

## Essay Assignment #1--Literary Analysis of *The Iliad*

### Writing Process and Goals

#### The Writing Process:

After re-reading Professor Izenberg's *Writer's Handbook* chapter on close reading, identify and explain the formal elements of the passage—its figures of speech, diction, imagery, tone, use of repetition, etc.—that relate to the question of human agency. (Keep in mind that this poem appears in translation so that an examination of meter and rhyme may not be appropriate). How do these pieces of evidence address the prompt? Write a working-thesis, or an interpretation, of this evidence. As you begin writing, you will notice your working-thesis becoming more specific and refined, if not changing altogether. When your initial reading is complete, return to your working-thesis and revise based upon what your interpretation has taught you.

The passage your instructor chooses may not refer to all forms of human agency—as they relate to human events, gods, or fate. It almost certainly will not conceive of agency in absolute terms—as something humans do or do not possess. In the process of refining your thesis, you will be making qualitative assessments about the form and scope of agency—that is, *how* it exists, not whether it exists.

#### Student Learning Goals:

- Make specific, clear, arguable claims
- Produce cohesive paragraphs
- Present well-selected evidence that is well-contextualized and explained
- Develop strong warrants
- Understand and perform the assumptions and methods of literary analysis
- Engage in active revision (in which the final submitted draft of your paper exhibits a careful reflection, and working through, of numerous drafts).