
STOCKTON UNIVERSITY
ANNUAL REPORT FOR
2020 INITIATIVES PROJECT

PROJECT LEADER(S):	David Roessel and Jason Babin
PROJECT TITLE:	From Troy to Ithaca
DATE:	7/11/2017
CC:	

- *The boxes below expand as needed to accommodate your notes. You may also include/submit appendices or attachments, if needed.*
- *Email a copy of this completed form to Jessica Kay, Data Analyst & Assistant to the Chief Planning Officer at: jessica.kay@stockton.edu*

Please provide a summary of the project and your experience.

GAH 2428, *From Troy to Ithaca*, was the first of its kind course offered in the 2017 Spring Semester to help assist and support service members as they transition to a college environment. It was offered solely to service members and veterans to help build community and support amongst these students. Recent studies by the Department of Veteran Affairs and the American Council on Education have suggested that these types of courses help to promote transition and better academic performance.

The course consisted of 10 in-person seminars that met each week before and after the ten-day trip to Greece. During the classes the Iliad and Odyssey were reviewed and discussed, along with other relevant materials related to the Homeric experience. The trip to the different Homeric sites in Greece went forward as scheduled (although the three days in Turkey had to be canceled because of alert that was sent out for active military personnel). The experience had by the students and staff that attended the trip, validate the central ideas and premise of the course and its benefit to the community.

- Veteran students do benefit from a seminar with their peers.
- The experience of travel abroad as a civilian is as important, if not more, to veteran students (although nationally they are one of the least served groups in travel abroad programs).
- In terms of integrating the students to Stockton and assisting them in their transition to student life, the seminar more than met our expectations. The reality was in fact better than the idea we had when we started.

From Troy to Ithaca: The Journey Home

A Study Tour Course of Stockton Veteran Students Based on GAH 2328 Worlds of Homer

The idea behind this project is twofold. First, it will reconfigure the current GAH Homer course as a seminar for Stockton student veterans. Homer's Iliad and Odyssey have been shown to have a special reference for veterans, such as in work like Jonathan Shays's Achilles in Vietnam and Odysseus in America and the recent use of Greek tragedy in the Theatre of War project by Brian Dorries. Where From Troy to Ithaca is unique in that it incorporates a study that will allow students to immerse themselves into the environment where Achilles and Odysseus lived and fought. A key component of this course will be to create opportunities for Stockton veterans to connect with the characters of the story, and to examine how their personal challenges relate to their own. We will use distance, both the distance between the Ancient Greek epics and the present and the distance from Homeric sites and New Jersey, as a means for our veterans to examine their own service and reintegration into society as civilians. The concept grew from conversations between David Roessel and Chaddy Cantona, a Stockton student veteran who traveled to Greece with a group in 2013. Stockton had a similar program for area teachers, The Examined Life, and they wondered why there could not be one for veterans as well. And then Chaddy Cantona was deployed. When Tom O'Donnell took the idea to Stockton student veterans, 18 members of the SVO (Student Veterans Organization) put their names down to take the course in Spring 2017. There is both a demand and a need to offer our student veterans such a program. If student's lives can be changed by the experience of travel abroad, and that has been shown on tours by Holocaust and Genocide Studies and ICHS, then it is equally true that student veterans lives can be changed and enhanced by a study tour that is designed for them. In this case, almost all of the veteran students will have traveled abroad before on active duty. What Roessel and Cantona discovered is that having a globalizing experience as a civilian gives a different meaning to foreign travel and the concepts of home and abroad. Jason Babin, Tom O'Donnell, Rob Gregg, Lisa Honaker, Tom Papademetriou, and the Foundation and Grants Office staff have been involved in the discussions shaping this project.

There will be two leaders of the seminar. Roessel would handle the history and culture of the Greek world, and Jason Babin would help incorporate that into their own experiences as veterans. While Homer will be the focus, the tour would also include the World War I battlefields of Gallipoli (just an hour from Troy), World War II sites on Kefalonia (just an hour from Ithaca), Mycenae (the palace of Agamemnon), Athens (where the democratic assembly voted to go to war with Sparta). The readings, with a focus on Homer, would incorporate these other places and time periods.

