

## World, Text, and Image I

# *Mankind's Search for Meaning and Well-Being*

[Dr. Matt Stith](#) and [Dr. Robert Sterken](#)

HNRS 1351.005—Fall 2025 TuTh 9:00a - 10:50a in the HNRS Classroom HPR 135

### Dr. Stith's Contact Information:

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Office Hours: Mon., 1:00-4:00pm; and by appointment.

### Dr. Sterken's Contact Information:

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Office Hours: T/R 911a to 2p; and by appointment.

**Course Description:** (from catalog): Comparative study in the humanities and social sciences from antiquity to the Renaissance. This seminar course takes an interdisciplinary approach to literature, history, and art of this period. This course is writing intensive. Prerequisite: Invitation by the Honors Committee. Satisfies core requirement for Language, Philosophy, & Culture.

## Student Learning Outcomes:

- To develop and improve critical thinking and writing skills about ancient and modern versions of the self and the other (papers and discussions).
- To learn how to read critically, analyze, and interpret philosophical texts (papers and discussions).
- To define and study figures of meaning and well-being as they were conceptualized by the peoples of the Ancient Eastern and Western Traditions (papers).
- To differentiate the characteristics of Eastern and Western thought and world views in the Classical and Early Modern Eras (papers and discussions).

## Required Readings:

1. Aristotle, "Moral Goodness" and "Pleasure and the Life of Happiness" (340 BCE). PDF in Canvas.
2. Cicero, "On Duties" (44 BCE). PDF in Canvas.
3. Seneca, "On the Shortness of Life" (49 CE). PDF in Canvas.
4. The Analects of Confucius (479 BCE), by Burton Watson. ISBN: 9780231141659.

To avoid confusion in class, all students must use these editions/translations. Students are required to bring appropriate books to class to supplement discussion.

## Assessment of Learning:

Weekly Journal Entries: 30%

Analytical Essay #1: 10%

Analytical Essay #2: 15%

Analytical Essay #3: 15%

Presentation Eudaimonia 15%

Class Participation: 15%

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## Course Assignments:

**1. Analytical Essay Papers:** Thrice during the semester, students will turn in a two-page, double-spaced, 12-point font, type-written essay with 1-inch margins. In these papers, the student will be asked to discuss some aspect of the readings. These papers must have and support a thesis.

**2. Eudaimonia Reflection Video Presentation.** Objective: To demonstrate an understanding of the concept of Eudaimonia in the context of the entire semester of class discussions and readings.

1. Create a 5 to 7-minute video presentation in which you address the Greek word Eudaimonia in the context of our course this semester.
2. Begin by providing a brief introduction to the concept of Eudaimonia, its origins, and its significance in ancient Greek philosophy.
3. Reflect on the various class discussions and readings (Confucius, Aristotle, Cicero, and Seneca) throughout the semester that have touched upon themes related to Eudaimonia, such as virtue ethics, happiness, flourishing, and the good life.
4. Discuss how the concept of Eudaimonia has influenced your understanding of ethics and morality, and how it has shaped your values and beliefs.
5. Use specific examples from class readings, discussions, and personal experiences to support your reflections on Eudaimonia.
6. Conclude your presentation by summarizing the key takeaways from your exploration of Eudaimonia throughout the semester.

Submission:

- Upload your video presentation here in Canvas by November 30th.
- Be prepared to present your video in class during the last week of the semester.

### ***3. Weekly Handwritten Journal Notes and Class Reflections***

1. Each week during class, you are required to take handwritten notes on the topics discussed, key points, and questions. Drs. Stith and Sterken will have questions for every class meeting.
2. After each class, take some time to reflect on the in-class discussion. Consider what you learned, any insights gained, and how the material relates to your own experiences or understanding.
3. At the end of each week, use your phone and make your handwritten notes and class reflections into a PDF document.
4. Upload the PDF document to the designated assignment submission here on Canvas.

Assignment Requirements:

- Handwritten notes should be legible and organized, capturing the main ideas and key points discussed in class.
- Class reflections should be thoughtful and demonstrate your engagement with the material and discussions.

Grading Criteria:

- Completeness and accuracy of handwritten notes.
- Depth and insightfulness of class reflections.

Submission Deadline:

- The PDF document must be uploaded to Canvas by the end of each week (late assignments will not be accepted). This assignment is designed to encourage active participation and reflection on the course material. Your handwritten notes and class reflections will serve as a valuable resource for reviewing and synthesizing the content covered in class.

