Hello future FIG-member and welcome to *From Odysseus to Marx*,

My name is Joshua Heath and I am your FIG Academic Assistant (FA) for GER 199 College Connections; I am working together with Matthias Vogel who is the instructor. He and I will help you maneuver GER 258 and COLT 101, and together we want to welcome you to our FIG!

I am a German major and when I graduate I plan to continue to study German literature and philosophy. Originally from Phoenix, Arizona, I spent most of my life in Banks, Oregon, a small town approximately 26 miles west of Portland. Playing bass and writing poetry are my favorite pastimes when I am not reading or hanging out at one of the German extra-curricular events (check out the conversation table on Tuesdays at 6 pm McMenamin’s 19th St. Café!) Vogel is the Language Coordinator in the German Department. He primarily teaches language, culture and literature courses. He comes from Mainz in Germany but loves Oregon. You often find him hiking, biking, running, reading, and watching films with students; we have some outings planned for 199 as well!

The *Introduction to Comparative Literature* with Leah Middlebrook theorizes and discusses cultural motivations behind literature and what we gain from the interpretations of it. *German Culture and Society* with Dorothee Ostmeier, is an overview of German literature and philosophy from Romanticism to Modernism, including authors such as E.T.A. Hoffman, Ludwig Tieck and Friedrich Nietzsche—some of the greatest authors of German literature!

We will occasionally post articles or videos on a Facebook page we specifically created for this course and we already have a summer reading assignment to help you hone your literary skills. Please read two articles about the interpretation and definition of literature (an elaborate description of this assignment can be found on the Facebook page—[check it out](#)). If you do not have a Facebook account and do not wish to create one, we will gladly inform you of the assignment and further postings by e-mail or Blackboard.

Amidst the chaos of moving to college, don’t forget to come to the meeting in Columbia 150 at **10 a.m. on September 21 (Friday)**, which we will attend together. Please bring your student handbook back to campus and be on time to the meeting on Friday; we will be relocating to another room afterwards to get to know some of our faculty. We will also be attending **University Convocation on Sunday, September 23** as a group.

You can contact us at matvogel@uoreon.edu or joshuah@uoregon.edu, at any time if you have questions. We’re looking forward to many academic adventures with you relating literary meanings to our lives.

Matthias Vogel – Instructor  
Joshua Heath – FIG Assistant

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FIG: From Odysseus to Marx, GER 258+COLT 101+GER 199  
Matthias Vogel and Joshua Heath 2012