

Classics 30: Classical Mythology

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Summer 2020

Class Meetings: WF 1-2:50 p.m. (Zoom meeting link on CCLE website)

Office Hours: WF 3-4 p.m. and by appointment (Zoom meeting link on CCLE website)



Course Overview

In this course we will study ancient Greek and Roman mythology through various media including: epic poetry, hymns, drama, history, philosophy, sculpture, and painting. We will follow a roughly mythological chronology (i.e. creation of the universe, birth of the gods, heroic age, etc.) as well as historical chronology (beginning with 8th-7th c. BCE poems by Hesiod and Homer and ending with the tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides in the 5th c. BCE).

Mythology has been a rich source of inspiration not only for Greek and Roman thinkers, artists, and poets but also up to our present moment. Many fields including visual art, psychology, philosophy, and literature make use of the texts we will study this quarter. This use and adaptation of mythology, or “reception,” will be another lens through which we examine myths and think about the impact classical mythology has had on culture. Why is it that some myths are so fruitful to think about, e.g., Oedipus in Freud’s theory of the Oedipal complex?

Finally, this course will also serve as a place for us to practice close, attentive reading to difficult literary texts as well as to practice writing for an academic audience. In order to achieve these goals, the quizzes will have writing components, and we will also have in-class workshops for planning and writing the paper. Classical Mythology also fulfills the GE Requirements for either Foundations of Arts & Humanities (Literary & Cultural Analysis) or Foundations of Society & Culture (Social Analysis).

N.B.: Classical Mythology often depicts taboo subjects that may be triggering, such as incest and sexual violence. Please contact me if you have any concerns about this material. We will encounter many of these topics in our discussions, so be mindful of this when we discuss as a group.

Required Texts

You **must** use these translations of the text so that we will be on the same page during our in-class discussions. Due to the impact of the current crisis, I understand that it may be difficult to get a copy of these texts. I will be putting scans of the first week's readings up on the CCLE website for this course, but if you have any problems accessing these texts, please get in touch with me.

Hesiod, *The Theogony* (transl. Athanassakis, ISBN: 9780801879845)

The Homeric Hymns (transl. Athanassakis, 9780801879838)

Homer, *The Odyssey* (transl. Lombardo, 9780872204843)

Aeschylus, *The Oresteia* (transl. Grene & Lattimore, 9780226311470)

Sophocles, *Sophocles I* (trans. Grene & Lattimore)

Euripides, *Bacchae* (transl. Woodruff, 9780872203921)

Readings that are not from our assigned texts can be found on CCLE. Written assignments are scheduled for weeks with a lighter reading load. All assignments are to be read for the date listed on the syllabus.

I have ordered these books to help keep the costs for the course low. Sportula (<https://thesportula.wordpress.com>) provides microgrants to support students in Classics courses.

Course Objectives

1. To practice close reading and analysis of ancient Greek and Roman literature in translation.
2. To consider the historical, social, economic, and religious context of ancient Greek and Roman mythology.
3. To read and analyze ancient Greek and Roman visual material culture.
4. To consider the reception of ancient Greek and Roman mythology over time.
5. To practice the process of revision, drafting, and critiquing a piece of writing.
6. To write an original paper related to ancient Greek and Roman women's literature.

What do *you* want to get out of this seminar? Write down some of your objectives and interests here. I will try my best to incorporate materials and activities that cater to your learning experience.

7. Learn how mythology has been interpreted through time in different media and cultures (reception).
8. Consider current relevance of myth and the continuity of mythology in contemporary culture.
9. Return to original context and texts of ancient Greek and Roman thought and mythology.
10. Improve analysis skills and learn to unpack aims of texts and not just plot.
11. Learn more about women's literature and mythology.
12. Consider mythology as treated in literature and how different authors (e.g. Homer and Hesiod) use the same characters.

Community Guidelines

This course is a space for us as a scholarly community to come together, to practice reading attentively, to discuss interesting questions, and to review each other's writing. In that spirit, students are expected to have completed the reading and watched the lecture videos assigned for each day before our class meeting and to bring the text to class.

Due to the great interest in this course (over 40!), I have decided to break up the class into two discussion sections, so that students will have more opportunities to speak up, ask questions, and interact with each other in a seminar-style meeting: Discussion Section A (Last names beginning with A-K) will meet on Wednesdays, 1-2:50 p.m., and Discussion Section B (Last names beginning with L-Z) will meet Fridays, 1-2:50 p.m. I will meet with each section live during our class period. As this occurs during our scheduled class time, I expect everyone to attend discussion section and engage in section activities.

A significant portion of the grade is participation, so I encourage you to listen to your peers and speak up in discussion. We may have some growing pains as we learn to communicate over Zoom, so please make sure to mute your mic when you first log into our sessions or if you have loud background noise. I understand that it may be difficult to attend live meetings via Zoom, so we will meet live for only a portion of our allotted time (~60-90 minutes for each discussion section). Please make sure you are signed into the meeting by 1:00 p.m., Wednesday or Friday. In the interest of everyone's learning, I will be recording our meetings and uploading them to our CCLE website for you to review.

What expectations do *you* have for this seminar? How should we interact with each other in our seminar online and in discussion? What will encourage your learning and pique your interest in the topics of the seminar? How can we foster an inclusive scholarly community?

1. Recognize the diversity of backgrounds and perspectives in class. Open up space for the diversity of opinions and points of view.
2. Allow time for others to speak. Listen to others, but also be willing to share your ideas.
3. Build off each other's ideas in seminar. Collaborate!
4. Assume the best of peers when they make a mistake.

Assignments & Grade Breakdown

In order to achieve the course goals of critical reading and literary analysis, you will have several written assignments that will help train you in close reading and organize your thoughts as well as in-class workshops.