***4. Attendance: Your attendance*** in this class is not only mandatory but also very important. Your contributions will be invaluable, and you need to be in each meeting. You will be allowed two unquestioned absences. After the second absence, each additional absence will result in a full letter-grade reduction (15%) of your attendance grade. Obviously, this is a serious matter, so try to plan accordingly. Unquestioned absences include sickness, job interviews, personal matters, etc. Therefore, if you anticipate having to miss class at any point during the semester, please plan accordingly. If a university activity will cause you to miss more than two classes, please see your instructors (just let us know). Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious observance are requested to inform us by the second class meeting of such absences.

***5. Participation:*** Reading assignments are listed in Canvas and will be discussed each week in class. All students are expected to have read the assigned material by the beginning of class. Partial completion of an assignment is unacceptable; coming to class unprepared will result in a full letter-grade reduction (10%) of your participation grade. On the other hand,

please understand that while we expect you to have read the assigned readings, we do not necessarily expect you to have mastered them. Like all readers, you will have questions and perhaps even occasional problems with these texts. That's part of the reading process. In such cases, please be sure to bring those problems and questions to class so that we can discuss them as a group. **We strongly suggest that you take notes on each text while you read it, focusing on its central ideas, characters, and plot points. Such careful reading will prepare you for discussion, a vital part of this class.** Also, be sure to plan. Because of scheduling constraints, reading assignments are not always evenly divided. The participation grade also includes active participation in the group project at the end of the semester.

***A note on lateness:*** Attendance will be taken at the beginning of the class meeting. If you come in late, it is your responsibility to make sure that your name has been recorded on the roll. Repeated lateness indicates a lack of respect for your colleagues and professors; to avoid showing such disrespect, please be on time or you may be denied entry.

***A note on academic honesty:*** Any sort of unauthorized aid, such as copying or loaning homework assignments, talking, or the use of notes during tests or quizzes, will not be tolerated. Plagiarism, the unacknowledged use of another person's language or ideas, will not be tolerated. If you cheat on anything in this class, you will receive an "F" for the course. *If you are unsure of what constitutes cheating in this class, see the University document at the end of this syllabus.* Ignorance of the rules will not be tolerated as an excuse for cheating.

***A note on the University Writing Center:*** Located in BUS 202, the UT-Tyler Writing Center provides professional writing tutoring for all students in all disciplines. If you wish to use the Writing Center, you should plan for a minimum of two hour-long tutorials per assignment: the first to provide an initial consultation and drafting plan, and the second to follow up. Be prepared to take an active role in your learning—you will be expected to write and/or discuss your work during your tutorial. While Writing Center tutors are happy to provide constructive criticism and teach effective writing techniques, under no circumstances will they fix your paper for you. Appointments: 565-5995. For more information: [www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter](http://www.uttyler.edu/writingcenter).

***A note on student absence due to religious observance or athletics.*** Any student who will miss any class days during the semester because of religious observance or participation in university athletics must inform the instructors of this course no later than the second day of class.

N.B. Please carefully read the final sheet of this syllabus, which contains university-wide policies on disability services, emergency procedures, etc.

## **Course Schedule/Readings & Discussion Topics:**

***Please note: This schedule is subject to revision. Details and dates are found under the "modules" tab to the left in Canvas.***

**Module 1 - Introductions and What Makes for a Well-Lived Life?**

**Module 2** - Confucianism (479 BCE).

**Module 3** - Aristotle, “Moral Goodness” and “Pleasure and the Life of Happiness” (340 BCE).

**Module 4** - Cicero, “On Duties” (44 BCE).

**Module 5** - Seneca, “On the Shortness of Life” (49 CE).

***“Happiness is the meaning and the purpose of life, the whole aim and end of human existence.” ~ Aristotle***

# UT Tyler Students Resources, Rights, & Responsibilities

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## [Student Resources](#)

### [University Policies and Information](#)

#### Student Resources:

Faculty can update student resources to provide additional supports appropriate for each course.

