

# NOBODY'S ODYSSEY

Background Guide

Director: Emilie Beaudoin

**ABSTRACT:** Welcome to the survivors of the siege upon Ilium. In this boat sits a team of Greeks who fought in the Trojan War and have begun their transit towards home, Ithaca. However, a question across everyone's lips simmers, who is Odysseus in this group of misfits? According to wise Athena, "Nobody is here, and nobody will win."



"nobody will win."  
Athena, "nobody is here" and



## TABLE OF CONTENTS

<b>DIRECTOR’S LETTER .....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>TERMINOLOGY .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>NOTABLE CHARACTERS.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>CAUSES OF THE TROJAN WAR .....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>ILIAD.....</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>END OF THE TROJAN WAR.....</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>CURRENT SITUATION .....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>IMPORTANCE OF XENIA .....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>RESTORATION OF THE OIKOS.....</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>ORDER OF THE ODYSSEY .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>POINT SYSTEM .....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>COMMITTEE CHARACTERS.....</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>ADVICE FOR RESEARCH .....</b>	<b>14</b>

## Director's Letter

Dear delegates,

The dais and I are pleased to welcome you to Nobody's Odyssey at SSICsim 2020!

My name is Emilie Beaudoin, and I will be your director. I am in my third-year at U of T studying International Relations and History with a minor in Classics. I've been participating in Model UN since high school and look forward to hosting a committee based after one of my favourite ancient literary works. Outside of university and MUN, I can be found, reading YA books, playing Animal Crossing or simply being on TikTok. Karrie is your crisis manager. She is a third-year commerce student specializing in Finance and Economics and minoring in Statistics. She's been involved in Model UN for 5 years now and is really excited for this committee! Outside of MUN, some of her hobbies include playing video games – Pokémon, Animal Crossing, and Final Fantasy are some of her favourite franchises – and watching baseball – she's a big fan of the Toronto Blue Jays.

This committee will be a retelling of the infamous epic and will require you to navigate rough seas and mythological creatures before re-establishing order within the kingdom of Ithaca and Odysseus' household. It is important to familiarize yourself with this background guide and pay close attention to the terms as some will play important roles within this committee. Do note, that while this is based upon Homer's Odyssey we will not repeat every component of the epic during committee sessions.

Additionally, as described below there will be a point system used, points will be attributed with successful private or public directives and failed directives will also have their consequences. The dais will also attribute a more detailed description of your characters once the committee begins, as the goal of this committee is not to be limited by your position but rather to explore and use your imagination and resources to its limits.

*“But you, brave and adept from this day on . . . there's hope that you will reach your goal . . . the journey that stirs you now is not far off.”*

Sincerely,

Emilie J. Beaudoin  
Director, Nobody's Odyssey  
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*Tell me about a complicated man.  
Muse, tell me how he wandered and was lost  
when he had wrecked the holy town of Troy,  
and where he went, and who he met, the pain  
he suffered in the storms at sea, and how*



*he worked to save his life and bring his men  
back home.*  
(Homer, *Odyssey* 1.1-7 trans. Emily Wilson)

## Terminology

While this committee will be hosted in English, these are some important Greek terms that will be useful during the conference:

- I. **Achaean**s: all of the Greeks who gathered under Agamemnon during the Trojan War.
- II. **Anax**: also sometimes spelled wanax, it refers to the king of kings / military leader of a large scale conflict and it is typically reserved for mythical figures.
- III. **Geras**: “prize” linked to timē which can be won during heroic deeds such as warfare or competitions.
- IV. **Ilium**: also called Troy and Ilium, it is the walled city of King Priam, father of Hector and Paris.
- V. **Klēos**: a higher form of timē and honour, it is earned by the completion of a truly remarkable deed and expressed not by a physical object, but by speech and poetry. It is metaphorical immortality through the arts.
- VI. **Mētis**: meaning “cleverness,” or “devious,” it is a term often used for Hermes and Odysseus, and while it includes lying it had a rather positive perception by the Greeks.
- VII. **Nostos**: the word can be described as “homecoming” and is the root of the English word “nostalgia.” It is a major theme within the *Odyssey* as Odysseus struggles to get back home to Ithaca and must give up war before going back home.
- VIII. **Oikos**: a term that includes the family, the family property, and the house.
- IX. **Rhapsode**: an ancient Greek whose job was to recite oral poetry.
- X. **Timē**: a type of honour which is embodied by geras that a hero wins and possesses.
- XI. **Xenia**: refers to guest-friendship, an important aspect of Greek society.