Assignment	% of Grade
You will be graded for your participation in class, which includes being attentive to the discussion in class and adding your voice to that discussion and responding to the weekly discussion forums. Each student will be the discussion leader for one session of our class. You will also participate in several writing workshops for the papers.	17.5%
There will be three quizzes in this class (~1p., due at the end of Weeks 1, 3, & 5). Quizzes will typically ask you to define a mythological term or person and write a short response to a discussion question. You may also be asked to identify and/or analyze an image or passage.	17.5%
There will be two short writing assignments (2 pp.) that are meant to help you prepare for the paper. The first assignment is the close reading assignment due at the end of Week 2 and is a practice for literary analysis.	20%
There will be two short writing assignments (2 pp.) that are meant to help you prepare for the paper. The second assignment is the reflection paper due at the end of Week 4. This paper is meant to help you organize your thoughts for the final paper and come up with an argument.	20%
There will be one paper (5 pp.) due at the end of Week 6. For this assignment, you should use the text to raise questions and make observations. Consider the repeated themes, words, and questions that you have noticed in the readings. This is an assignment that allows you to reflect on the readings, exploring your own thoughts and questions. Think of your text as “evidence” for a hypothesis that you have. Do not resort to summary.	25%

Course Schedule

Week One: In the Beginning...

M 8/3 Course Introduction / What is Mythology? (Video Lecture will be posted to CCLE)

W 8/5 Discussion Section A: The Generation of the Gods and the Greek Cosmos

Video Lecture: Introduction to Hesiod's *Theogony*

Reading: Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 1-452 (Athanasakis, pp. 1-22)

F 8/7 Discussion Section B: The Succession Myth

Video Lecture: Hesiod and his Near Eastern Sources

Reading: Hesiod, *Theogony* lines 453-end (Athanasakis, pp. 22-36)

In-Class Activity: Paper Workshop (Close Reading)

Assignment: Quiz 1 due Sunday 8/9 by 11:59 p.m. on Turnitin

Week Two: Gods, Humans, and Gender

W 8/12 Discussion Section A: Prometheus, Pandora, and the Origin of Women

Video Lecture: Introduction to the *Works and Days*

Reading: Hesiod, *Works and Days* lines 1-201 (Athanasakis, pp. 59-70)

F 8/14 Discussion Section B: Gender & Divinity

Video Lecture: Introduction to the Homeric Hymns

Reading: Reading: *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* (Athanasakis, pp. 1-14), *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite* (Athanasakis, pp. 42-50)

Assignment: Close Reading Assignment (2 pp.) due Sunday 8/16 by 11:59 on Turnitin

Week Three: Troy and its Aftermath

W 8/19 Discussion Section A: “Sing, Goddess, Achilles’ Rage”

Video Lecture: The Trojan War and an Introduction to Homer

Reading: Homer, *Iliad* Books 1 & 5 (CCLE, pp. 1-18, 83-110)

F 8/21 Discussion Section B: 10 Years Later...The Telemachy

Reading: Homer, *Odyssey* Books 1-4 (Lombardo, pp. 1-68)

Assignment: Quiz 2 due Sunday 8/9 by 11:59 p.m. on Turnitin

Week Four: Tall Tales

W 8/26 Discussion Section A: Odysseus’ Adventures

Video Lecture: A Story within a Story

Reading: Homer, *Odyssey* Books 8-9 (Lombardo, pp. 106-40)

F 8/28 Discussion Section B: Odysseus’ Adventures Ctd.

Reading: Homer, *Odyssey* Books 10-12 (Lombardo, pp. 151-91)

In-Class Activity: Reflection Paper

Assignment: Reflection Paper (2 pp.) due Sunday 8/30 by 11:59 p.m. on Turnitin

Week Five: Law and Order

W 9/2 Discussion Section A: Revenge

Video Lecture: Introduction to Aeschylus, the *Oresteia*, & Greek Drama

Reading: Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* (Greene & Lattimore)

F 9/4 Discussion Section B: Justice

Reading: Aeschylus *Libation Bearers* (Greene & Lattimore); (optional) *Eumenides*

Assignment: Quiz 3 due Sunday 8/9 by 11:59 p.m. on Turnitin

Week Six: Thebes

M 7/9 Labor Day

W 9/9 Discussion Section A: Know Yourself

Video Lecture: Introduction to Sophocles

Reading: Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* (Greene & Lattimore)

F 9/11 Discussion Section B: The New God Dionysus

Video Lecture: Introduction to Euripides

Reading: Euripides, *Bacchae* (Woodruff)

Assignment: Final Paper (5 pp.) due Sunday by 11:59 p.m. on Turnitin

Other Rules & Regulations

Attendance, makeups, late work, & plagiarism:

1. Although attendance is not officially a part of the grade breakdown, if you are absent, you will not receive any participation points for the days you miss unless you contact me with documentation explaining your absence.
2. There will be no extended deadlines for papers except in the case of a legitimate emergency. Students will lose 2% for each day a paper/assignment is late.
3. Plagiarism is a serious offense and ignorance is not acceptable as an excuse. Any case of plagiarism will result in a 0 for the assignment and be reported to the Dean of Students. Read [this guide](#) carefully so you do not plagiarize.

Classics Department Contact Information

If you have any issues with registration, questions/concerns about the course, feel free to contact me (zborst@humnet.ucla.edu), the Summer Sessions Supervisor, or the Student Affairs Officer.

Summer Sessions Supervisor: Sam Beckelhymer sbeckelhymer@humnet.ucla.edu

Student Affairs Officer: Savannah Shapiro sshapiro@humnet.ucla.edu

*All items on this syllabus are subject to change; the instructor will give written notice to all students of any changes.