

# **Human Being and Citizen**

HUMA 12300

Autumn 2020

**Professor:**

**Office Hours:**

Zoom link under Modules-->Zoom links and other info.

**Writing Specialist:**

Office Hours by appointment

## **1. Course Description**

Human Being and Citizen explores the needs and aspirations that draw human beings together in formal and informal communities and the problems that we encounter as social animals in the pursuit of human flourishing. We investigate matters of justice, the law, and leadership, and consider these together with modes of human interaction from contractual relations to friendship and kinship ties in both their legislative and affective dimensions (especially love, anger, shame, grief, and faith). We think about the role of divinity (from Greek mythology to modern Christianity) in shaping the ways our texts conceive of these topics, and we consider ideas about the formation of the self. Our readings are predominantly drawn from the western tradition—Homer, Plato, Aristotle, Augustine, Dante, Shakespeare, Kant, among others—and these canonical texts do not go unquestioned. Rather, by entering into conversation with one another, they provide the intellectual resources for an inquiry that leads ultimately into an exploration of contemporary questions of rights, representation, and belonging.

The fall quarter explores the ways that Ancient Greek and Abrahamic texts conceive of, express ideals about, and articulate tensions in conceptions and practices of justice, human and divine law, and emotion. We examine the ways these conceptions figure in literary, philosophical and religious texts concerned with rupture and continuity in the social order. We consider the ways human beings come together in families, armies, and under the rule of law and how to understand what binds such structures of meaning-making and social practice. We do so, in the present quarter, in the presence of personal, political, and technological challenges. We do so under conditions of geological, political, and personal uncertainty that will no doubt inform our engagement. Let's all do so with principles of charity, rigor, and kindness.

## **2. Texts and Editions, in reading order:**

Plato, *Republic*. Trans. GMA Grube, revised by CDC Reeve. Hackett, 1992. ISBN-10: 0872201368

ISBN-13: 978-0872201361

Plato, *Symposium*. Trans. Alexander Nehemas and Paul Woodruff. Hackett, 1989. ISBN-10: 0872200760. ISBN-13: 978-0872200760.

Homer, *The Iliad*. Trans. Caroline Alexander. New York: Harper Collins, 2015. ISBN 978-0-06-204628-4

Sophocles, *Antigone*. In *Three Theban Plays*. Trans. Robert Fagles. ISBN-10: 0140444254

ISBN-13: 978-0140444254

*Genesis*. Trans. Robert Alter. New York, NY: W. W. Norton, 1997. ISBN 039331670X

### 3. Class Meetings

During Week 1, we will meet as one group on Zoom during both our Tuesday and our Thursday class times.

All Thursday classes will be on Zoom during our scheduled class times.

**Tuesdays after Week 1** will require a bit more attention from all of us. Here is the plan:

- You will be surveyed and assigned to one of two Cohorts for your section, consisting of 9 or 10 students. One of these Cohorts will meet on Tuesdays for 40 minutes beginning at the start of class time.
  - Morning class: If you are in the first Cohort for the 11:20 class, you will begin class at 11:20 and have class until a few minutes before 12. If you are in the second Cohort, you will begin at 12 noon and have class until 12:40.
  - Afternoon class: The first Cohort will meet from 2:40 to a little bit before 3:20; the second Cohort will meet from 3:20 to 4:00.
- In Weeks 1, 3, 5, 7, and the last week of class, these Cohorts will meet on Zoom. The point of breaking into smaller groups this way is so that we can have a more active and dialogical session in which you are better able to talk and build ideas with one another. This is, of course, an experiment in making everyone comfortable and encouraging participation, even via screens. If you just can't get enough of HBC, you are welcome to "attend" both discussion groups. I would simply ask that when you are attending the group to which you were not assigned, you make room for those assigned to the group to do most of the talking.
- I hope, in Weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8, to meet the Cohorts in person for our Tuesday classes. The dates for these possible in-person classes are as follows: 10/6, 10/20, 11/3, 11/17.

I will make every effort to remind you of these in-person days. They are listed in the course schedule. Do put them in your calendars.

**There will be makeup sessions for anyone who is feeling the least bit unwell. If you are feeling even remotely unwell, do not come to a live session.** In this and all things, please exercise extreme caution. Similarly, if I so much as have a tickle in my throat or the least physical unease, I will move these sessions online and send you an email saying I've done so.

Weather and appropriate space permitting, I may try to hold some in-person sessions outdoors. Check your email. The default, though, is to meet on these weeks in our assigned classroom. (This is Stuart 101 for the 11:20/12 Cohorts and SHFE 203 for the 2:40/3:20 Cohorts.)