Gregg, Honaker and Roessel have talked with Todd Regn, Phil Elmore, and Tom Papademetriou about finding a sponsor for the program. They both relayed the same message. That it would be easier to find a sponsor after a successful pilot program. And that it would be easier to fund the pilot program if it were presented a match and not full funding. The cost for a group of 20 for the trip will be around \$3000 for March (still low season). Amphitriou Travel has promised to offer a \$2800 rate to honor the veterans. The \$20,000 for the 2020 grant will be entirely committed to Stockton veteran travel costs. Tom Papademetriou has taken the lead in negotiations with the OXI Day Foundation, an organization of Greek American veterans, and they have indicated that they would provide a match to Stockton's contribution. We are confident, based on the comments of Phil, that we will be able to have the rest of the costs for the veterans matched. All other expense will come from other sources. Jason Babin's cost will be paid

by ICHS. David Roessel and Tom Papademetriou, who will assist on part of the trip, will use ARHU travel money and ICHS Professorship funds.

This project has a college-wide impact both internally and externally. Stockton currently offers First Year Seminars and Transfer Seminars with the understanding that these are unique communities and there is value in having them take at least one seminar with their peers. But, while everyone acknowledges that veteran students are also a unique community, Stockton currently has no seminars for veteran students. Stockton veteran students mentioned this often when we asked them about their interest in this—that they would like to have a course which addressed their issues with other students “who get it.”

Integrating veterans into our community in the same way that we have moved to integrate First Years and Transfers will, as those programs have, make our community stronger. Other institutions have such veteran student seminars already, but as Tom O’Donnell can confirm, no one else has a study tour for veterans. By implementing a program such as this, Stockton University can be the first, and “lead the way” for others. The idea of the study tour originated as an integral part of the seminar process. As educators, we know that it is a different experience to read about something in a book, then it is to see something in person. (Roessel can attest to his from his experience with teachers, especially how the on-campus seminars after the trip offer much more depth than the ones that occur before). One might ask whether the seminar could be an on-campus course, with a visit to a battlefield nearby. But compare in the mind two photographs—one of twenty Stockton veteran students sitting in a classroom and one of 20 Stockton veteran students standing at the walls of Troy. The second, we submit, will indeed have college-wide impact. We also think the picture of the Stockton veteran students participating as a group during Internalization week, on Day of Scholarship, and at open houses for veterans will make each of those forums more inclusive and better our community. Some of the potential benefits are outlined in a new program by the VA called “AboutFace”

“When that something bad is a trauma, you can imagine how hard it would be to speak up about it. So imagine the courage it took for a special group of Veterans to tell their stories about their posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to the entire world. In the course of their recovery, these Veterans realized that talking about their experiences helped – and, wanting to help other Veterans begin talking as well, they agreed to put their stories out there. The hope is that other Veterans may relate to these experiences, may recognize themselves in what they see, and know that they are not alone”.

The same benefit is produced in our VETS program. When student veterans speak about their experience, they not only help the general population better understand what is happening to them, they also help other veterans, by showing they are not alone. It really is a benefit for all.

We have attached below a description of the proposed seminar that has been constructed by Roessel and Babin, to show how the study of Homeric poems can be used to highlight themes of importance to veteran students.

From Troy to Ithaca: The Journey Home is an 8-week seminar and 10-day travel tour that will investigate the themes of warfare, duty, and heroism as found in Homer’s works. The group will consist of approximately 20 selected veterans of various military backgrounds. Participants will meet with faculty once a week to discuss the readings and prepare themselves for the travel tour. The readings are aimed to connect the modern American soldiers with their ancient counterparts. The study of these ancient texts will show that the difficulties of war and the journey home are universally acknowledged throughout time while also illuminating the differences inherent in modern.

The travel tour will begin its journey at the ancient battlefield of Troy, and conclude at Ithaca, Odysseus’ home. The tour will stop in a variety of places including but not limited to Athens, the ancient city of

Mycenae, and Olympia, where the Olympics originated. Travelling to these locations is designed to be a transcendent experience for the veterans; to stand on Troy—the site of the 12th century BC war—completes the experience one begins on the page. The program is looking to give that elevated moment to veterans. By reading these texts first and then travelling to the location, the veterans become the narrators of the experience instead of the subjects. They become mediators between witness and warrior. The goal of this seminar is to give back to veterans through great works of literature and travel. Over the course of the program, participants will engage with fellow veterans about their experiences and discuss the ways in which the text illuminates for them the universal experiences of the soldier. Upon returning home from the travel tour, participants are asked to reach out into their communities to discuss their experience. This initial program will be the groundwork for a larger and more extensive program, and this first group will later act as delegates for recruiting interested parties the following year.

