"The poem of force," according to Simone Weil, the Iliad is also a poem of forceful influence. In this course we will read the Iliad intensively, followed by an introduction to its heritage on the dramatic stage. In the first half of the semester we will primarily explore the Iliad in terms of the poetics of traditionality; the political economy of epic; the ideologics of the Männerbund (the "band of fighting brothers"); the Iliad's uses of reciprocity; its construction of gender; its intimations of tragedy. In the second half of the course, informed by a reading of Aristotle's Poetics, we will focus on responses to the Iliad in dramatic form.

Schedule of Assignments:

**September 5**  introduction: problems and perspectives; background to the Homeric poems

**September 12**  epic and action: forms of authority
readings: Homer, Iliad Books 1-8; Martin, R. “Epic as Genre”, Ch.1 in A Companion to Ancient Epic, ed. J.M. Foley (Oxford: 2005);

**September 19**  epic and character: forms of desire
reading: Iliad Books 9-16
September 26  

genre and gender


October 3  

pity and the audience


October 10  

before and beyond the *Iliad*

reading: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*


October 17  

In-class written exercise –

reading: Aeschylus, *Libation Bearers* and *Eumenides*
October 24  sacrifice transformed

reading: Euripides, *Iphigeneia at Aulis*


October 31  theorizing Greek tragedy


November 7  drama and desire


November 14  fidelity, heroism, and the female


November 21  comic Troy -- NO CLASS, but…

reading: Giraudoux, J., *Tiger at the Gates*, transl. by Christopher Fry (1955) of *La guerre de Troie n’aura pas lieu* [“The Trojan War will not take place”] (Paris: 1935)

November 28  Iliadic traces in our time

All primary texts are available (under the course number and instructor’s name) at Shakespeare & Co. Bookstore, 716 Broadway (right across the street from Gallatin).

**Secondary readings will be posted on Blackboard.** Texts designated ‘reading’ in the weekly schedule above are required; you are urged (but not required) to read those designated ‘recommended’, and it will be to your advantage to draw on them in your written work.


**Course requirements:** 1) class attendance and participation: unexcused absence – except for documented emergency – will adversely affect your grade; 2) required reading; 3) *weekly questions (see below); 4) midterm written exercise; 5) final take-home exam.

*Weekly questions: beginning next week (Sept. 11), please post on the Blackboard discussion site-- NO LATER THAN than 9 p.m. the night before
class TWO clearly formulated, SUBSTANTIVE questions about the week's reading (required or recommended) that you think will stimulate or enrich class discussion. Be prepared to be called on to present one or more of your questions in class. These will NOT be graded separately, but will be considered part of your class participation for the purposes of your final grade. No posting necessary for class on Oct. 17.

Grading will be based on:
class participation 30%; midterm exercise 30%; final exam 40%.

All your written work must be your own; “borrowed” work will be severely sanctioned in accordance with school policies. See the following for the university’s response to plagiarism:
http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies__procedures.html
If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me.