## Notable Characters

While this committee might not have direct interactions with all characters listed, the index will provide a better understanding of the background.

- I. **Achilles**: son of Peleus king of the Myrmidons and goddess Thetis, he commands his father’s forces during the Trojan War. The best Greek warrior and lover of Patroclus.
- II. **Agamemnon**: brother of Menelaus, he is the lead military commander (*anax*) during the Trojan War. His wife, Clytemnestra, is Helen’s sister and he infamously sacrificed his oldest daughter, Iphigenia, at the beginning of the war.
- III. **Chryses**: Trojan priest of Apollo captured by the Achaeans.
- IV. **Chryseis**: daughter of Chryses, war prize of Agamemnon.



- V. **Circe:** daughter of Helios, she is a powerful sorceress who uses potions, herbs, and her wand to turn men into animals.
- VI. **Hector:** greatest Trojan warrior, he eventually would kill Patroclus resulting in Achilles killing him and not returning his body to his father King Priam.
- VII. **Helen:** daughter of Zeus, she is known as the most beautiful mortal woman and is whom Aphrodite gives to Paris, even as she was married to Menelaus.
- VIII. **Menelaus:** the king of Sparta and husband of Helen, he would gather with his brother Agamemnon to launch a fleet of a thousand ships to retrieve his wife from Paris.
- IX. **Odysseus:** the king of Ithaca, husband of Penelope and father of Telemachus, and favoured by Odysseus he is known to possess *mētis*.
- X. **Patroclus:** an exiled prince raised at King Peleus' court, while he is trained as a soldier, he spent most of the Trojan War as a healer before being killed in battle for wearing his lover, Achilles', armour.
- XI. **Paris:** son of Priam, he is the most handsome mortal man and is who picked Aphrodite as the fairest goddess resulting in him receiving Helen as a gift.
- XII. **Penelope:** married to Odysseus, she is described as the ideal wife.
- XIII. **Priam:** king of Ilium and father of Hector, Priam, and forty-eight other sons, he is too old to fight during the war.
- XIV. **Telemachus:** son of Odysseus, however, he does not remember his father since he has not seen him in twenty years.
- XV. **Thetis:** minor sea goddess, married to the mortal king Peleus and bore Achilles.

## Causes of the Trojan War

### *The face that launched a thousand ships*

The events leading up to the Trojan War can be linked to Jason's journey with his crew, the Argonauts, and their search for the Golden Fleece across ancient Greece. During their travels, Peleus, king of the Myrmidons, fell in love with a sea goddess named Thetis; however, some classicists believe Zeus forced the marriage to ensure a mortal offspring would be produced, thus the child would not threaten his sovereignty. Nevertheless, the lovely couple had their union blessed by Zeus and had a lavish wedding filled with heroes and gods alike; however, Zeus had not invited Eris, goddess of strife, fearing she would start a dispute between the gods. Once the goddess appeared at the festivities against the wishes of Zeus, she let a golden apple roll upon the floor with the words "for the fairest" engraved upon the smooth fruit. As Zeus notices the discord, his wife Hera and daughters, Athena and Aphrodite, all surround the apple, each believing it belonged to them. Zeus, not wanting to start an uproar, decided to call upon the fairest male in the world, Paris, prince of Troy. Once Paris was summoned, Zeus told the three goddesses that they could each make a case as to why they deserved the apple and then Paris would pick the fairest among them. Hera and Athena's gifts lose against what Aphrodite promises Paris: the most beautiful mortal woman. Once the apple has been given to the goddess of love, Paris finds himself with Helen, daughter of Zeus and wife of Greek King Menelaus,

brother of Agamemnon. Madly in love with Helen, he quickly brings her to his father's stronghold, the walled city of Troy. Upon learning of the disappearance of his wife, Menelaus goes to his brother, and together they raise an armada filled with soldiers from all corners of Greece. Agamemnon is declared *anax*, king of kings, and leader of all troops as they launch to retrieve the women whose beauty launched a thousand ships.

