

**HNRS 1351.005—Fall 2024**  
**World, Text, and Image I**  
**Mankind's Search for Meaning and Well-Being**  
**Dr. Matt Stith and Dr. Robert Sterken**

TuTh 2:00PM - 3:20PM in Room: HNRS Classroom HPR 135

**Dr. Stith's Contact Information:**

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Office Hours: T/R 9a-11a; 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 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 Texts:**

1. [Confucianism: A Very Short Introduction](#) by Daniel K. Gardner. ISBN-13: 978-0195398915.
2. [The Hobbit](#) paperback – by J. R. R. Tolkien. 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.

**Assessment of Learning:**

Journal Entries: 25%

Analytical Essay #1: 20%

Analytical Essay #2: 20%

Analytical Essay #3: 25%

Class Participation: 10%

**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.

**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 (10%) 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.

**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. 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](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. 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 for each module are found in **Canvas**.

**Module 1** - Introductions and What Makes for a well-lived life? **August 27 to September 19.**

**Module 2** - Confucianism: Dr. Sterken: A Short Introduction - **September 24 to October 3.**

**Module 3** - The Hobbit: Dr. Stith: The Historical Background for J.R.R. Tolkein's writing of The Hobbit. **October 8 and 10.**

**Module 4** - The Hobbit Chapters 1, 2, and 3 - **October 15 and 17.**

**Module 5** - The Hobbit Chapters 4, 5 and 6 - **October 22 and 24.**

**Module 6** - The Hobbit Chapters 7, 8 and 9 - **October 29 and 31.**

**Module 7** - The Hobbit Chapters 10, 11 and 12 - **November 5 and 7.**

**Module 8** - The Hobbit Chapters 13, 14 and 15 - **November 12 and 14.**

**Module 9** - The Hobbit Chapters 16, 17 and 18 - **November 19 and 21.**

**Module 10** - The Hobbit Chapter 19 - **December 3.**

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## UT Tyler Student Resources, Rights, & Responsibilities

### 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

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 (see below) is considered a breach of academic integrity. The student will be subject to disciplinary actions as outlined in UT Tyler's Academic Integrity Policy.

AI is permitted only for **this course** for specific assignments or situations, and appropriate acknowledgment is required.

a. Example 1: This course has specific assignments where artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as ChatGPT or Copilot) are permitted and encouraged. When AI use is permissible, it will be clearly stated in the assignment directions, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. Otherwise, the default is that AI is not allowed during any stage of an assignment.

b. Example 2: During some class assignments, we may leverage AI tools to support your learning, allow you to explore how AI tools can be used, and/or better understand their benefits and limitations. Learning how to use AI is an emerging skill, and we will work through the limitations of these evolving systems together. However, AI will be limited to assignments where AI is a critical component of the learning activity. I will always indicate when and where the use of AI tools for this course is appropriate.

c. Example 3: Most assignments in this course will permit using artificial intelligence (AI) tools, such as ChatGPT or Copilot. When AI use is permissible, it will be documented in the assignment description, and all use of AI must be appropriately acknowledged and cited. When using AI tools for assignments, add an appendix showing (a) the entire exchange (e.g., prompts used), highlighting the most relevant sections; (b) a description of precisely which AI tools were used, (c) an explanation of how the AI tools were used (e.g. to generate ideas, elements of text, etc.); and (d) an account of why AI tools were used (e.g. to save time, to surmount writer's block, to stimulate thinking, to experiment for fun, etc.). Students shall not use AI tools during in-class examinations or assignments unless explicitly permitted and instructed to do so.

d. Example 4: In this course, we may use AI tools (such as ChatGPT and Copilot) to examine how these tools may inform our exploration of the class topics. You will be notified as to when and how these tools will be

used, along with guidance for attribution. Using AI tools outside of these parameters violates UT Tyler's Honor Code, constitutes plagiarism, and will be treated as such.

### **Resources available to UT Tyler Students**

- UT Tyler Counseling Center (available to all students)
- TAO Online Support Center (online self-help modules related to mental & emotional health)
- Military and Veterans Success Center (supports for our military-affiliated students)
- UT Tyler Patriot Food Pantry
- UT Tyler Financial Aid and Scholarships
- 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 are allowed to withdraw (drop) from a course through the University's Withdrawal Portal. Texas law prohibits students who began college for the first time in Fall 2007 or thereafter from dropping more than six courses during their entire undergraduate career.

The number includes courses dropped at other 2-year or 4-year Texas public colleges and universities.

Make sure to consider the impact withdrawing from any course has on your academic progress as well as the financial implications. We encourage you to consult your advisor(s) and financial aid for additional guidance. CAUTION #1: Withdrawing before census day does not mean students receive 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.

- **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 are required to 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 course requirements by the end of the semester, then the instructor may recommend an Incomplete (I) for the course. The "I" may be assigned in lieu 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 course work 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 prior to 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 for a student. 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 complete the work for the course within the time limit, 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 not been assigned within one year, then the Incomplete will be changed to an F or to NC, if the course was initially taken under the CR/NC grading basis.

- **Grade Appeal Policy:** - UT Tyler's Grade Appeal policy requires the completion of a Grade Appeal form for this action to take place. The grade appeal begins with the instructor of the course. If a student does not agree with the decision of the instructor, the student may then move the appeal to the department chair/school director for that course. If the student is still dissatisfied with the decision of the chair/director, the appeal moves to the Dean of the College offering that course, who has the final decision. Grade appeals

must be initiated within sixty (60) days from the date of receiving the final course grade. The Grade Appeal form is found on the Registrar's Form Library.

- **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 a student has 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, the student is encouraged to visit <https://hood.accessiblelearning.com/UTTyler> and fill out the New Student application. The Student Accessibility and Resources (SAR) office will contact the student when the application has been submitted and schedule 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 <http://www.uttyler.edu/disabilityservices>, the SAR office located in the University Center, # 3150 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. Campus resources for military-affiliated students are in the Military and Veterans Success Center (MVSC). The MVSC can be reached at [MVSC@uttyler.edu](mailto:MVSC@uttyler.edu) or via phone at 903.565.5972.

- **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 in protecting your confidential information.**

- **Recording of Class Sessions:** Class sessions may be recorded by the instructor for use by students enrolled in the course. Recordings that contain personally identifiable information or other information subject to FERPA shall not be shared with individuals not enrolled in the course unless appropriate consent is obtained from all relevant students. Class recordings are reserved only for the use of students enrolled in the course and only for educational purposes. Course recordings should not be shared outside of the course in any form without express permission.

- **Absence for Official University Events or Activities:** All courses follow the practices related to approved absences as noted by the Student Manual of Operating Procedures (Sec. 1 -501).

- **Absence for Religious Holidays:** Students who anticipate being absent from class due to a religious holiday are requested to inform the instructor by the second class meeting of the semester.

- **Campus Carry:** We respect the right and privacy of students who are duly licensed to carry concealed weapons in all courses. 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>[Links to an external site.](#).