### **General Weekly Class Structure—**

**On Mondays by 9 pm:** Contributions to Class Discussion Boards due

**On Tuesdays:** Complete the assigned reading for the day. Read all of the discussion board posts of your classmates and be ready to revisit and continue the written conversation.

I am aiming for Tuesdays to be avid discussion days. There are instructions about the Class Discussion Boards pinned to the top of the Discussion section of our course Canvas site. Remember to check the schedule and your calendar regarding class times on Tuesdays. Again, we will try to meet in person in Cohorts in Weeks 2, 4, 6, and 8. And we will meet in Cohorts on Zoom in Weeks 3, 5, 7, 9.

I will post Writing Board instructions by 7 pm on Tuesdays.

**On Thursdays by 9 am:** Contributions to Writing Boards due

**For Thursday Zoom Classes:** Complete the assigned reading for the day. Read the Writing Board contributions. During class time, I will be providing you with background information, modeling ways of engaging with the text, setting discussion questions, and answering questions. We will also sometimes use the famous Zoom breakout rooms on Thursday to pool resources and work collaboratively.

**On Fridays by 5 pm,** I will post the Class Discussion Board topics for you to respond to before 9 pm Monday.

**\*\*As scheduled by T Lacy, our Writing Specialist:** Engagement with recorded materials and attendance at three Writing Seminars during the quarter. I will just mention here that T makes really great recorded learning materials. Word on the street is that students watch and re-watch them. Also, this is a writing-intensive class and T is excellent at teaching writing. Do what T tells you to do!

**\*\*As indicated in the weekly course schedule:** Larger non-weekly assignments (Argument Exercise, Iliad Essay, Genesis Essay, Collaborative Project)

#### **4. Grading**

Engagement (see 5a, below) :	10%
Class Discussion Boards (see 5b):	20%
Writing Boards (see 5c):	10%
Symposium Argument Exercise (see 5c):	10%
Iliad essay 1 (see 5c):	20%
Genesis essay (see 5c):	20%
Collaborative Projects (see 5d):	10%

#### **5. Explanation of Grading Components**

##### **5a. Engagement:**

Attendance is part of engagement. Come to class. If you can't come to class, send me an email. If you miss more than 2 classes and there is not a serious reason for missing, your grade will be affected.

Come to class ready to think. Be thinking about class and its topics when you are not in class. Be responsive to your classmates and their ideas. Try to speak in class at least once every class session, whether it's on Zoom or otherwise. Make friends with your classmates. Talk to them about the nerdy things you love. Make use of Writing Tutors, one another, and your instructors to improve your writing. I am not sure what the quarter will hold in terms of making use of campus. Typically, there are many lectures, art exhibitions, theater performances, and the like that resonate with our course texts and themes. Take advantage of these when you can.

Please be sure to stay in contact via email should anything interfere with your class participation. I will not know what is going on unless you tell me. So please make me aware of tech issues, illness, personal circumstances, etc. and we will try to find workarounds and ways to adapt to circumstances where that is needed.

##### **Engagement on Zoom:**

Zoom meetings will be recorded by default. If you are ill and can't attend class, or if you should run into tech problems that cause you to miss a session, please let me know and I will share the recording. You are also welcome to ask for the recording if you want to use it for review. But please make every effort to be present in class.

I will consider you fully in attendance when your camera is on and you are engaged in the class discussion or group work. If tech problems prevent this, please communicate with me about that.

I don't expect you to stare tragically into the lens during the whole of our Zoom sessions, but it is uncomfortable for anyone in class who is speaking to do so in front of an audience that is invisible. So it is a matter of courtesy to all if we, as a default, keep our cameras on.

We will endeavor to use one Zoom class link all quarter. I will set up a different link for office hours. Both are available Modules tab in Canvas. The meetings will be password protected. Please feel free to tune in a few minutes early if you would like; I will try to be available at least 5 minutes before the session time lest you should want to chat with me.

Keep your microphone unmuted when it's possible. The added step of having to unmute oneself in order to speak is often prohibitive. If you can use headsets, that would be great. Otherwise, figure on muting only in case there is unavoidable background noise.

There are a few gestures that we can use to improve our Zoom room. We will practice these during our first Zoom session. I think it will be less tedious to sit in front of a screen if we all make an effort to engage in this way.

Try to contribute at least once per Zoom session. If you are talkative (like me) try to make sure there is space for everyone to contribute. If you want to be extra-nice, you can point it out if I'm missing the raised finger or hand of a classmate who wants to speak. If you tend to be quiet, think about using the Conversational Moves recommended for our class discussion boards when you are having live conversations too!