However, before the launching of Odysseus's ships and warriors, a notable incident occurred, showcasing the *mētis* of the Ithacan King, Odysseus. While gathering forces Menelaus and Agamemnon sent Palamedes to get Odysseus as they knew his skills and trickery would be useful for the upcoming war. Odysseus, having heard of the looming war, devised a plan to ensure his inability to participate. As Palamedes arrived in Ithaca and stayed with an old friend showcasing great *xenia*, he would eventually go to Odysseus' home. Penelope, his wife, still taking care of their young son, Telemachus, offered him food and wine before telling him about her dear husband's unfortunate news. Odysseus had gone mad and now kept ploughing with a donkey and an ox on the same plough, causing chaos upon their field. Doubting the sincerity of Penelope, he asked her to be taken to Odysseus, and so she did to showcase Palamedes the tragedy that has become her life. Palamedes, also possessing *mētis*, decided to test Odysseus' insanity by putting young Telemachus in the way of the plough. Odysseus trying to ensure the ox and donkey did not kill his son, undoubtedly revealed he was not so insane after all, and was thus able to join the rest of the Greeks to Troy. This incident showcased the cleverness of the complicated man that is Odysseus.

## Iliad

*Sing, O Muse, of the rage of Achilles,  
son of Peleus, that brought countless ills upon the Achaeans.*

The Iliad is set within the ninth year of the Trojan War in which the Achaeans (Greeks) siege the walled city of Troy (Ilium). The entire epic happens within approximately 52 days and begins with the muses' warning of Achilles' anger. As a half-god and the best Greek warrior, Achilles is insulted by Agamemnon, King of Mycenae and *anax*. Agamemnon's war prize, Chryseis, daughter of Chryses, a Trojan priest of Apollo, results in a plague upon the Greek forces until Agamemnon returns the girl to her father. As a proud king, Agamemnon refuses at first, until too many lives are being taken by the sickness resulting in Achilles forcing the return of Chryseis to her father. Angered, by losing his *geras* Agamemnon demands Achilles to give him his war prize, a woman named Briseis.

Insulted by such a demand, Achilles considers killing Agamemnon until the goddess Athena intervenes and stops him. However, Achilles knowing while he is not in charge of the Achaean forces, is the best warrior within them and thus decides to go on strike by refusing the fight himself and for his Myrmidon warriors. Odysseus urges Agamemnon to continue fighting and not return home, which results in various notable battles that shape the body of Homer's Iliad. The waging war's balance is shifting onto the side led by King Priam's son Hector, the best



Trojan warrior. Throughout the time, Achilles refuses to fight despite countless offers of wealth and promises to the warrior in hopes of making his return to the battlefield. Still, his rage prohibits him from returning to combat. Odysseus leads a successful campaign into the walls of Ilium, but Agamemnon is wounded in battle, and soon after, the camp is attacked by Trojans who, in turn, harm Odysseus and Diomedes, making it clear that the Greeks are losing.

Depending upon the interpretation, Patroclus, close friend and lover of Achilles, is either convinced by Achilles to put on his armour and go into the battlefield to bring hope again to the Greeks and fear to the Trojans, or he did it of his own accord. Either way, cloaked in Achilles' armour and weapons, Patroclus goes into the heart of the conflict. Hector sees Achilles' armour and, with the help of Apollo, fights and kills Patroclus. Distraught by the death of his lover and closest companion, Achilles is filled with rage. Once dressed in a new armour made by Hephaestus, that his mother goddess Thetis brings him, Achilles' himself and his forces rejoin Agamemnon. Achilles entered the battlefield with anger that made mountains shake as he slew any Trojan in his way, turning the fields and river alongside him ruby red. Achilles reaches Hector, the killer of his lover and disposes of him. Achilles' next actions are deemed extremely disrespectful and are only a testament to his pain, each day Achilles circles Patroclus' funeral bier with Hector's body tied to his chariot.