A veteran's journey home is not as physically long as Odysseus' in the modern age but it is emotionally long as the veteran struggles to adapt to civilian life. In one way the modern age exacerbates the journey home as in only a few hours one can go from a military base in a warzone to the safety of home. The seminar *From Troy to Ithaca: The Journey Home* allows for the veteran to discuss this emotional journey home and the experience of war with fellow soldiers and, through the literary works, with the ancient soldiers. This allows for them to find a support group in people as well as in literature that transcends time.

The following is a list of the themes that will be discussed during the seminar:

The Iliad

Seminar: Mutiny Against Commanders

- The Iliad begins with the rage of Achilles. The Muse tells us of Achilles' disagreement with his commander, Agamemnon, over the appeasement of Gods and the exchanging of war trophies. Achilles' anger and refusal to behave as a subordinate removes him from his troops and endangers his men. This seminar will examine what it means to be part of a hierarchy, what happens when that hierarchy is broken, and what the consequences are for alienating oneself.

Seminar: What is a hero? How do we define glory?

- Achilles tells us of his two fates: "Two fates bear me on to the day of death. / If I hold out here and I lay siege to Troy / my journey home is gone, but my glory never dies. / If I voyage back to the fatherland I love, / my pride, my glory dies." To the Greek, glory is extremely important. Achilles exchanges his homecoming for his potential glory. How is military glory valued in modern American society? Does Achilles' choice compute for the modern soldier?

Seminar: Humanity vs. Nationalism

- When Achilles kills Hector in Book XXII, Hector's body is dragged back to the Greek camps. The king of the Trojans, Hector's father, Priam, ventures down into the enemy camp to ask for the body of his son back. In Achilles' tent, Priam gets on his knees and weeps. In this moment Achilles and Priam share a profound sense of loss—Achilles has just lost his best friend Patrocles. Can human loss or connection make a soldier abandon his sense of duty and nationalism, and relate to the enemy? How does this connection interfere with the tasks of war?

Seminar: Personal Choice

- Throughout the Iliad, the Greek gods intervene and it is said that fate rather than free will plays a role in the events. In the first lines of Book I of the Iliad, we are introduced to this concept: "Goddess, sing me the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, that fatal anger that brought countless sorrows on the Greeks, and sent many valiant souls of warriors down to Hades, leaving their bodies as spoil for dogs and carrion birds: for thus was the will of Zeus brought to fulfillment." While it is often stated that fate is in power rather than free will, the characters can

still have room to make decisions, such as Achilles who can decide to return home or die in glory at Troy. Does the limited choices Achilles can choose from because of fate resonate with choices modern soldiers must make in battle? Is there room for personal choice in duty?

The Odyssey

Seminar: Recognition and Homecoming

- When Odysseus arrives home to the island of Ithaca, his guide, the goddess Athena, disguises him as an old man to protect him from the suitors, who have been making advances on his wife and home. Unrecognized by his family, Odysseus quickly becomes a stranger in his own home. This seminar will focus on the ways in which a soldier changes during his time away and how those changes—both physical and mental—make homecoming more difficult. It will also examine the way in which the soldier recognizes his home and how he, in turn, is recognized.

Seminar: Identity and Sacrifice on the Journey Home

- During his journey home from the Trojan War, Odysseus is forced to adopt many different identities. He becomes “nobody” to the Cyclops and a swineherd to his father. By adopting these identities, Odysseus also adopts false lives and it is only through these identities that he is able to successfully complete his journey home. Does the soldier at war or on the journey home develop a second self? How and why are these identities created and do they in some way protect the soldier emotionally from his own identity at home?

Seminar: Memory

- Throughout the Odyssey, Odysseus tells the tales of his journey to the strangers he encounters, a different rendition each time. The tales are arranged in a Ring Composition: they return to a point in the past and bring us up to the present moment of Odysseus’ story telling. These winding stories often create gaps in time and reality—is this conceptualization of the past familiar to the modern soldier? Does time cease to be linear for the soldier? Additionally, does Odysseus gain power over his personal story by being the narrator of it? Does the soldier find strength in the telling of his story?

