This course will concentrate on the tragic visions of the classical Greeks and modern plays as their major alternatives to philosophy. The course begins by comparing and contrasting the underlying philosophical problems of the tragedy inherent in the plays. We will examine Aeschylus's Oresteia; Sophocles's Oedipus the King and Antigone; and Euripides's Bacchae. These plays will be contrasted with the modern works of Shakespeare's King Lear; Tennessee Williams's Streetcar Named Desire and Chekhov's The Cherry Orchard. Emphasis throughout our reading of these plays will be how they speak to each other in a manner relevant to the 21st century.

Tuesdays 6:30-9:30 pm, January 5-March 8, 2016
This course fulfills an elective requirement.

Syllabus
Week 1 (Jan. 5) - Lecture: Tragedy  
Reading: Aristotle, Poetics, especially Ch. VI

Week 2 (Jan. 12) - Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy, especially Sections 1-9  
Simone Weil, The Iliad: Poem of Force

Week 3 (Jan. 19) - Aeschylus, Oresteia

Week 4 (Jan. 26) - Sophocles, Antigone

Week 5 (Feb. 2) - Sophocles, Oedipus Rex

Week 6 (Feb. 9) - Euripides, Bacchae

Week 7 (Feb. 16) - Shakespeare, King Lear

Week 8 (Feb. 23) - Book of Job

Week 9 (March 1) - Williams, Streetcar Named Desire

Week 10 (March 8) – Printed papers due in class for discussion

Course Texts for MLAP 34702-01 Greek and Modern Tragedy
Aristotle, Poetics and Rhetoric, Barnes and Noble Classics, 2006–2009 (whichever of the following is the ppbk ed.: 10-1593083076 or 978-1593083076)

Friedrich Nietzsche, The Birth of Tragedy and the Case of Wagner - same as Vintage 1967 0394703693

Simone Weil, The Iliad, Poem of Force - same as Pendle Pub 1956 087574091X (copy also on internet)

Aeschylus, The Oresteia (U. of Chicago ppbk 1963) – Same as Lattimore, Aeschylus I, University of Chicago Press 0226307786

Sophocles, Antigone - Same as Grene, The Complete Greek Tragedies: Sophocles I ppbk 1991, University of Chicago 9780226307923

Oedipus Rex (U. of Chicago ppbk) – see immediately above (in same book as for Sophocles, Antigone)

Euripides, The Bacchae - Same as Grene and Lattimore, The Complete Greek Tragedies: Euripides V 1969, 9780226307848

William Shakespeare, King Lear, Modern Lit Classics, 2009 (whichever of the following is the ppbk ed. ISBN 10 0812969111 or 13 978-081-296-9115)


Tennessee Williams, Streetcar Named Desire Penguin (2 editions of this are available. Both editions are also available in ppbk. Either ppbk is OK:
Publication date 2009 - ISBN 10-0141190273 or 13-9780141190273)