The Greeks deemed death sacred and taking care of a corpse properly was a crucial aspect of society, which is why the gods that favoured the Trojans used their skills to protect Hector's body. After nine days, Zeus declares the spoiling of the body must be stopped and sends Hermes to bring Hector's corpse to his father, Priam. Hermes sneaks Priam into the Greek war camp, and the King of Troy enters Achilles' tent. Within the tent, Priam reveals his identity to Achilles, both sit and discuss their loved ones they lost due to the on-going war. In a heartwarming gesture, Priam kisses and holds Achilles hands, the same ones that killed his son, as he apologizes for the terrors war had brought upon everyone, the men embrace and cry. Achilles, still mourning, but having let go of much of his anger, tells Priam to take Hector's body and give it a proper funeral. The Iliad ends with the beginning of a twelve-day truce that Achilles provides the Trojan so they may adequately mourn their prince, Hector.

## End of the Trojan War

*Sing to me of the man, Muse, the man of twists and turns*

The Trojan war does not end alongside the Iliad, but instead nearly a year after Homer's epic. The siege upon Ilium lasted 10 years and did not end after the death of Achilles by Paris' hand but instead was won by the Achaeans due to Odysseus' infamous Trojan Horse trick. Odysseus disguised himself as an old beggar and was able to infiltrate Troy, only for Helen to immediately recognize him as he walked in the street; however, Odysseus kept his disguise as Helen provided him with a bath and food. Helen whispered Trojan's secrets to Odysseus, who, on his way out of the walled city, took out a hidden bronze sword and slew many Trojans while



heading back to the Greek camp. Odysseus used his newly gained knowledge of Troy and began scheming for a way to finally bring down the city.

Thus, Odysseus made the Greeks build a giant wooden horse that hosts hidden warriors and their weapons inside. The Trojan Horse, as history would call it, was brought in the middle of the night to Troy's city gates, the sleeping city unaware of the looming disaster. The men often wanted to talk and make noise, but Odysseus forbade them from such a thing knowing any sound would expose them. Eventually, as dawn came the Trojans started noticing the giant wooden horse by their city gates, believing it to be a gift from the gods, they opened the gates. As they tried to bring the wooden horse to the city's temples to honour the gods, the best of the Greek soldiers unleashed themselves from the belly of the wooden beast and started slaying the Trojans within their way. As they fought within the heart of the city, the rest of the Achaeans broke into the walls, and Troy began to fall. The decade long war that cost so many lives and created even great disturbance within the gods was finally over, and the Achaeans won, Helen would be going back to her husband Menelaus, all thanks to Odysseus' *mētis*.

## Current situation

*I am nobody*

The Trojan War has been won, and now it is time for everyone to finally begin the journey home with all of the honour and war prizes they have gained; however, there is a disturbance within one fleet. The Ithacans it seems, do not have Odysseus amongst them. Instead, the people within this ship appear to be the only ones Athena was able to save from Poseidon's wrath. As rosy-fingered Dawn awoke, the sailors spot an owl sitting on the bow of the boat overlooking the rising survivors of Ilium. As everyone is awake, the owl begins speaking, it is now evident that the bird is Athena, the goddess that favours Odysseus.

“Nobody is here, and may Nobody win”

This is all that the owl says before flying and disappearing in a blinding light, far away from the ship. The sailors look at each other, knowing that within this team is the real Odysseus. This committee shall undergo all of Odysseus' famous travels during the decade long Odyssey. The committee's dais, also known as the Olympian Council, shall keep track of when sailors come in near-death experiences and use *mētis* in every situation they encounter.

The committee will have two parts, the first will be the journey towards Ithaca in which the committee will face many mythological creatures and trials that are present within Homer's Odyssey. The second part will be the arrival and restoration of the *oikos* as the suitors of Penelope. Odysseus's wife must be slain, and equilibrium to the *oikos* must be restored so that your family can be convinced that you indeed are the Odysseus they have waited for twenty years.





## Importance of Xenia

*For a friend with an understanding heart is worth no less than a brother*

As defined in the terms list, xenia or guest-friendship is another important theme found within Homer's Odyssey. The Greeks highly stressed the proper manners of hosting and receiving guests in addition to being a good guest. Guest-friendships were passed down for multiple generations and also showcased social status as it was deemed crucial to provide ample food, lodging, and gifts to your guests. Within Homer's Odyssey the proper order of hosting and being a guest includes these guidelines:

How to be a good homeric host:

- I. Accepting guests
- II. Providing them a bath and rest if needed
- III. Prepare and serve a nice meal and wine
- IV. If available, provide entertainment such as a that provided by a rhapsode
- V. Discuss your guests' heritage without imposing too much on their lives
- VI. When the guest is ready to leave provide ample gifts especially ones of great fortune to a xenia guest
- VII. Send them off well-rested, fed, and provide any supplies or transportation they require

How to be a good homeric guest:

- I. Be grateful to your host and treat them with high respect
- II. Accept their offering of bath and lodging
- III. Eat and drink lots with the hosts and show that you enjoy the entertainment they provide you
- IV. Reveal your identity when is most acceptable regarding your situation
- V. Provide gifts or information they might enjoy if available
- VI. Leave not too late, but not too early, a good guest knows the right time of departure
- VII. When leaving, ensure you promise better food, accommodations and gifts than that which you received for when the hosts become your guests

## Restoration of the oikos

*There is nothing more admirable than when two people who see eye to eye keep house as man and wife, confounding their enemies and delighting their friends*

One of the major themes within the Odyssey is the restoration of the *oikos*, by having a stable home life the surroundings become balanced as well. It should be noted that most kingships are from city-states and not vast areas of land. In terms of Odyssey's home, Ithaca, it is lacking its rightful ruler and is in shambles. His son, Telemachus was but a baby when Odyssey left him and his wife to go fight abroad.



Telemachus does not remember his father's presence and at the beginning of the *Odyssey* even questions his heritage as he is reaching the age of maturity and does not know how to use his power as Odysseus' successor within society. As Telemachus ponders his role within his household, the goddess Athena pays him a visit disguised as an old man. Telemachus tells the old man, whom he believes is a guest-friend of his father, that he is unsure of his heritage and role within his household that is in shambles because it is missing the authority of the father figure. The role of the father is extremely important within the functions of the *oikos* because he is the master of all members of his family and household, and in the case of Odysseus also king of Ithaca his kingdom is also at risk. The Greeks truly believed that leaders and households needed to be at peace for the city to function properly, a leader's trouble with his *oikos* would reflect badly upon the city-state. As Telemachus is near his age of maturity, but not yet a full man, he does not have the wisdom nor the help of a paternal figure to establish order within his household and city. Thus, wise Athena sends him on a quest to learn information about his father which provides him an experience that is the custom of elite young men to go through.

The reasons the household and city are in shambles can also be associated with Penelope, Odysseus' wife. Penelope is continually surrounded by a long list of suitors who come into Odysseus' estate and feast and drink upon his property, eating away at his wealth. Penelope as a woman, cannot make them go away, neither can Telemachus who is too young. As well, Odysseus' father, Laertes, ran off to live like a miser in the woods after his son failed to return from Troy, meaning he is also absent from the household. If the suitors were honourable they would seek Laertes or Penelope's father and formally ask for her hand in marriage as tradition expects them to; however, by simply showing up day-after-day to Odysseus' estate, and using his resources for their benefit, their characters are clearly not respectful guests according to the rules of *xenia*, nor good Greeks. Penelope, ever the ideal wife, never entertains their inappropriate actions and demands and instead only interacts with them to use her own *mētis*. Penelope is known to be a skilled weaver and told the suitors she could not accept a proposal until she was done with the shawl she was making for the hard-working slave, Eumaeus. However, little did they know every night she untied the previous day's work so that the shawl was never finished. *"Three whole years I deceived them blind, seduced them with this scheme."* Thus, showcasing that *mētis* is not something reserved to Odysseus, and that Penelope is more than she appears and should not be underestimated.

As Odysseus encounters various troubles upon his return home, he much like the rest of his family has to prepare for his homecoming. One of the overarching themes surrounding Odysseus, is his need to let go of war and embrace the home life. Odysseus' travels begin in the mythical world and shift into the real world during his journey. Learning how to let go of war and embrace that he has brought enough *geras* and *timē* for his household and kingdom is something Odysseus had to realize within the course of the *Odyssey*. When a soldier returned home, he needed to bring wealth in the form of prizes and fame to his family or else he was deemed a failure even if he won the war. This tradition is why the committee faces different challenges in which you must keep in mind the importance of bringing back ample *geras* and *time* for your journey abroad to be considered successful, but do not forget to also maintain balance through establishing the household as the wealth you bring will mean nothing to a crumbling city.