Seminar: Integration

- When Odysseus returns home, he becomes reconnected—he rejoins his wife in their marriage bed, he is again a father to his son—but in many ways there is no longer a place for Odysseus in his home. The story concludes with Odysseus setting off on another journey, to complete a task given to him in the underworld. The continuation of his travels is a symbol for his inability to remain at home. How does this speak to the reintegration of the modern soldier in his home and society? Can the soldier ever completely come home after war?

Texts

- The Iliad of Homer
- The Odyssey of Homer
- Achilles in Vietnam by Jonathan Shays
- Odysseus in America by Jonathan Shays

Each student will have a presentation on one of the sites visited. There will be three short assignments of three pages, each student will keep a seminar journal, and there will be final paper of pages.

Budget

Veteran students are generally older than the average of the student body, and many have family or other responsibilities. We started with the concept that we should provide the travel expenses to make it accessible for all who have served and are now students at Stockton. The student travel expenses will

be \$60,000 (\$3000 per student). It will provide transportation, accommodation and some meals. The students will be responsible for lunch and half of the dinners. We have an offer from the OXI Day Foundation, an organization of Greek American veterans, to supply the remaining \$40,000 if Stockton and the 2020 Initiative offers the first \$20,000. The remaining costs for the trip leaders will be provided by the Pappas Center for Hellenic Studies.

We talked to Todd Regn in the Grants Office, and we will apply for larger grants to continue the program after a successful effort. The Grants Office advised us to run a pilot program first which is why we doing things in this order. We have also talked to Phil Ellmore and the Foundation about future funding.

Please describe the results of your project and compare them to your original expectations. Elaborate on how well your objectives were met and how they might have changed. Note any particular obstacles that may have prevented your achieving full satisfaction on desired outcomes.

When building this course, we had several goals in mind that we felt would be most beneficial to our students. Firstly, we wanted to incorporate the lived experience of service members and the process of homecoming and tie them to the readings of Homer. Through the course work and trip we found this to be extremely successful, and while we foresee minor changes to better enhance the experience, we intend to use the same materials, especially *Achilles in Vietnam* by Jonathan Shay, again. Additionally, some of the readings and assignments may change to incorporate more about ancient Athens and Sparta.

A big part of this course was the trip to Greece, and we found it to have a profound impact on the students understanding of the material and their interaction in the classes following the trip. While we did promote student on student collaboration before the trip with several projects, we could see a comfort and bond amongst the students that further enhanced the learning experience of the class. We intend to increase the number of group projects before the trip to get that interaction started earlier. We found the combination of the readings by Homer and the personal experience of service members to be extremely successful.

The trip to Greece was truly an incredible experience for all, especially the island of Ithaca, which is the home of Odysseus. It was deeply moving and emotional for everyone, including the staff, as it reflected each student's personal journey home. We did not foresee this when planning the trip, but it was clear to us that the standing on Odysseus's home island meant a great deal. This was a perfect conclusion to our journey and helped to tie in the final days of the tip in Athens and the museums that we visited. The biggest challenge in the construction of the trip was the the removal of Troy from the itinerary as it would have further added to the trip. Because of the continued situation in Turkey we are planning to forgo Troy and plan for additional stops in Greece.

Perhaps the most impressive result of this course came from our counselor for veterans, Karen Matsinger.

The eight students who were in counseling said that their condition had improved after returning from Greece. Four students in the seminar began counseling after they returned. We had hoped that this course would have therapeutic benefit for the student veterans enrolled, but now there are tangible results beyond what we had hoped.

Please list any follow-up actions (publications, presentation venues, etc.)

Jason Babin has already discussed the potential of this program with other local institutions as well as at several regional conferences. He will further providing updates on the program now that the pilot has been completed. We will also be submitting a proposal to a competition for innovative study abroad initiatives.

Are you recommending the continuation of this project? If so:

- **What are the next action steps you foresee or recommend?**
- **What are the expected budget requirements going forward?**
- **Please identify the program, department, or division to which the continuation proposal should be forwarded.**

[Note: continuation proposals must be approved and incorporated into the appropriate budget process.]

