

# Performing Antigones

CS3904G/TS3952G/ARTHUM3390G



Image Credit: Antigone in Ferguson, Theatre of War 2018

Western University

Department of Classical Studies

CS3904G/TS3952G/ARTHUM3390G

## Performing Antigones: from Ancient Greece to the Contemporary World Stage Winter 2024

I acknowledge that Western University, and our classroom, is located on the traditional lands of the Anishinaabek (AUh-nish-in-ah-bek), Haudenosaunee (Ho-den-no-show-nee), Lūnaapéewak (Len-ah-pay-wuk) and Attawandaron (Add-a-won-da-run). We acknowledge all the treaties that are specific to this area: the Two Row Wampum Belt Treaty of the Haudenosaunee Confederacy/Silver Covenant Chain; the Beaver Hunting Grounds of the Haudenosaunee NANFAN Treaty of 1701; the McKee Treaty of 1790, the London Township Treaty of 1796, the Huron Tract Treaty of 1827, with the Anishinaabeg, and the Dish with One Spoon Covenant Wampum of the Anishnaabek and Haudenosaunee.

With this, I respect the longstanding relationships that Indigenous Nations have to this land, as they are the original caretakers. We acknowledge historical and ongoing injustices that Indigenous Peoples (First Nations, Métis and Inuit) endure in Canada, and we accept responsibility as a public institution to contribute toward revealing and correcting miseducation as well as renewing respectful relationships with Indigenous communities through our teaching, research and community service.

This Land Acknowledgement is a first step towards reconciliation. It is the work of all citizens to steps towards decolonizing practices and bringing our awareness into action. We encourage everyone to be informed about the traditional lands, Treaties, history, and cultures of the Indigenous people local to their region.

# Tentative Course Outline\*

## Course Description

Welcome to Performing Antigones! In this course we explore the story of Antigone from Sophocles production at the City Dionysia in fifth-century Athens to re-performances on the contemporary world stage. This course has two equally important goals. The first goal is to explore Sophocles' *Antigone* in the historical context of 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens. The second goal is to investigate why and how the story of Antigone has been re-told and performed and how we might envision it continuing to be re-told and performed in our contemporary world. We begin the course with an intensive study of the text of Sophocles' *Antigone*. In the first eight weeks, we focus on critically reading and discussing the play, act by act considering topics including the historical context, the performance context, staging, embodiment, and character development, as well as addressing the overarching themes of the play. In the final four weeks of the course, we explore the many Antigones that have been performed on the contemporary world stage including performances in Canada, Japan, Turkey, Taiwan, Ireland, and many more.

A large component of this course depends on your weekly progress and weekly engagement with the material which means that students are expected to organize their time to complete the weekly readings and come to class ready to engage to be able to fully benefit from this course. Remember, it is up to you to do the work. That being said, my door is always open to discuss time management, reading and study strategies, and all content related questions.

Our classroom is intended to be an open space for the critical and civil exchange of ideas. There will be content and discussions in this course that touch on difficult topics including sexual abuse, gender-based violence, slavery, disenfranchisement, discrimination, and racism. I ask all students in this class to help me to create a classroom environment based on mutual respect and sensitivity towards the experiences of others (both in-person and in all other modes of communication regarding this class, for example on OWL).

This course is interdisciplinary which means it combines approaches from different academic disciplines to showcase different ways of knowing and learning. These different perspectives are equally valuable and help us to broaden our understanding of the topic at hand (the story of Antigone). This course, therefore, is cross-listed between Classics (CS3904G), Theatre Studies (TS3952G), and SASAH (ARTHUM3390G) to facilitate a diverse, creative, and collaborative experience.

### **Instructor**

I have been a doctoral student at Western since 2017. I received my MA in Classics at Brock University and my BAH in Classics at the University of Guelph. I specialize in the study of Archaic and Classical Sparta and focus my research primarily on the development of the polis in the Archaic period with a special interest in the Spartan dyarchy and social memory. As an instructor, I am passionate about interdisciplinary learning and creative pedagogy. Outside of the university, I love to read *LOTR*, I play the clarinet and sign, and I love animals, especially llamas and dogs.