We all know that having a conversation on Zoom is extra stressful. It is much harder to "feel" that a comment went over well, or met interested skepticism, or for that matter was understood, when we are all tiny screen heads. Many of you will be uncomfortable talking. So be polite and extra kind to one another. Make an effort to validate and show appreciation for the contributions of others. (I hope the gestures will help with this.) Sometimes helping others speak helps you speak too!

### **5b. Class Discussion Boards:**

Participating effectively on the discussion boards requires careful reading of the week's texts as well as careful consideration of the remarks of your classmates. Plan to read and to read carefully. Plan participate weekly, outside of class meeting time, in discussion boards on Canvas. Use the list of "Conversational Moves" (pinned on the discussion page of our Canvas site) to help make this a good conversation. Over the quarter, experiment with as many of the conversational moves as you can. I may ask you to reflect on your use of these and what you have learned from shaping the discussion in these ways.

### **5c. Writing Boards, Symposium Exercise, and the Two Essays:**

It is an aim of the class to teach you college level writing so smoothly, so gradually, and so regularly and in a way so systematically woven into the way we talk in class and the way you come to read our texts that you will hardly even realize you are learning. However, you probably will realize you are learning, because becoming a good college writer is hard work and we can

only make it so intuitive. It takes, first and foremost, a lot of time and attention. It takes a willingness to think for real about what you want to communicate and why. And it takes brushing away your sense that there is nothing more to learn, and equally your sense that you just aren't good at it.

T and I want to know about your thoughts, and we want you to express them clearly, in ways that are well supported by the text, and in ways that show why you care about them. We *know* that you care about your thoughts, but we also know that students tend to arrive from high school thinking that school writing is something you do to make teachers happy. We want to help you transition beyond that.

We will be working on this on one way or another all the time. Hum core writing can be truly transformative if you take it seriously. The Writing Boards will sometimes ask you to do some very basic-seeming things. Quote a bit of text in a particular way or for a particular purpose. Pull apart a position that a text articulates and show all the joints and ligatures of the argument. Think with it until you have worn it down to fundamentals. It might seem silly at times. It might seem overly technical (and in that sense, hard) at times. It might seem like it has nothing to do with you doing you. I promise it is all worthwhile.

**The Symposium exercise** is called an exercise because its point is to help you build stretch, acuity, agility in dissecting and understanding arguments. It asks for a technical sort of writing. We will spend time during the first three weeks of class working on the skills and talents being asked for in the exercise. You will receive more specific instructions in advance of the deadline. One of our two Group Projects this quarter will involve synthesizing the work of the class on the arguments in this text.

**The Iliad essay** is about developing arguments of your own. (See how we did that? First you analyze arguments and get to know how they make their appearance in texts and conversations. Then we have you make one yourself.)

**The Genesis/Antigone essay** asks again for an argument of your own, this time about texts that make writing arguments about them very challenging. I'll leave it at that for now. Here again, more detailed instructions will follow.

I will remind you as we start to take on these tasks, but will mention now that you will be sharing your writing with classmates. A lot. This will sometimes be for the sake of critique. At other times, it will be because what you write has a part to play in the....

**5d. ...Collaborative Projects!:** We will talk more about the collaborative projects once you have been assigned to Cohorts. There will be a collaborative project on Symposium, and a collaborative project on Iliad. These projects will in different ways collectivize our work into larger products in which we all have a share. Expect that writing you do for other assignments will be shared and made part of this collaborative work.

## 6. **Health and Well-Being**

—Please follow *every* safety guideline outlined in the UChicago Health Pact and every added safety guideline that seems right to you . Please do not come to class if you so much as think you might be unwell. In all contexts, don't be persuaded by others who might seem to have more flexible ideas than you about what is safe. Groupthink risks taking everyone beyond their comfort zones on the spurious idea that everyone (else) is comfortable with what is happening. (Believe it or not, Augustine talks about this and the problems it poses for friendship, which we will read about in *Confessions* in winter quarter.)

If for any reason you are feeling uncomfortable about attending in-person class, please let me know. We all signed up for this awhile ago. Comfort levels can change. Sometimes things happen quickly and I am not always apprised of the very latest campus information. If it is scary over there, please tell me. It is my wish for us to meet in person only to the extent that it can be done with reasonable comfort. If we are not comfortable, we should not meet. If it is unsafe, we should not meet. <https://goforward.uchicago.edu/health-requirements/#healthpact>

These are stressful times. Counseling Services and UChicago Student Wellness can help. There are a range of support and other workshops on offer, as well as scheduled and drop-in therapy sessions. Therapy can be a great resource for getting to know yourself (including your work habits) better. And in our present moment, where there is so much reason to feel stressed or uncertain, these sorts of resources are all the more essential. Links are here: <https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/>

If you are a FLI student (first-generation, low income, or immigrant), you should know about the resources of the Center for College Student Success. It's a fantastic resource with a wide range of offerings. Check it out: <https://college.uchicago.edu/student-services/center-college-student-success>

## **7. Contact, Communication, Learning Atmosphere**

— Please **contact me via email**—[sfenno@uchicago.edu](mailto:sfenno@uchicago.edu)—not via the Canvas messaging system.