We will be offering the course again in Spring 2018 and Spring 2019. This was made possible by a donation by the Pappas Family Foundation of \$30,000 for each of the next two years. The rest of the money for the 2018 will come from the President's Initiative Fund, and we are working with the Foundation and the Grants Office on the funding for 2019 and creating an endowment. We will meet our budgetary needs without further support from the 2020 Fund. We are grateful to the 2020 Committee for helping to launch this program. We will always remember that the chance to prove this concept had both merit and legs came from 2020 funds.

FINANCES: Based on your proposal, please outline below how the award has been spent.		
	Amount	Notes/Comments
Beginning Budget Balance as of:	\$	
Salary Expenditures		
• Stipends	\$	
• Full-time staff salaries	\$	
• Full-time faculty salaries	\$	
• TES salaries	\$	
• Fringe Benefits	\$	
Total Salary and Fringe Expenditures	\$	
Non-Salary Expenditures (<i>supplies, travel, etc.</i>)		
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
•	\$	
Total Non-Salary Expenditures	\$	
Total Salary + Non-Salary Expenditures	\$	
Ending Budget Balance as of:	\$	

If there are remaining expenditures required to complete the project, please itemize them with expected amounts and timing for payment.

IMPORTANT: *Unused funds will revert to the general 2020 Initiative Fund at the end of the fiscal year if not approved and encumbered for project costs.*

Item	Expected Amount	Expected Timing for Payment
Total		

A Study Tour Course for Stockton Student Veterans



David Roessel

Jason Babin

Karen Matsinger

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A Study Tour Course for Stockton Student Veterans.

From Troy to Ithaca: The Journey Home

Based on GAH 2328 Worlds of Homer

The idea behind this project is twofold. First, it will reconfigure the current GAH Homer course as a seminar for Stockton student veterans. Homer's *Iliad* and *Odyssey* have been shown to have a special reference for veterans, such as in work like Jonathan Shays's *Achilles in Vietnam* and *Odysseus in America* and the recent use of Greek tragedy in the Theatre of War project by Brian Dorries. Where *From Troy to Ithaca* is unique in that it incorporates a study that will allow students to immerse themselves into the environment where Achilles and Odysseus lived and fought.

A key component of this course will be to create opportunities for Stockton veterans to connect with the characters of the story, and to examine how their personal challenges relate to their own. We will use distance, both the distance between the Ancient Greek epics and the present and the distance from Homeric sites and New Jersey, as a means for our veterans to examine their own service and reintegration into society as civilians.

The concept grew from conversations between David Roessel and Chaddy Cantona, a Stockton student veteran who traveled to Greece with a group in 2013. Stockton had a similar program for area teachers, The Examined Life, and they wondered why there could not be one for veterans as well.

If student's lives can be changed by the experience of travel abroad, and that has been shown on tours by Holocaust and Genocide Studies and ICHS, then it is equally true that student veterans lives can be changed and enhanced by a study tour that is designed for them. In this case, almost all of the veteran students will have traveled abroad before on active duty. What Roessel and Cantona discovered is that having a globalizing experience as a civilian gives a different meaning to foreign travel and the concepts of home and abroad. Jason Babin, Tom O'Donnell, Rob Gregg, Lisa Honaker, Tom Papademetriou, and the Foundation and Grants Office staff have been involved in the discussions shaping this project.

Leaders/Instructors

There are two leaders of the seminar. Dr. David Roessel would handle the history and culture of the Greek world, and Jason Babin would help incorporate that into their own experiences as veterans. In

addition a third staff member, Karen Matsinger Assistant Director of Counseling Services, will be used to further support the veteran experience.

While Homer will be the focus, the tour also includes trips to the World War II sites on Kefalonia (just an hour from Ithaca), and Mycenae (the palace of Agamemnon), Athens (where the democratic assembly voted to go to war with Sparta). The readings, with a focus on Homer, would incorporate these other places and time periods.

Cost/Expenses

The cost for a group of 20 students to take part in the trip is approximately \$2,800 to travel during Spring Break, March (off season). Amphitriton Travel will be used as they have provided a lower rate and have been used on previous trips. All funding collected through grants and donations will be used solely for student expenses. All staff will provide funding through institutional means.