### **Office Hours: TBD**

Appointments can be booked on OWL using the Zoom Tab. If there are no available times that fit your schedule, please contact me via e-mail and we will find a time that is suitable for us both. Note: If you would like to discuss your grades or any aspect of your evaluation in this course, please come to my office hours or schedule an appointment.

**Note regarding emails:** it is important in any profession/vocation to find a work-life balance that works for you. For me, that means taking time in the evenings and on the weekends to go outside, cook some food and play some music. **I aim to respond to emails between the hours of 9am-6pm on weekdays and will typically be “out of office” from Fridays at 6pm until Mondays at 9am.**

### **Course Objectives and Learning Outcomes**

The primary objectives of this course are:

- 1) To encourage critical dialogue about the use of language in performance through close reading completed both individually and collectively.
- 2) To explore a variety of reperformances of Antigone’s story to consider how this story has and continues to impact different audiences.
- 3) To consider the role of performance in both historical and contemporary political discourse.

Through the content of this course students will learn to do the following:

- 1) To evaluate primary material and critically consider historical context to see how social norms and customs develop over time and are shaped by geography, people, and events.
- 2) To engage in a critical analysis of an ancient Greek play.
- 3) To articulate the capacity of a story to impact an audience.
- 4) To participate in dialogues about the past in an informed and critical manner.
- 5) To engage both critically and creatively with texts and performances.

### Course Readings and Textbooks

There are three different translations/versions of *Antigone* that are required readings for this class, all other readings will be assigned from online resources available through Western Libraries' website or they will be made available on OWL. These three translations have been carefully selected for this course; they cannot be replaced with other translations.

#### Required Textbook:

Rayor, Diane. 2011. *Sophocles' Antigone: A New Translation*. Cambridge University Press. ISBN 978-0521134781

Woodruff, Paul. 2001. *Sophocles Antigone*. Hackett Publishing. ISBN 978-0-87220-571-0

Carson, Anne. 2015. *Antigonick*. New Directions. ISBN 978-0811222921

#### Recommended Textbook:

A blank notebook to serve as your workbook (see below)

#### Course Website

Students are responsible for checking the course OWL site (<http://owl.uwo.ca>) on a regular basis for updates. This is the primary method by which information will be disseminated to all students in the class. All course material will be posted to OWL: <http://owl.uwo.ca>. If students need assistance with the course OWL site, they can seek support on the OWL Help page. Alternatively, they can contact the Western Technology Services Helpdesk. They can be contacted by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800.

#### Using Electronics in the Classroom

The use of electronic devices for any purpose other than taking notes is distracting and disrespectful to those around you. Please refrain from surfing the internet, using social media, and watching videos during class. Please do not use your cellphone during class or have your cellphone out of your bag/pocket during class.

#### Course Assessment

<i>Assessment</i>	<i>Percentage</i>	<i>Due Date</i>
Course Engagement	25%	Ongoing
Workbook	30%	Ongoing
Close Reading Assignment	10%	Feb.15
Performance Review	10%	Mar.21
Final Assignment/Project	25%	Apr.4

## Course Engagement

What do I mean by engagement?

By engagement, I mean the degree of attention, curiosity, interest, excitement, thoughtfulness, and passion that students show when they are learning. This extends to the motivation students have for the learning process in general. This is different from participation, which generally is a measurement of how often a student speaks in class or seminar and the quality of their contribution. One can participate in a seminar, for example, as a part of demonstrating they are engaging with the material, but simply saying words in the space is not engagement.

What is included in engagement?

Engagement in this course makes up 25% of the overall course grade. What I am looking for when I measure engagement is that you have been attentive to the material, have thought about it, brought curiosity and interest, and express that in the completion of your work, whether that be in participating in classroom discussions, being present and engaged in classroom activities and lectures, and showing interest in the material and the perspectives of others.

It is important to come to class prepared to participate in the class activity. Engaging should include talking with your peers and participating in collective activities, but also actively listening and contributing to working through the given task. Not all tasks will be in groups, there will be an equal amount of individual thinking and writing. 5% of this portion of the overall grade (25%) is derived from attendance which means 5% of your overall grade can be completed by being present in classes.