## Order of the Odyssey

*Farewell! But if you only knew, down deep, what pains are fated to fill your cup before you reach that shore*

It should be noted that Homer's epic The Odyssey does not tell of Odysseus' journey in chronological order and that it was an oral epic meant to be recited out loud, not read. The epic is composed of 24 books, which are the equivalent of a chapter in a modern book; however, it should be noted that Greeks could ask the rhapsode to recite any book they wanted to hear regardless of order as everyone already was familiar with each tale. Book 1-4 are typically referred to as The Telemachy, as Telemachus goes on a journey trying to learn about his father Odysseus. Books 4-8 is Odysseus leaving Calypso only to meet Nausicaa and the Phaeacians. Books 9-12 are composed of Odysseus telling the tale of his travels to the Phaeacians from the end of the Trojan War to him leaving Calypso to end up on their shores. Books 13-18 is Odysseus' journey to Ithaca thanks to the Phaeacians' help and Telemachus returns as well. Books 19-24 contain Penelope's test for the suitors and Odysseus which is the final step of re-establishing order within the home and the city-state of Ithaca.

Legend:

Books 1-4

Books 5-8

Books 9-12

Books 13-18

Books 19-24

### Chronological Order

- I. Odysseus and his men raid the Cicones
- II. They arrive at the Land of the Lotus Eaters
- III. Odysseus blinds Polyphemus
- IV. Aiolos gives Odysseus the bag of winds
- V. Odysseus nearly reaches Ithaca
- VI. The Laistrygones destroy 11 ships
- VII. Circe turns the crew into swine
- VIII. Odysseus visits Teiresias in the Underworld
- IX. Odysseus's ship passes the Sirens
- X. Odysseus passes between Scylla and Charybdi
- XI. The crew slaughters Helios' cattle
- XII. Zeus kills everyone but Odysseus
- XIII. Odysseus arrives on Calypso's island
- XIV. Council of the gods. Athena bargains with Zeus
- XV. Athena visits Telemachus; he sails for Pylos

- XVI. Telemachus reaches Pylos, then sails to Sparta
- XVII. King Menelaus receives Telemachus.
- XVIII. Second council of gods, Calypso frees Odysseus
- XIX. Poseidon destroys Odysseus' raft
- XX. Odysseus lands on Scheria and meets Nausicaa
- XXI. Odysseus narrates his adventures to Phaeacians
- XXII. The Phaeacians bring Odysseus to Ithaca. He stays with the swineherd Eumaios.
- XXIII. Telemachus travels back to Pherai. Next he sails to Pylos, then home to Ithaca.
- XXIV. Telemachus joins Odysseus and Eumaios on Ithaca. Disguised as a beggar, Odysseus visits the palace.
- XXV. Penelope proposes bow competition. Still disguised, Odysseus wins the competition.
- XXVI. Odysseus reveals himself to suitors and Penelope. With Athena's help, Odysseus kills all suitors.
- XXVII. Odysseus reassumes his throne. Penelope finally accepts Odysseus.
- XXVIII. Suitors' families attempt to take revenge. Athena intervenes to put an end to the violence.

### The Odyssey Order

- I. Council of the gods. Athena bargains with Zeus
- II. Athena visits Telemachus; he sails for Pylos
- III. Telemachus reaches Pylos, then moves on to Sparta
- IV. King Menelaus and Helen receive Telemachus
- V. Second council of gods. Calypso frees Odysseus
- VI. Poseidon destroys Odysseus' raft
- VII. Odysseus lands on Scheria and meets Nausicaa
- VIII. Odysseus narrates his adventures to Phaeacians
- IX. Odysseus and his men raid the Cicones
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XXVIII. Suitors' families attempt to take revenge. Athena intervenes to put an end to the violence.

Source: <http://www.classics.upenn.edu/myth/php/homer/index.php?page=timelines>

## Point System

*There is a time for many words, and there is also a time for sleep*

The Council of the Gods, also known as the dais, will be keeping track of every successful deed and every failure you will undertake as your character and as a committee. Yourself and the committee will be able to gain points through the success of public and private directives when encountering different phases of the Odyssey, while also having the ability to lose points by making bad decisions. While announcements will be made when the committee as a whole gains or loses points, every delegate's ranking will be kept private. Losing points as a delegate or as a committee will negatively impact future decisions as points also represent to a certain extent how much the gods favour you and your teammates. Public directives will typically be worth more points since passed public directives are typically less frequent than private directives, however like any regular committee, please find a proper balance between public and private directives.