—**Office Hours:** I will set office hours and a Zoom link for them via a Google doc where you can sign up for particular time slots. Links will be posted on Canvas.

— **Access to Learning.** I strive to maintain an inclusive learning environment in every sense. You are all welcome and honored in my class. If you have ADA accommodations, please let me know so we can think together about how to make things work best. I will ask you for documentation from Student Disability Services (SDS). If you are unsure whether you qualify for ADA accommodations, by all means contact Student Disability Services at 773-702-6000, or [disabilities@uchicago.edu](mailto:disabilities@uchicago.edu). You can also report an access barrier, ask for services in a particular university facility, and more at <https://equalopportunityprograms.uchicago.edu/accessibility/request-an-accommodation/>

If you are concerned that you may have a learning disability or are otherwise struggling with your schoolwork, Student Health and Counseling Services has an academic skills assessment

program that may be able to help you sort out what is going on: <https://wellness.uchicago.edu/mental-health/academic-skills-assessment-program/>

— **Religious Holidays.** Please let me know if you need to miss class or adjust deadlines to accommodate religious observance. We will work something out. Please check your calendars in advance of signing up for any self-imposed deadlines (mainly, class presentations) that might interfere with such observance.

— **Diversity.** I aim to maintain a productive learning environment based on open communication, collegiality and mutual respect, and non-discrimination. I view the perspectives and backgrounds that students bring to this class as a resource, strength and benefit. I am a member of the FLI network and take matters of inclusion and equality of access to heart. Students of any gender, sexuality, physicality, age, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, religious background, and immigration status are avidly welcome. Any suggestions you might have for promoting a positive and open environment will be appreciated and given serious consideration. Please let me know your preferred name and gender pronouns. If there are circumstances that make our learning environment and activities difficult, I hope you will let me know. I promise to maintain the confidentiality of such discussions.

— **Please communicate!** If you are having tech or health or other issues that inhibit or prohibit your learning in my class, I want to know. We can try find workarounds where that is possible. I won't necessarily know there is a problem unless you tell me.

## **8. Attendance and Course Work**

— Please make every effort to **be present for our class sessions and to complete work on time.** I understand we are all being challenged to work very independently and under difficult conditions. We will do our best in these challenging times. One way you can help make good things happen is by attending class and working outside of class with vigor and integrity when you are able. I and probably all of your professors are working hard to make our collective situation as meaningful and valuable as we can.

— Please make every effort to **submit written work on time.** If you need an extension for non-medical reasons, you will need to ask at least 72 hours in advance of the deadline. Work that is late without permission (or a medical grade emergency) will be penalized for lateness by a +/- per day late. (So, a paper that would earn a B receives a B- if it is one day late; C+ if two days late, etc.)

— **Academic honesty** and integrity is fully expected. You must acknowledge other people's ideas whether you are quoting them directly or paraphrasing them. If you have questions about how or when to cite sources, please consult your instructor, Writing Specialist, or the Writing Tutors. See <https://writing-program.uchicago.edu/writing-support/ccwt/> The writing tutors are highly trained and an invaluable resource for *all* aspects of the writing process.

Modern Language Association (MLA) documentation style is recommended. The MLA provides resources here: <https://style.mla.org>



The MLA style guide and other information about citing sources is available via our campus libraries: <http://guides.lib.uchicago.edu/c.php?g=297265&p=1984226>

Failure to credit sources of ideas or information constitutes plagiarism, which can lead to your being expelled from the university. There can also be consequences for your assignment grade and course grade. Just don't do it. Information from the College about these rules can be found here: <https://college.uchicago.edu/advising/academic-integrity-student-conduct>

**9. A note many that hum core students will completely forget by the end of the quarter:**

The university requires that students **remain in the same section of this course for at least two quarters**. By signing up for this course in the fall quarter, you are committing to the same time slot for the winter quarter as well. Please consult with your academic adviser if you are concerned about this policy.