You might be wondering; how do I engage? Everyone will likely do the labour for this class in different ways. My advice on this would be to organize your time so that you can do the readings and think about them before each class. The weekly prompts are there to help you organize your thoughts and prepare your thoughts for discussion. Completing the weekly prompts and taking notes in class in your workbook will also count towards engagement as they demonstrate active engagement in the process of learning and the material.

**By organizing your time so you can read and think about the material before class, you will best position yourself to give and to get as much out of this class as possible.**

*Workbook (25%)*

The workbook is a collection of your notes, reflections, prompt responses, and observations. It could include notes you take while reading and preparing for class, notes taken in class, reflections on the readings and discussions in class, etc. We will discuss the workbook in detail in the first class. The purpose of this workbook is to simulate the process of working on a script through intensive study and practice like in a company. The Workbook represents your study of Antigone and should reflect your engagement with the material on a weekly basis. You will be prompted to contribute to your workbook in each class including when we read and discuss the play, discuss additional readings, and content, and take time for reflection. Each week you will be given a prompt, your response should be included in the workbook. These responses constitute 10% of the workbook grade. The remaining 15% of the workbook grade will be calculated based on the record you create of your engagement with the material in the book.

**There are three mandatory components of the workbook:**

- 1) Responses to the weekly prompts (10%)
- 2) Notes from your individual reading of the course material (part of the remaining 15%)
- 3) Additions/notes added in-class as we discuss the material (part of the remaining 15%)

The workbook is an ongoing process, it will be evaluated regularly for completion. You will be asked to submit the workbook for closer examination **four times throughout the semester**, twice before reading week, and twice after reading week.

**I encourage you to get a physical notebook to act as your workbook.** This will be easier to transport, submit, and utilize in classroom discussion and exercises. If, however, you chose to make an electronic workbook, it is up to you to ensure that you can contribute to it outside and inside of class throughout our discussions and activities. Electronic workbooks will be submitted for evaluation via OWL using the Dropbox tab, rather than physically in class. They will be due BEFORE class begins on the date of submission.

*Close Reading Assignment (10%)*

For this assignment you will conduct a close reading of a passage of your choice from Sophocles' *Antigone*. The passage should you select should not exceed one page of the text. There is an assignment sheet describing in more detail the expectations and evaluation of this assignment on OWL under Resources. This assignment will be further discussed in class. I encourage you to discuss your choice with me.

*Performance Review (10%)*

For this assignment you will review a performance of Antigone of your choice. This can be a performance we have discussed in class or will discuss, but it does not have to be. You can choose a performance from a variety of formats including a painting or artistic presentation of another kind. There is an assignment sheet describing in more detail the expectations and evaluation of this assignment on OWL under Resources. This assignment will be further discussed in class. I encourage you to discuss your choice with me.

*Final Assignment (25%)*

For the final assignment, students have a choice from three options. All three options are substantial pieces of work. Students should speak to the instructor about their ideas and decide on an option BEFORE reading week.

1) *Performance Proposal*

As a final project the student will propose a performance of Antigone. Performance here is broadly conceived and could include a modality of Applied Theatre (e.g., an audio walk, verbatim theatre, etc.) or, for example, an art exhibition, film, orchestral or musical performance, etc.

2) *Creative Output*

As a final project the student will produce a creative output of their choosing (e.g., painting, artistic piece, piece of music, sculptural element, etc.) In addition, the student

will write a short description of the creative output that grounds the work in the course material.

3) *Research Essay*

As a final project the student will compare a contemporary performance of Antigone to Sophocles' Antigone addressing, for example, the different historical and performance contexts of the plays. This will include engagement with the text of the play itself and secondary sources drawn from the material we discussed and read in class. This option will require the student to use persuasive analytical writing skills and must include elements such as a thesis statement, analysis of evidence, an formulated introduction and conclusion, etc.

Each of these options has an assignment sheet describing in more detail the expectations and evaluation of this assignment on OWL under Resources. This assignment will be further discussed in class. I encourage you to discuss your choice with me.