Delegate ranking will be considered when choosing awards; however, it does not mean the highest-ranking delegate will win Best Delegate. Furthermore, the dais will explain the worth of certain actions during the conference but it should be noted, the number of points you have should not impact your ability to participate in debate or send directives which is why specific scores will be kept hidden and will only be told by the dais when deemed appropriate. Here are some examples of ways to gain or lose points in the committee:

- Gain:
  - Sponsor of a public directive that is successful
  - Private directives that are successful
  - Escapes a near-death situation
  - Is respectful to the Gods
  - Exhibits metis
  - Ensures proper guest-friendship is maintained
- Lose:
  - Sends private directives that fails
  - The committee's public directive is unsuccessful
  - Enters a near-death situation
  - Offends the Gods or a guest-friend

## Committee Characters

*Each man delights in the work that suits him best*

Some of these characters are inspired by real-life Greeks; however, it does not mean you represent the historical character, as within this committee every character is a fictional Ithacan soldier who fought and accompanied Odysseus to Troy. Additionally, every character as noted down below has a talent or gift they possess and it is crucial to remember what the Gods have given you in order to properly utilize it during the committee whether that is in private, public directives or debate. More detailed definitions and talents of your character will be provided prior or during the conference when deemed appropriate by the dais.

- I. **Alcibiades**: great public speaker and money always follows him.
- II. **Apion**: scholar, gifted with great knowledge.
- III. **Berenike**: their long hair can be given to the gods as exchange for a favour.
- IV. **Callimachus**: a great liar and spinner of tales
- V. **Damokles**: has the physical strength of a god.
- VI. **Gregorios**: always keeps a watchful eye.
- VII. **Halkyone**: a lucky sailor especially when it comes to fishing.
- VIII. **Iason**: a gifted healer.
- IX. **Isokrates**: well versed in battle defence and offence.
- X. **Kalliope**: has a voice similar to a siren's and is able to lure individuals with it.
- XI. **Klotho**: crafty, can make a lot from nothing.
- XII. **Leto**: a great spy able to blend in the shadows.
- XIII. **Lykourgos**: a great fighter who specializes in leading group battles.
- XIV. **Minta**: great at defence, has a special shield.
- XV. **Mneme**: can recall nearly everything they hear.
- XVI. **Nikephoros**: a fast runner able to investigate areas in a short amount of time.
- XVII. **Pallas**: keeper of the weapons.
- XVIII. **Pamphilos**: everyone they meet wants to be their friend and not their foe.
- XIX. **Pericles**: their strategies always end up working.
- XX. **Theron**: a talented tracker and hunter.
- XXI. **Tychon**: an archer that nearly never misses.

## Advice for Research

*Tell me, why do you weep and grieve so sorely when you hear the fate of the Argives, hear the fall of Troy? That is the gods' work, spinning threads of death through the lives of mortal men, and all to make a song for those to come*

Firstly, I should begin by stating that you will not be required to read the entirety of the Odyssey prior to the conference. This background guide provides any necessary information needed prior to the conference. As stated in my director's letter, we will be using certain Greek terms due to



the fact that there are no accurate English translations for words such as *mētis*, and *xenia*. Please use my translations, and do contact me if you wish to discuss any term more deeply.

However, if you do wish to familiarize yourself with the work and plan to research further it is important to note that, I am using the Emily Wilson translation of Homer's *Odyssey*, thus certain terms might be different or have spelling variations. What you might find helpful is simply watching a youtube video summarizing the *Odyssey*, such as Ted-Ed "Everything you need to know before reading *The Odyssey*," or else Crash Course also has a great video.

And as always please contact me with any questions regarding content and help for research, I will be happy to assist anyone at [e.beaudoin@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:e.beaudoin@mail.utoronto.ca) please allow up to 2 business days before my response, if I do not reply simply re-send your email, thank you.

I understand the *Odyssey* might appear daunting at first; however, I am fully confident in everyone being able to participate fully and have a great conference. Good luck with your preparation, and may nobody win.