Resources to assist you in the course

- UT Tyler Student Accessibility and Resource (SAR) Office (provides needed accommodations to students with document needs related to access and learning)
- UT Tyler Writing Center
- The Mathematics Learning Center
- UT Tyler PASS Tutoring Center
- UT Tyler Supplemental Instruction
- Upswing (24/7 online tutoring) - covers nearly all undergraduate course areas
- Robert Muntz Library and Library Liaison.
- Canvas 101 (learn to use Canvas, proctoring, Unicheck, and other software)
- Digital Support Toolkit (for supported courses only. Students are automatically enrolled in the toolkit for supported courses)
- LIB 422 -- Computer Lab where students can take a proctored exam
- The Career Success Center
- UT Tyler Testing Center
- Office of Research & Scholarship Design and Data Analysis Lab

Resources available to UT Tyler Students

- UT Tyler Counseling Center (available to all students)
- MySSP App (24/7 access to Student Support Program counseling through phone or chat and online wellness resources available in a variety of languages)

- Student Assistance and Advocacy Center
- Military and Veterans Success Center (supports for our military-affiliated students)
- UT Tyler Patriot Food Pantry
- UT Tyler Financial Aid and Scholarships
- UT Tyler Student Business Services (pay or set up payment plans, etc.)
- UT Tyler Registrar's Office
- Office of International Programs
- Title IX Reporting
- Patriots Engage (available to all students. Get engaged at UT Tyler.)

## University Policies and Information

### Withdrawing from Class

Students may withdraw (drop) from this course using the Withdrawal Portal. Withdrawing (dropping) this course can impact your Financial Aid, Scholarships, Veteran Benefits, Exemptions, Waivers, International Student Status, housing, and degree progress. Please speak with your instructors, consider your options, speak with your advisor, and visit the One-Stop Service Center (STE 230) or email [enroll@uttyler.edu](mailto:enroll@uttyler.edu) to get a complete review of your student account and the possible impacts to withdrawing. We want you to make an informed decision. UT Tyler faculty and staff are here for you and often can provide additional support options or assistance. Make sure to carefully read the implications for withdrawing from a course and the instructions on using the Withdrawal portal.. Texas law prohibits students from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career\*. The six courses dropped includes those from other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities. Consider the impact withdrawing from this class has on your academic progress and other areas, such as financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and Enrollment Services for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean you get a full refund. Please see the Tuition and Fee Refund Schedule. CAUTION #2: All international students must check with the Office of International Programs before withdrawing. All international students are required to enroll full-time for fall and spring terms. CAUTION #3: All UT Tyler Athletes must check

with the Athletic Academic Coordinator before withdrawing from a course. CAUTION #4: All veterans or military-affiliated students should consult with the Military and Veterans Success Center.

\* Students who began college for the first time before 2007 are exempt from this law.

## Artificial Intelligence Statement

UT Tyler is committed to exploring and using artificial intelligence (AI) tools as appropriate for the discipline and task undertaken. We encourage discussing AI tools' ethical, societal, philosophical, and disciplinary implications. All uses of AI should be acknowledged as this aligns with our commitment to honor and integrity, as noted in UT Tyler's Honor Code. Faculty and students must not use protected information, data, or copyrighted materials when using any AI tool. Additionally, users should be aware that AI tools rely on predictive models to generate content that may appear correct but is sometimes shown to be incomplete, inaccurate, taken without attribution from other sources, and/or biased. Consequently, an AI tool should not be considered a substitute for traditional approaches to research. You are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the information you submit. Misusing AI tools that violate the guidelines specified for this course is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy. Refer to the About This Course section of the UT Tyler Syllabus Module for specific information on appropriate use of AI in your course(s).

## Final Exam Policy

Final examinations are administered as scheduled. If unusual circumstances require that special arrangements be made for an individual student or class, the Dean of the appropriate college, after consultation with the faculty member involved, may authorize an exception to the schedule. Faculty members must maintain student final examination papers for a minimum of three months following the examination date.

## Incomplete Grade Policy

If a student, because of extenuating circumstances, is unable to complete all of the requirements for a course by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in place of a grade only when all of the following conditions are met: (a) the student has been making satisfactory progress in the course; (b) the student is unable to complete all coursework or final exam due to unusual circumstances that are beyond personal control and are acceptable to the instructor, and (c) the student presents these reasons before the time that the final grade



roster is due. The semester credit hours for an Incomplete will not be used to calculate the grade point average. The student and the instructor must submit an Incomplete Form detailing the work required and the time by which the work must be completed to their respective department chair or college dean for approval. The time limit established must not exceed one year. Should the student fail to meet all of the work for the course within the time limit, then the instructor may assign zeros to the unfinished work, compute the course average for the student, and assign the appropriate grade. If a grade has yet to be assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F, or NC. If the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis, this may adversely affect the student's academic standing.