## **Student Absences**

Because a substantial portion of the overall grade in this course is derived from being present in class and engaging actively on a weekly basis with the content and your peers it is important to be present. If you have to be absent, because that happens, we are all human, take a look at the following information and communicate when needed.

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, please follow the procedures below.

### **Assessments worth less than 10% of the overall course grade:**

In this course, there are no assessments collectively worth less than 10%, but course engagement and the Workbook will be evaluated on an ongoing basis.

In each case, there is flexibility built into the process. It is expected that students will have to miss a class occasionally for reasons beyond their control (i.e., illness, compassionate circumstances, life-stuff, etc.). For Course Engagement, each student is permitted to miss 1 Tuesday and 2 Thursday classes without it impacting on their grade. You do not need to inform me of your absence if you are within this window of absences. Additionally, for the Workbook, the best 10 out of 12 prompts will be used to calculate 10% of the workbook grade. Because the workbook is evaluated on an ongoing basis, there is always room to improve the content for the next submission. If something beyond your control (illness or other serious circumstances) prevents you from submitting your workbook for a scheduled check, reach out to the instructor as soon as possible to discuss an extension. Extensions will not be granted if you have not been in touch with the instructor within 24 hours after the original due date of the workbook submission. If you require an extension for the final submission of the workbook you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible.

## **Assessments worth 10% or more of the overall course grade:**

For work totalling 10% or more of the final course grade, you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration as soon as possible. For further information, please consult the University's medical illness policy at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/accommodation\\_medical.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/accommodation_medical.pdf).

The Student Medical Certificate is available at

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/medicalform.pdf).

This means that you must provide valid medical or supporting documentation to the Academic Counselling Office of your Faculty of Registration in order to receive an extension for the Close Reading Assignment (10%), Performance Review (10%), and Final Assignment (25%). There will be no re-weighting of grades in this course.

## **Accommodation and Accessibility**

### **Religious Accommodation**

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

### **Accommodation Policies**

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic_Accommodation_disabilities.pdf).

### **Academic Policies**

The website for Registrarial Services is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>.

In accordance with policy ([https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies\\_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf)), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

### **Academic Offences**

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

## **Support Services**

### **Academic Counselling**

Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: [https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty\\_academic\\_counselling.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html)

### **Mental Health Support**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Gender-based and Sexual Violence**

Western is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at

[https://www.uwo.ca/health/student\\_support/survivor\\_support/get-help.html](https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html).

To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Accessible Education**

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at [http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html) if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

### **Learning Development and Success**

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

### **Digital Student Experience**

Western University is committed to a thriving campus as we deliver our courses in the mixed model of both virtual and face-to-face formats. We encourage you to check out the Digital Student Experience website to manage your academics and well-being: <https://www.uwo.ca/se/digital/>.

