

Classical Mythology

Spring 2011 - CLAS/ART 3210

Utah State University

Class: MWF 9:30-10:20 in LIB 421

Professor: Dr. Susan O. Shapiro

Office hrs: MWF 10:30-11:20 & appointment

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Description and Goals: The main purpose of course is to enable you to read and enjoy the myths of the ancient Greeks and Romans, as well as the literature in which those myths are retold. A secondary goal is to enable you to pick up any work of modern literature in which Greek and Roman mythology is mentioned and to understand those references immediately, without having to look them up. Although this class will concentrate on Greek mythology, you will also be gaining the necessary background for Roman mythology, since the Romans based their myths on those of the Greeks.

Caution and Warning:

1. **The literature you will be reading this semester is some of the most exciting literature ever written, in any language.** But, like all great literature, it can be disturbing. There is some sex and violence, including some mention of homosexuality, although this is not extensive. I think the most disturbing thing about the literature we will be reading is that **the Greek gods and goddesses sometimes do things that just aren't very nice:** they cheat, deceive and even kill human beings, sometimes without warning, and occasionally without justification. What are we to make of this? In fact, this is one of the most interesting aspects of Greek mythology, and we will be spending a great deal of time discussing it, but it can be disturbing. **If you feel that you don't want to read about gods and goddesses doing things that you wouldn't do, you should not take this course.**

2. One of the goals for this course is to introduce you to some of the most important works of classical literature, and if you look at the **Tentative Assignment Schedule**, you will see that we will be **reading a great deal of material.** Sometimes we will read a small amount of text and discuss it in great depth; the purpose of this is to help you learn to carefully analyze and understand complex writing. **But other times we will have to read a lot of material quickly, and we will not have the opportunity to discuss it in detail.** This can be frustrating and even painful, because you may be moved by the text and want to discuss it more fully. Unfortunately, we will need to skim over some wonderful passages in order to survey the most important works of Greek literature.

Required Texts:

1. Tripp, Edward. *The Meridian Handbook of Classical Mythology* (Plume, 1974)
2. Fitzgerald, R., trans. *The Odyssey: Homer* (Farrar, Straus, Giroux) .
3. Lattimore, trans. *The Iliad of Homer* (Univ of Chicago Press).
4. Grene and Lattimore, trans. *Aeschylus I: The Oresteia* (Univ of Chicago Press).
5. Grene and Lattimore, trans. *Sophocles I: Oedipus the King, Oedipus at Colonus, Antigone* (Univ of Chicago Press).
6. Woodruff, Paul, trans. *Euripides: Bacchae* (Hackett Publishing).

Note on the Books: Different translations of the same works do vary greatly, and I have chosen these particular translations for this class. Even though you may already have these works in different translations, **you will need to purchase these particular translations for this class.**

Requirements: Grades for the course will determined as follows:

3 exams	20% each	60%
3 out of 6 short papers	10% each	30%
Attendance/Participation		<u>10%</u>
Total		100%

The grading scale will be: A (100-93), A- (92-90), B+ (89-88), B (87-83), B- (82-80), C+ (79-78), C (77-73), C- (72-70), D+ (69-68), D (67-60). F represents a grade below 60. There will be no curving of grades.

Exams: There will be **three hour exams**, one about one third of the way through the semester, one about two thirds of the way through, and one during finals week. **Each exam will concentrate on material covered since the last exam, although it will (of course) build on what has come before.** The last exam will have the same weight and format as the other exams and it will not be a true final.

Makeups: Exams can be made up only in case of a serious medical emergency (prior notification and doctor's note required).

Short Papers: During the semester **six short (5 page) papers will be assigned.** Each student **must write three of these.** Each student will write either Paper 1 or Paper 2, Paper 3 or Paper 4, Paper 5 or Paper 6. The papers will increase in difficulty and complexity, with the papers in each pair being at about the same level of difficulty. For this reason students must write one paper from each pair (1 or 2; 3 or 4; 5 or 6). I will try to give the paper assignments well ahead of time, so students can choose which papers they would prefer to write.

The papers will cover specific readings, and you will be asked to consider specific questions in each one. Some of the papers will be analytic, some will be creative, and some will be a combination of both types. Since you will have some choice, you should be able to write papers that have some interest to you.