Impact

This seminar has a college-wide impact both internally and externally. Stockton currently offers First Year Seminars and Transfer Seminars with the understanding that these are unique communities and there is value in having them take at least one seminar with their peers. Through the creation of this course, Stockton University now has the ability to provide a unique experience that focuses on the experience of military and veteran students. Integrating veterans into our community in the same way that we have moved to integrate First Years and Transfers will, as those programs have shown, make our community stronger and more diverse.

Other institutions have created veteran specific seminars, no one has yet incorporated a study tour that takes combines classroom learning and real world experiences. As educators, we know that it is a different experience to read about something in a book, and then to actually see something in person. Dr. Roessel can confirm this experience with teachers, especially how the on-campus seminars after the trip offer much more depth than the ones that occur before.

One might ask whether the seminar could be an on-campus course, with a visit to a battlefield nearby. But compare in the mind two photographs—one of twenty Stockton veteran students sitting in a classroom and one of 20 Stockton veteran students standing at the walls of Troy. The second, we submit, will indeed have college-wide impact. We also think the picture of the Stockton veteran students participating as a group during Internalization week, on Day of Scholarship, and at open houses

for veterans will make each of those forums more inclusive and better our community. Some of the potential benefits are outlined in a new program by the VA called “AboutFace”. “When that something bad is a trauma, you can imagine how hard it would be to speak up about it. So imagine the courage it took for a special group of Veterans to tell their stories about their posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) to the entire world. In the course of their recovery, these Veterans realized that talking about their experiences helped – and, wanting to help other Veterans begin talking as well, they agreed to put their stories out there. The hope is that other Veterans may relate to these experiences, may recognize themselves in what they see, and know that they are not alone”.

The same benefit is produced in our VETS program. When student veterans speak about their experience, they not only help the general population better understand what is happening to them, they also help other veterans, by showing they are not alone. It really is a benefit for all.

Lasting Connections

Dr. David Roessel has already made several trips to this area with students and has connected with the Greek military and the University of Athens. Through these connections, Stockton Student Veterans will form lasting relationships that will help them better understand their own unique experience. These relationships, will be used to further expand Stockton’s presence in the global environment and provide future students an opportunity to learn.

Outline of Seminar

From Troy to Ithaca: The Journey Home is an 8-week seminar and 10-day travel tour that will investigate the themes of warfare, duty, and heroism as found in Homer’s works. The group will consist of approximately 20 selected veterans of various military backgrounds. Participants will meet with faculty once a week to discuss the readings and prepare themselves for the travel tour. The readings are aimed to connect the modern American soldiers with their ancient counterparts. The study of these ancient texts will show that the difficulties of war and the journey home are universally acknowledged throughout time while also illuminating the differences inherent in modern.

The travel tour will begin its journey at the ancient battlefield of Troy, and conclude at Ithaca, Odysseus’ home. The tour will stop in a variety of places including but not limited to Athens, the ancient city of Mycenae, and Olympia, where the Olympics originated. Travelling to these locations is designed to be a transcendent experience for the veterans; to stand on Troy—the site of the 12th century BC war—completes the experience one begins on the page. The program is looking to give that elevated

moment to veterans. By reading these texts first and then travelling to the location, the veterans become the narrators of the experience instead of the subjects. They become mediators between witness and warrior. The goal of this seminar is to give back to veterans through great works of literature and travel.

Over the course of the program, participants will engage with fellow veterans about their experiences and discuss the ways in which the text illuminates for them the universal experiences of the soldier. Upon returning home from the travel tour, participants are asked to reach out into their communities to discuss their experience. This initial program will be the groundwork for a larger and more extensive program, and this first group will later act as delegates for recruiting interested parties the following year.

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The following is a list of the themes that will be discussed during the seminar:

The Iliad

Seminar: Mutiny Against Commanders

- The *Iliad* begins with the rage of Achilles. The Muse tells us of Achilles' disagreement with his commander, Agamemnon, over the appeasement of Gods and the exchanging of war trophies. Achilles' anger and refusal to behave as a subordinate removes him from his troops and endangers his men. This seminar will examine what it means to be part of a hierarchy, what happens when that hierarchy is broken, and what the consequences are for alienating oneself.

Seminar: What is a hero? How do we define glory?

