

HNRS 1351.060—Fall 2021

World, Text, and Image I

Mankind's Search for Meaning and Well Being

Dr. Matt Stith and Dr. Robert Sterken

TR 9:30a–10:50a in Room: Arts and Sciences 257

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 Texts:

1. *Sapiens: A Brief History of Humankind* Paperback by Yuval Noah Harari. ISBN-13 : 978-0062316110.

2. *The Path: What Chinese Philosophers Can Teach Us About the Good Life* by Michael Puett. ISBN-13: 978-1476777849.

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

Grade Breakdown:

Analytical papers (1st x 10% and 2nd x 15%)	25%
Paper 3	25%
Reading Worksheets	35%
Attendance	5%
Participation & Group Project	10%

Analytical Papers: Thrice during the course of 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. All writing assignments will be evaluated according to the following rubric:

Reading Worksheets: There will be six reading worksheets due throughout the semester. These are meant to help students think carefully and critically about the readings. Each worksheet will consist of two or three guided questions, and no outside sources are allowed. Answers to each question should be approximately 100 words long, and should be written in a single paragraph.

Attendance: Zoom 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 (10%) of your attendance grade. Obviously, this is a serious matter, so try to plan ahead. 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. 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.

Participation: Reading assignments are clearly listed below. 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 ahead. 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 role. 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 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.

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

Schedule/Assignment List:

(Please note: This schedule is subject to revision)

World, Text, & Image 1: Schedule				
Week #	Date	Class Topic	Readings	Date Due
Week 1	8/24	Course introduction, syllabus, and Thinking like a lifelong scholar.		
Week 2	8/31	Timeline of History. The Cognitive Revolution	Harari Part 1	
	9/5	The Tree of Knowledge. Adam & Eve	Harari Part 1	
Week 3	9/7	The Flood	Harari Part 1	
Week 4	9/14	The Age of Complacency	Puett p. 5	
	9/12	The Age of Philosophy	Puett p. 15	
Week 5	9/21	On Relationships	Puett p. 23	
Week 6	9/28	On Decisions	Puett p. 55	
Week 7	10/5	The Agricultural Revolution: History's Biggest Fraud	Harari Part 2	
		Building Pyramids	Harari Part 2	
Week 8	10/12	Memory Overload	Harari Part 2	
		There is no Justice in History	Harari Part 2	
Week 9	10/19	The Arrow of History	Harari Part 3	
Week 10	10/26	On Influence	Puett p. 87	
		On Vitality	Puett p. 118	
Week 11	11/2	One Spontaneity	Puett p. 141	
Week 12	11/9	On Humanity	Puett p. 163	
Week 13	11/16	The Scent of Money	Harari Part 3	
		Imperial Visions	Harari Part 3	
Week 14	11/30	The Law of Religion	Harari Part 3	
		The Discovery of Ignorance	Harari Part 4	
Week 15	12/7-10	Final Paper Due		Dec 10 at 11:59p