**Tale of Kieu Writing Assignment**

**There are two sections to the assignment, but you do not need to break them into two sections: simply start a new paragraph for the second section.**

Section I: Summarize the plot (the main action) of the Tale of Kieu in a simple narrative format of two or three paragraphs. Your description should be no more than 350 words and include *only your own words.* Your challenge is to break the action down into the most important actions or scenes, and cover those scenes quickly and clearly.

Section II: In 250 words or fewer, analyze one part of the poem for what it tells us about Vietnam in that era (not today). You analysis may include material on the following topics: economics, sexuality, religion, government, national pride, agricultural, or gender relations. This list is not exhaustive: your analysis may include other topics, but focus on one topic, not many. Remember, analysis states an opinion (thesis) backed up by evidence. Quotations should be short, if any are used. Page numbers can be included in parentheses.

Grading rubric:

Paper accurately summarizes the main plot of the Tale of Kieu.  
Paper is well organized, in its ideas, sentences, and paragraphs.   
Paper makes effective use of standard English usage and grammar.

Section II of the paper makes a clear argument, supported by evidence.

Tips:

Summarizing an epic poem in 350 words can be challenging: I recognize this. Please do not attempt shortcuts. Wikipedia on Kieu contains an error (no I’m not going to tell you what it is). Other “study guides” avoid the sex in the poem, making their summaries hilarious to read. Reading poetry is not easy for most because we don’t do it often. Taking notes for your self will help. For example, “Pages 14-20, Kieu talks to brother.” That way you start to organize the action. The poem is not actually that long, based on the number of words, certainly shorter than our regular chapters in the textbook.