- Achilles tells us of his two fates: "Two fates bear me on to the day of death. / If I hold out here and I lay siege to Troy / my journey home is gone, but my glory never dies. / If I voyage back to the fatherland I love, / my pride, my glory dies." To the Greek, glory is extremely important.

Achilles exchanges his homecoming for his potential glory. How is military glory valued in modern American society? Does Achilles' choice compute for the modern soldier?

Seminar: Humanity vs. Nationalism

- When Achilles kills Hector in Book XXII, Hector's body is dragged back to the Greek camps. The king of the Trojans, Hector's father, Priam, ventures down into the enemy camp to ask for the body of his son back. In Achilles' tent, Priam gets on his knees and weeps. In this moment Achilles and Priam share a profound sense of loss—Achilles has just lost his best friend Patrocles. Can human loss or connection make a soldier abandon his sense of duty and nationalism, and relate to the enemy? How does this connection interfere with the tasks of war?

Seminar: Personal Choice

- Throughout the *Iliad*, the Greek gods intervene and it is said that fate rather than free will plays a role in the events. In the first lines of Book I of the *Iliad*, we are introduced to this concept: "Goddess, sing me the wrath of Achilles, Peleus' son, that fatal anger that brought countless sorrows on the Greeks, and sent many valiant souls of warriors down to Hades, leaving their bodies as spoil for dogs and carrion birds: for thus was the will of Zeus brought to fulfillment." While it is often stated that fate is in power rather than free will, the characters can still have room to make decisions, such as Achilles who can decide to return home or die in glory at Troy. Does the limited choices Achilles can choose from because of fate resonate with choices modern soldiers must make in battle? Is there room for personal choice in duty?

The Odyssey

Seminar: Recognition and Homecoming

- When Odysseus arrives home to the island of Ithaca, his guide, the goddess Athena, disguises him as an old man to protect him from the suitors, who have been making advances on his wife and home. Unrecognized by his family, Odysseus quickly becomes a stranger in his own home. This seminar will focus on the ways in which a soldier changes during his time away and how those changes—both physical and mental—make homecoming more difficult. It will also examine the way in which the soldier recognizes his home and how he, in turn, is recognized.

Seminar: Identity and Sacrifice on the Journey Home

- During his journey home from the Trojan War, Odysseus is forced to adopt many different identities. He becomes "nobody" to the Cyclops and a swineherd to his father. By adopting

these identities, Odysseus also adopts false lives and it is only through these identities that he is able to successfully complete his journey home. Does the soldier at war or on the journey home develop a second self? How and why are these identities created and do they in some way protect the soldier emotionally from his own identity at home?

Seminar: Memory

- Throughout the *Odyssey*, Odysseus tells the tales of his journey to the strangers he encounters, a different rendition each time. The tales are arranged in a Ring Composition: they return to a point in the past and bring us up to the present moment of Odysseus' story telling. These winding stories often create gaps in time and reality—is this conceptualization of the past familiar to the modern soldier? Does time cease to be linear for the soldier? Additionally, does Odysseus gain power over his personal story by being the narrator of it? Does the soldier find strength in the telling of his story?

Seminar: Integration

- When Odysseus returns home, he becomes reconnected—he rejoins his wife in their marriage bed, he is again a father to his son—but in many ways there is no longer a place for Odysseus in his home. The story concludes with Odysseus setting off on another journey, to complete a task given to him in the underworld. The continuation of his travels is a symbol for his inability to remain at home. How does this speak to the reintegration of the modern soldier in his home and society? Can the soldier ever completely come home after war?

Texts:

- *The Iliad* of Homer
- *The Odyssey* of Homer
- *Achilles in Vietnam* by Jonathan Shays
- *Odysseus in America* by Jonathan Shays

Each student will have a presentation on one of the sites visited. There will be three short assignments of three pages, each student will keep a seminar journal, and there will be final paper of pages.

Budget

Veteran students are generally older than the average of the student body, and many have family or other responsibilities. We started with the concept that we should provide the travel expenses to make it accessible for all who have served and are now students at Stockton. The student travel expenses will be \$60,000 (\$3000 per student). \$1200 for the round trip flight and \$1800 for lodging and in-country transportation per student. These funds will provide transportation, accommodation and some meals. The students will be responsible for lunch and half of the dinners.

