

Instructor

Alice Taylor, PhD

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- Office hour: 12-1 Wednesdays.
- Office phone: 310 287 4201
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By far the best way to reach me is through the Private Message tool of the class.

There is No Required Textbook

We will use the web instead of a textbook. The specific web pages you need to read are linked in the modules; if you find material online that you think is more useful, please contribute to the annotated list of websites in the discussion area.

Technical Requirements

Please carefully review the ETUDES system requirements (click [here](#)). Make sure you have configured your computer correctly *before* the course starts.

Course Description

Humanities 77 is a comparative study of the cultures of the middle ages in Europe and the middle east, including the literary, musical and artistic traditions of Christianity, Islam and Judaism.

Course Learning Outcomes

The faculty of West Los Angeles College identifies specific Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs) for every course. These are things a student should be able to **do** after the course is over.

Humanities 77's SLOs are:

1. Distinguish between the vocabularies of music, art, architecture and literature.
2. Apply appropriate methods of evaluation to various media. Identify representative styles and issues in the art, architecture, music, philosophy, theology and literature of medieval Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
3. Recognize personal reactions to specific works of art and literature, and build on those reactions to analyze the relationships between expression, form and impact in the arts of medieval Christianity, Judaism, and Islam.
4. Explain personal reactions to art and literature to peers and to a broader academic audience. Support opinion with direct observation and with properly-referenced research.

The course should help you master these skills; you will be practicing them in the online discussions and in class.

The course SLOs relate to West's Institutional SLOs--what we intend students be able to **do** once they graduate. Humanities 77 is intended to particularly support three of these:

Critical Thinking: Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences.

Aesthetics: Use multiple modes of inquiry and approaches to experience and to engage with the arts and nature; develop and express personal creative visions throughout all aspects of ones life.

Cultural Diversity: Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them.

Course Requirements and Expectations

This is a hybrid class; We cover a semester in eight weeks. We will meet seven Saturdays, and work online between meetings. You should plan on at least 11 hours of work per week, in addition to the class meeting.

You must come to the seven class meetings. We will use the time to experience art, architecture, music and literature together. Twice we will meet at the Getty Museum, and once at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art. We will also visit Culver City buildings that will help us understand medieval architecture.

Quizzes: There will be 7 open-book quizzes, one each week except for the last week of the semester. There will be true/false, matching and multiple-choice questions, all drawing on factual information in assigned websites. You can treat the quizzes like guided reading, if you like—read with the quiz open answer the questions as you encounter the facts in the websites. (Use two browsers if you do this this--Firefox for ETUDES, and Internet Explorer or Safari for the websites.)

Discussions: The discussions are the heart of the course, the place you practice critical thinking most directly. You must post at least three times a week, and read what others have posted. Some topics will ask you to make direct observations of art, architecture, music or literature. These can be very brief--your goal is to make it clear what you are pointing out. Some topics will ask you to synthesize the observations the class has made. These should consist of a rich paragraph. I will not post very often--generally only if issues of fact arise.

Poster: For a poster session in our last class, prepare a presentation contextualizing one work of art, chosen from the list posted in discussions

Final: In our last class session, work with three or four other students to create and present a narrative including four or five works of art.

Extra-credit:

- Contribute an annotated entry to our list of websites useful for understanding the middle ages.
- Read a medieval text to the class. Do it well enough to interest other students.

I will also give extra credit for asking and answering questions about the course in the "Questions" section of the discussion area:

- For posing a question that cannot be answered with the materials I have provided: 10 points. (This has to be a reasonable question about the course and how it works, not about the cultures we are considering.)
- For answering someone else's question, citing the materials I have provided: 5 points. (In other words, point out where the answer is in the syllabus, the modules, the quiz instructions, etc., and paraphrase my materials to answer the question.)

Methods of Evaluation

Except for the Syllabus quiz, each quiz will be worth 45 points. The Syllabus quiz is worth 20 points:

- true/false questions, 2 points
- multiple choice with one correct answer, 3 points
- matching or multiple choice questions in which you must select **more than one** correct answer, 5 points

Participating in a discussion gains you 10 points.

The poster is worth 100 points.

The final presentation is worth 100 points for each student.