### **USC**

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

## Tentative Schedule of Readings and Seminar Topics

Week	Topics	Reading Assignments
<b>Week 1</b> <b>Jan.9</b>	Introductions Fifth Century Athenian Drama	Introductions from Rayor, Woodruff, Carsen Readings TBD
<b>Jan.11</b>	The Family of Antigone	Readings TBD
<b>Week 2</b> <b>Jan.16</b>	Reading Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Hymns	Prologos (Opening Scene) 1-99 Parados (First Choral Song) 100-61
<b>Jan.18</b>	Women and Death Rituals	Readings TBD
<b>Week 3</b> <b>Jan.23</b>	Reading Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> The Ode to Man	First Epeisodion (Second Scene) 162-331 First Stasimon (Second Choral Song) 332-75
<b>Jan.25</b>	Politics and Athenian Drama	Readings TBD
<b>Week 4</b> <b>Jan.30</b>	Reading Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Atē	Second Epeisodion (Third Scene) 376-581 Second Stasimon (Third Choral Song) 582-625
<b>Feb.1</b>	Religion and Athenian Drama <b>First Workbook Check-in</b>	Readings TBD
<b>Week 5</b> <b>Feb.6</b>	Reading Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Eros and Aphrodite	Third Epeisodion (Fourth Scene) 626-780 Third Stasimon (Fourth Choral Song) 781-801
<b>Feb.8</b>	The Family vs. the City	Readings TBD
<b>Week 6</b> <b>Feb.13</b>	Reading Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Mythological Exempla	Fourth Epeisodion (Fifth Scene) 801-943 Fourth Stasimon (Fifth Choral Song) 944-87
<b>Feb.15</b>	Emotion and Musicality <b>Close Reading Assignment Due</b> <b>Workbook Submission</b>	Readings TBD
<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Reading Week</b>	<b>Reading Week</b>
<b>Week 8</b> <b>Feb. 27</b>	Reading of Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Prophecy, Divination, Oracles	Fifth Epeisodion (Sixth Scene) 988-1114 Fifth Stasimon (Sixth Choral Song) 1115-54
<b>Feb.29</b>	Reading of Sophocles' <i>Antigone</i> Take Away?	Exodos (Seventh and Final Scene) 1155-1353
<b>Week 9</b> <b>Mar.5</b> <b>Mar.7</b>	Topic: Individual vs. the Collective & Human Rights Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage	ACWS Introduction Possible Performances: Miyagi Satoshi's <i>Antigone</i> , Japan 1951 Aris Alexandrou's <i>Antigone</i> by Victor Arditto in Thessaloniki (2003) <i>Eurydice's Cry</i> in Turkey <i>Yup'ik Antigone</i> in the Arctic <i>Antigone</i> in Cracow
<b>Week 10</b> <b>Mar.12</b>	Topic: Cultural & Political Freedom	Possible Performances:

<b>Mar.14</b>	<b>Second Workbook Check-in</b>	1995 and 2004 <i>Antigone</i> in Manipur, North-East India Félix Morisseau-Leroy's <i>Antigòn an Kreyòl</i> , Haiti <i>Antigone</i> (2001) in lyrical Taiwanese in Tainan <i>Antigone</i> (1974) in Indonesia <i>Antigone: Insurgency</i> (2007) in Toronto Children's Theatre Company of Minneapolis' <i>Antigone</i> (2006), Minnesota
<b>Week 11</b> <b>Mar.19</b>	Topic: Cultural & Political Freedom	Performances from Week 10 will be split with this week
<b>Mar.21</b>	<b>Performance Review Due</b>	
<b>Week 12</b> <b>Mar.26</b>	Topic: Cultural Memory	Possible Performances: <i>Antigone in Ferguson</i> 2021 and <i>The Nurse Antigone</i> 2021 Theatre of War Project <i>Antigone's Emigration</i> (2006) by Jihad Saad at the Damascus International Theatre Festival Gianluca Guidoti and Enrica Sangiovanni's <i>Antigone</i> (2006) in a German Second World War Cemetery in the Appennine Mountains Sylvain Bemba's <i>Noces Posthumes de Santigone (Black Wedding Candles for Blessed Antigone</i> 1988)
<b>Mar.28</b>		
<b>Week 13</b> <b>Apr.2</b>	Wrap-up/TBD	
<b>Apr.4</b>	<b>Final Assignment Due</b> <b>Final Workbook Submission</b>	

**Note:** In weeks 1-8 Tuesday's classes will be dedicated to discussing and reading the text. Thursday's classes will be reserved for discussing secondary readings about Sophocles' *Antigone*. The readings have not yet been set, but the topics for these seminar-style discussions will revolve around the historical context of the first performance of *Antigone* in 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens. We will discuss topics such as the audience of Sophocles' production, Athenian drama and religion, women and death rituals, staging and performance in 5<sup>th</sup> century Athens, etc. Weeks 10-13 students will get to sign up for a reading/performance each week that they will serve as 'experts' on in the discussion. Students will not be responsible for reading all of the articles for the given theme or viewing all the performances but will choose one or suggest one that appeals to them most. All, however, will be discussed. The students will be responsible for explaining their article and the performance therein and will discuss its relevance in our in-class discussions.

We will be using articles and performances from the following book, available through Western's library catalogue (this is **not** a textbook, do **not** purchase this book).

ACWS = Erin B. Mee and Helene P. Foley, 2011, *Antigone on the Contemporary World Stage*  
[https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL\\_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044812916405163](https://ocul-uwo.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/permalink/01OCUL_UWO/r0c2m8/alma991044812916405163)