Student Selection

Enrollment into GAH 2328 will be restricted to student veteran's enrolled fulltime at Stockton University. Enrollment will also be determined by class and academic standing. Senior level students (Juniors and Seniors), will be given priority as they may not have another opportunity to enroll in the course. In addition, pre-travel survey will be given to all students enrolled so that they may be properly prepared for the experience of traveling to another country. The Office of Veteran Affairs will approve all prospective students.

Travel

For travel arrangements, Amphitriion Travel will be utilized. Having been used by Dr. Roessel for travel in Greece and Turkey over twenty times. This company is being employed because they have staff and transportation throughout Greece who can assist us with problems (lost luggage, customs, and transportation). Amphitriion bus drivers have years of experience with groups and are familiar with local doctors, pharmacies, and police in all of the towns that they visit.

Travel Itinerary

Day 1: Depart for Greece

Day 2: Arrive in Greece, Athens

Day 3: Full day Athens city tour, including visits to Acropolis & New Acropolis Museum

Day 4: Travel to Nafplion, Visit Tiryns & Mycenae

Day 5: Travel to Sparta (overnight in Sparta). Crusader castle at Mistras.

Day 6: Travel to Pylos and Olympia (overnight in Olympia)

Day 7: Travel to Ithaca, (overnight)

Day 8: Walking tour of Ithaca

Day 9: Travel to Athens

Day 10: Tour of Athens

Day 11: Continued Tour of Athens

Day 12: Depart Home

In addition to Homeric sites, the class will visit, read and talk about: The experience of The Greek War of Independence in the early 1900s The Crusades in Greece The occupation of Greece in World War II and the Holocaust in Greece.

Assessment Plan for

A Study Tour Course for Stockton Veteran Students (GAH2328)

Assessing students' global learning:

1. Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) (Pre- and Post-study tour/course): to see students' development in the intercultural communication competence.
2. Qualitative evaluation using our Global Awareness Map (see below): students may write their reflections or maybe just videotape daily diary (but the problem is that we need someone to transcribe the diaries later).
3. Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) (Pre- and Post-course): to see the differences of students' beliefs and values, and hence to better design the study tour.

Assessment and Feedback

The students that took part in the course and trip during the spring 2017 semester have all suggested that the experience they've gained has been beneficial to them personally and

academically. Each student has reported an increase in global understanding and a connection to their fellow students and the campus community.

Feedback from students:

Army Veteran, Freshman, Heath Services Major

- *“Worlds of Homer has provided both an opportunity to learn and grow for me and, though I cannot speak for them, my classmates. It has allowed me to draw parallels between people who lived so long ago and now. It has given me the chance to go to the places where those people once stood and experience the people and culture of Greece. As a veteran, I can appreciate a story of a man who returns home from his service to a place that no longer seems familiar. I can understand the anger of losing someone precious. While it may not seem like it, being able to go through this class with others like me, veterans, has afforded me the chance to tackle the wall that is the transition to civilian life with those who can understand what it is that I am going through”.*

Marine Veteran, Freshman, Art History Major

- *“Having an opportunity where we were afforded an otherwise rare chance to connect with each other- with that unique sense of esprit-de-corps, living within and standing upon history itself and experiencing a potentially once-in-a-lifetime course of study abroad is invaluable in every sense of the word. The fact is that I know I would have been unable to experience this of my own accord, and being permitted to have such an incredible experience”*

Army National Guard, Sophomore, Business Major

- *“The most striking experience to me was seeing the Parthenon in-person. From the hike up the hill I saw ancient stone theaters where people would meet for entertainment or possible public speaking events. Also on the hike I saw beautiful stone statues of Greek gods and marble walkways/stairs. Upon arrival to the Parthenon I was breath taken by the sheer size and craftsmanship of it. I am not a religious man, but for the duration of being near the Parthenon I was converted to believe in ancient Greek gods like Athena; who the Parthenon was dedicated to”.*

Army Veteran, Senior, Environmental Science Major

- *“I personally want to thank you for allowing me to discover this beautiful country and the stories who have died for it, their legends showing an insight of how the history of war repeats itself. The class was just the beginning, I befriended people whom I would have never interacted with. The trip ensured that these classmates went from strangers to close friends, knowing we all have a common background displaying comradery. The steps I climbed made me think of those whom walked before me with ideologies that made it all the way to our shores”.*

Photo From the trip

















