Writing Assignment No. 1 (ungraded)

Write a brief essay (at least two pages, and up to four if you need that length) on one of the following topics.

1. “If Homer had used a male god as Odysseus’ guide instead of Athena, it would have made no difference to his presentation of values.” Agree or disagree with this idea.

2. “The ancients said that ‘even Homer nods’; that is, even Homer sometimes falls asleep and loses track of what he’s doing. The story of Ares, Aphrodite, and Hephaistos (Odyssey, VIII.280-393) is a good example. It’s fun, but it has nothing important to do with the rest of the Odyssey.” Agree or disagree with this idea.

3. “Because the Kyklops acts according to his own values, it is wrong for Odysseus to hurt and humiliate him.” Agree or disagree with this idea.

In writing your essay, play close attention to pp. 4 and 8-12 of the Humanities Handbook, which are about formatting papers and developing a paper from a thesis, and to discussions of this Handbook material that take place in your sections. Turn in your essay at the end of lecture on Friday, January 19.

At the same time, you need to send an electronic copy to the anti-plagiarism website Turnitin.com. Instructions about this will be provided in your section.

I want to be sure you know how serious plagiarism is, even on an ungraded first paper. Here’s the serious language of the university:

Students are expected to submit only their own work on papers and examinations. While you may discuss the assignments with others in the class, collaboration on the preparation of a paper is not permitted. Unless the assignment specifically directs otherwise, papers should be based entirely on your own study of the assigned material and not on secondary sources. Turning in someone else's work, whether from printed sources or material available electronically, as if it were your own, constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarism is an act of intellectual dishonesty.

The academic consequences of plagiarism range from failure for the tainted assignment to failure for the course, depending on the seriousness of the offense. All such offenses are reported to the college dean, who will impose additional administrative consequences, which can include suspension or expulsion from the university.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to the following: turning in another student's paper as if it were your own; collaboration with another student in writing the paper; quoting, paraphrasing, or borrowing ideas from published or unpublished material written by someone other than yourself, without specific acknowledgment of the source.

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, you should consult with your section instructor.