Writing Assignment No. 1 (ungraded)

Write a brief essay (two pages long) on one of the following topics.

1. “In his first speech in the *Odyssey*, Zeus defends the gods from responsibility for human suffering. Homer may agree with Zeus, but the speech does very little to account for the suffering that actually occurs in the poem.” Agree or disagree with this contention.

2. “Odysseus’ conduct in the Kyklops episode has been explained, by Professor Cox and others, as if it were justified by Polyphemos’ violation of civilized values. But the Kyklopes have no laws; therefore Polyphemos, a Kyklops, cannot be violating any laws. Odysseus acknowledges laws of civilization, yet he violates them by invading the Kyklops’ home and assaulting him viciously.” Agree or disagree with this contention.

In writing your essay, play close attention to the handouts about writing that are being distributed in your discussion sections. Turn in your essay at the end of lecture on Friday, January 16.

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collaboration with another student in writing the paper; quoting, paraphrasing, or borrowing ideas from published or unpublished material written by someone other than yourself, without specific acknowledgment of the source.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.