**Course Schedule**

**WEEK 1**

**Tues. Sept. 29**      Zoom full class

Introduction to the course

Introduction to Toulmin Model: Claims, Grounds, Warrants

Writing Board instructions (reading for claims and grounds) to be posted by 7 pm

**Thurs. Oct. 1**              Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Republic* pp. 1-20

Class Discussion Board instructions (due Monday, 9pm) to be posted by 5pm Friday

**WEEK 2**

**(Mon. Oct. 5**              Due by 9 pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Oct. 6**              **In-Person Cohort Meetings** (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

Reading due: *Republic*, pp. 20-48 (ending with "Yes" at 373b on p. 48)

Writing Board instructions (reading for claims, grounds, warrants) to be posted by 7pm

Symposium Writing Exercise instructions to be posted by 7 pm

**Thurs. Oct. 8** Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Symposium* pp. 1-31

Class Discussion Board instructions for Tuesday to be posted by 5 pm Friday Oct. 9

### **WEEK 3**

(**Mon. Oct. 12** Due by 9pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Oct. 13** Cohort Meetings on Zoom (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

**Due in class: Group Symposium Project**

Reading due: *Symposium*, pp. 32-77

No new Writing Boards this week. Work on your Symposium Writing Exercise, due Friday.

**Thurs. Oct. 15** Zoom full class

Reading due: *Iliad* Books 1-3 (pp. 1-68)

Class Discussion Board instructions for Tuesday to be posted by 5 pm on Friday

**Fri. Oct 16** *Symposium* writing exercise due 5pm

### **WEEK 4**

(**Mon. Oct. 19** Due by 9pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Oct. 20** **In-Person Cohort Meetings** (at 11:20 and 12 in Stuart 101; and 2:40 and 3:20 in SHFE 203)

Reading due: *Iliad* 4-8 (pp. 69-170). (Focus on 4-6)

Writing Board instructions to be posted by 7 pm

**Thurs. Oct. 22** Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Iliad* 9-12 (pp. 173-260). Focus on 9, bits of 11 & 12

Class discussion board instructions to be posted by 5 pm Friday

## **WEEK 5**

**(Mon. Oct. 26** Due by 9pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Oct. 27** Zoom Cohort Meetings (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

Reading due: *Iliad* 13-18 (pp. 261-411). Focus on 18, 16, bits of 13, 14

Writing Board instructions to be posted by 7 pm

**Thurs. Oct. 29** Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Iliad* 19-21 (pp. 413-465).

Class discussion board instructions to be posted by 5 pm Friday

*Iliad* essay instructions to be posted by 5 pm Friday

## **WEEK 6**

**(Mon. Nov. 2** Due by 9pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Nov. 3** **In-Person Cohort Meetings** (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

Reading due: *Iliad* 22-24 (pp. 467-531).

Writing Board instructions to be posted by 7 pm

**Thurs. Nov. 5** Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Antigone* p. 57 to line 492 on p. 81

Class discussion board instructions to be posted by 5 pm Friday

## **WEEK 7**

**(Mon. Nov. 9** Due by 9pm: Weekly Class Discussion Board posts)

**Tues. Nov. 10** Zoom Cohort meetings (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

Reading due: *Antigone*, pp. 81-128

No writing board this week! Work on your Iliad essays.

**Thurs. Nov. 12** Zoom full class

Reading due: Genesis 1-3 (pp. 1-15)

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

**Fri. Nov 13 Iliad essay due by 5pm**

No new class discussion boards this week!

## **WEEK 8**

**Tues. Nov. 17 In-Person Cohort meetings** (at 11:20 and 12 in Stuart 101; and 2:40 and 3:20 in SHFE 203)

Reading due: *Genesis* 4-11 (pp. 16-49)

Writing board topics to be posted by 5pm

Instructions for final paper to be posted by 5pm

**Thurs. Nov. 19** Zoom full class

Due by 9 am: Writing Board posts

Reading due: *Genesis* 12-23 (pp. 50-112)

Discussion board topics to be posted by 5pm Friday

## **WEEK 9--READING WEEK--TRAVEL--THANKSGIVING**

## **WEEK 10--Last week of class**

**Mon., Nov. 30:** Discussion Board posts due by 9pm

**Tues. Dec. 1 :** Zoom Cohort meetings (at 11:20 and 12; and 2:40 and 3:20)

Discussion boards due by 9am

Reading due: *Genesis* 24-36 (pp. 113-207)

Instructions for Writing Boards to be posted by 5pm

**Thurs. Dec. 3:** Zoom Full Class

Writing Board posts due by 9am

Reading due: *Genesis* 37-50

**FINALS WEEK**

**Final paper due by 5pm December 8**

There is no final exam for this class.