Extra Credit

I will give 20 extra-credit points for each outstanding discussion posting—postings that use **specific** observations to open up new ways of seeing or understanding. I will highlight what's outstanding in the posts as I read them.

Up to three contributions to our annotated list of websites are each worth 30 points of extra credit. A full contribution gives:

- the exact location of the web page
- an account of its reliability
- an account of its usefulness. A website is not useful just because it contains information. You have to explain why we need it.

A dramatic reading of a primary text is worth up to 100 points. You would need to select a text written during the middle ages, and prepare to read it effectively. While this does not necessarily mean you need to memorize the text, you do need to understand it well in order to engage you audience in your reading. You may set up small groups to read, if this helps convey the meaning of the texts. The number of readings will be limited by the amount of class time available. Signing up early is the best way to guarantee a spot.

Grading Scale

The grading scale is based on the points available for the quizzes, discussion participation, the poster and the final presentation.

- A more than 657 points
- B more than 584 points
- C more than 511 points
- D more than 438 points
- F 438 points or fewer

Quizzes total 290 points.

Discussion participation totals 240 points.

The poster is worth up to 100 points.

The final presentation is worth up to 100 points (per participant).

Extra-credit notes on websites may total up to 90 points

Extra-credit on discussions could total up to 600 points.

Extra-credit dramatic reading is worth up to 100 points.

Plagiarism, the presentation of someone else's words or ideas in such a way that a casual reader would think they were yours, is penalized by the subtraction of the points the assignment could have been worth (that is, 20 points in a discussion, 30 in the annotated list of websites). Note that that is worse than a zero.

It is your responsibility to understand what plagiarism is, as defined by [Indiana University](#).

Instructor Response Policy

During the term, expect me to respond to Private Messages or emails within 24 hours. (**Private Messages are better** than emails.)

Etudes scores the quizzes as you submit them and shows your scores. The answers are available after the quizzes close.

The participation points for discussions should appear the day after the discussion closes. Extra-credit points should appear as I mark the excellent posts.

I will score the poster and the final by October 26.

Drop Policy

If you choose to drop the course, it is **your** responsibility to do so. Note the deadlines:



Watch the time!

If you drop by October 4, you will have a W (for "withdrawn") instead of a grade on your transcript.

If you drop by August 30, the course will not appear on your transcript, and qualify for a refund of your tuition.

I will exclude students who do not participate **at all** by August 29.

I may drop students who do not show up for the first class, August 31, if there are students there who want their places.

It's never a good idea to trust your prof to drop you. We could get sick, have a power outage, or just be flaky. You should drop any course you do not plan to finish, yourself.

Special Needs and Disabled Students Policy

If you are a student with a disability and require accommodations, please send me a Private Message. The sooner I am aware of your eligibility for accommodations, the quicker I will be able to assist the Disabled Students Programs & Services (DSP&S) Office in providing them.

The [DSP&S Office](#) provides special assistance in areas including: registration assistance specialized tutoring, academic and career guidance counseling, instructor liaison, special instruction and testing assistance.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is a fundamental value of higher education at WLAC; therefore, acts of cheating, plagiarism, falsification or attempts to cheat, plagiarize or falsify will not be tolerated in this course.

It is your responsibility to understand what plagiarism is, as defined by [Indiana University](#).

Any student caught cheating or plagiarizing will be subject to disciplinary action, in addition to the penalty noted under grading scale, above. I report plagiarism to West's Vice President of Student Services.

Note that I do not consider discussing the quizzes privately as cheating, but another professor might--be sure you understand other online professors' views on this.

Online Student Resources

West's Online Resources: <http://www.wlac.edu/online/index.asp>

[Technical Requirements: https://etudes-ng.fhda.edu/portal/site/!gateway/page/4243c7b4-9b68-45fc-0016-148ad08653aa](https://etudes-ng.fhda.edu/portal/site/!gateway/page/4243c7b4-9b68-45fc-0016-148ad08653aa)

Netiquette: <http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>

Strategies for Online Learners: <http://www.uidaho.edu/eo/dist8.html>

Be a Successful Online Student: <http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/StudentProfile.asp>

Tips for Online Success: <http://www.ion.uillinois.edu/resources/tutorials/pedagogy/tips.asp>