/2019</u>	Conference Week
Monday		
Wednesday	11/20/2019	Video
Friday	11/22/2019	Study day
<u>Week 14 Starts:</u>	<u>11/25/2019</u>	Thanksgiving Week
Monday		No Class
Wednesday		No Class
Friday		No Class
<u>Week 15 Starts:</u>	<u>12/2/2019</u>	
Monday		Student Presentations
Wednesday		Student Presentations
Friday		Student Presentations
<u>Week 16 Starts:</u>	<u>12/9/2019</u>	Student Presentations - Classes End
<b>Final Exams</b>	12/12/2019	Final Exams - 12/18/2019