## Grade Appeal Policy

Disputes regarding grades must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade by filing a Grade Appeal Form with the instructor who assigned the grade. A grade appeal should be used when the student thinks the final course grade awarded does not reflect the grades earned on assessments or follow the grading scale as documented in the syllabus. The student should provide the rationale for the grade appeal and attach supporting document about the grades earned. The form should be sent via email to the faculty member who assigned the grade. The faculty member reviews the rationale and supporting documentation and completes the instruction section of the form. The instructor should return the form to the student, even if a grade change is made at this level. If the student is not satisfied with the decision, the student may appeal in writing to the Chairperson of the department from which the grade was issued. In situations where there is an allegation of capricious grading, discrimination, or unlawful actions, appeals may go beyond the Chairperson to the Dean or the Dean's designee of the college from which the grade was issued, with that decision being final. The Grade Appeal form is found in the

## Registrar's Form Library.

NOTE: The Grade Appeal Form is different from the Application for Appeal form submitted to the Student Appeals Committee, which does not rule on grade disputes as described in this policy.

## Disability/Accessibility Services

In accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) and the ADA Amendments Act (ADAAA), the University of Texas at Tyler offers accommodations to students with learning, physical, and/or psychological disabilities. If you have a disability, including a non-visible diagnosis such as a learning disorder, chronic

illness, TBI, PTSD, ADHD, or a history of modifications or accommodations in a previous educational environment, you are encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler/> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact you when your application has been submitted and an appointment with the Assistant Director Student Accessibility and Resources/ADA Coordinator. For more information, including filling out an application for services, please visit the SAR webpage at <https://www.utt Tyler.edu/disability-services>, the SAR office located in the Robert Muntz Library, LIB 460, email [saroffice@utt Tyler.edu](mailto:saroffice@utt Tyler.edu), or call 903.566.7079."

## Military Affiliated Students

UT Tyler honors the service and sacrifices of our military-affiliated students. If you are a student who is a veteran, on active duty, in the reserves or National Guard, or a military spouse or dependent, please stay in contact with your faculty member if any aspect of your present or prior service or family situation makes it difficult for you to fulfill the requirements of a course or creates disruption in your academic progress. It is important to make your faculty member aware of any complications as far in advance as possible. Your faculty member is willing to work with you and, if needed, put you in contact with university staff who are trained to assist you. The Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC) has campus resources for military-affiliated students. The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@utt Tyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@utt Tyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.

## Students on an F-1 Visa

To remain in compliance with Federal Regulations requirements you must do the following:

- Traditional face-to-face classes: Attend classes on the regular meeting days/times.
- Hybrid Classes: Attend all face-to-face classes convened by the instructor according to the schedule set for your specific course.
- Online course: Only one online course can count toward your full-time enrollment. Students are expected to be fully engaged and meet all requirements for the online course.

## Academic Honesty and Academic Misconduct

The UT Tyler community comes together to pledge that "Honor and integrity will not allow me to lie, cheat, or steal, nor to accept the actions of those who do." Therefore, we enforce the Student Conduct and

Discipline policy in the Student Manual Of Operating Procedures (Section 8).

## FERPA

UT Tyler follows the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) as noted in University Policy

5.2.3. The course instructor will follow all requirements to protect your confidential information.

## Absence for Official University Events or Activities

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for University Events or Activities as noted in the Catalog.

## Absence for Religious Holidays

This course follows the practices related to Excused Absences for Religious Holy Days as noted in the Catalog.

## Absence for Pregnant Students

This course follows the requirements of Texas Laws SB 412, SB 459, SB 597/HB 1361 to meet the needs of pregnant and parenting students. Part of the supports afforded pregnant students includes excuse absences. Faculty who are informed by a student of needing this support should make a referral to the

Parenting Student Liaison. NOTE: Students must work with the Parenting Student Liaison in order to receive these supports. Students should reach out to the Parenting Student Liaison at [parents@uttyler.edu](mailto:parents@uttyler.edu) and also complete the Pregnant and Parenting Self-Reporting Form.

## Campus Carry

We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in this class. License holders are expected to behave responsibly and keep a handgun secure and concealed. More information is available at <http://www.uttyler.edu/about/campus-carry/index.php>.