All short papers are due at the beginning of class on the day they are due. Late papers (beginning after class on the due-day) **will be subject to a penalty of 5 points per day.** The reason for this rule is that there will be a class discussion of the

paper topic on the date that each paper is due. Thus, anyone turning in a late paper will have the benefit of the class discussion before writing it.

Attendance, Class Discussion and Homework: Since we will frequently engage in class discussions of the reading, **regular attendance and daily preparation of assigned reading materials is essential. Class attendance and participation count for ten percent of your grade. I expect you to come to class every day with your reading assignment completed, ready to pay attention, take notes, and participate in class discussions. I plan to take attendance every day.**

Attendance Grade

Each student is allowed **three personal days to be absent** with no questions asked. This is equivalent to a full week of classes. Any **unexcused absences beyond the three personal days will result in points taken off the student's attendance grade** as follows: each student is given 100 attendance points at the beginning of the semester. **Each unexcused absence will result in three points subtracted from his/her attendance grade.** Thus, if a student is absent six times during the semester (i.e., two weeks worth of classes), that would be three absences beyond the three that are allowed, and would result in an attendance grade of 100 - 9 or 91. **The attendance grade will count for 10% of the student's final grade.** Although this policy may seem a bit punitive, I believe it is a fair way to reward those students who come to class consistently throughout the semester. **If you must be absent because of illness or any other circumstance beyond your control, please let me know,** and I may excuse your absence.

Academic Honesty: **Cheating of any kind will not be tolerated in this class.** If you have any questions about what plagiarism is or what constitutes unauthorized assistance, please do not hesitate to ask me.

Note: **This syllabus,** like that for any class, is a work in progress, and **is subject to change,** as long as written or verbal notice is given in class.

This information is available in Braille or large print format upon request.

Tentative Assignment Schedule

Readings Assignments and Papers are Due on the Date Specified

You will be expected to look up any unfamiliar people or places in Tripp

Week 1

- M 1/10 –Introduction; What is a Myth?
 W 1/12 - Historical Background.
 F 1/14 - Zeus and Hera; Read: Tripp: Zeus, Hera

Week 2

- M 1/17 – **NO CLASS MLK DAY**
 W 1/19 - Aphrodite and Ares; Read: Tripp: Aphrodite, Ares
 F 1/21 – *Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite*; Read: Handout

Week 3

- M 1/24- Athena and Poseidon; Read: Tripp: Athena, Poseidon
 W 1/26 - Apollo, Artemis and the Delphic Oracle; Read: Tripp: Apollo, Delphic Oracle, Artemis
 F 1/28 - Demeter, Hades & Persephone; Read: Tripp: Demeter, Hades (2 articles) Persephone

Week 4

- M 1/26 - Hestia, Hermes, and Dionysus; Read: Tripp: Hestia, Hermes, Dionysus; HH: 4, 7, 18, 24, 29
 W 1/28 - Greek Heroes: Heracles, Theseus, Perseus ; Read: Tripp: Heracles, Theseus, Perseus
 F 1/30 - Greek Heroes: Jason, Orpheus, Bellerophon: Read: Tripp: Jason, Argonauts, Orpheus, Orphism, Bellerophon; **Paper 1 due**

Weekend: View Film: *Black Orpheus* and answer questions

Week 5

- M 2/7 - Discuss *Black Orpheus*
 W 2/9 - Review
 F 2/11 - **Exam 1**

Week 6

- M 2/14 – Introduction to the *Iliad*
 W 2/16 - Homer, *Iliad*, Book 1
 F 2/18 - Homer, *Iliad*, Books 2, 3, & 5 **Paper 2 Due**

Week 7

- M 2/21 - **Washington/Lincoln Day - no class**
 T 2/22 - no Monday class (too confusing)
 W 2/23 - Homer, *Iliad*, Books 6, 8, & 9
 F 2/25 - Homer, *Iliad*, Books 12, 16

Week 8

- M 2/28 – Homer, *Iliad* Books 18, 19
 W 3/2 - Homer, *Iliad*, Books 21 (lines 514-end), 22, 23, & 24
 F 3/4 – Catch up; **Paper 3 due**

SPRING BREAK - March 7-11**Week 9**

- M 3/14 - Homer, *Odyssey* Book 1
 W 3/16 - Homer, *Odyssey* Books 2 & 3
 F 3/18 - Homer, *Odyssey* Book 4

Week 10

- M 3/21 - Homer, *Odyssey* Books 5 & 6
 W 3/23 - Homer, *Odyssey* Books 7 & 8
 F 3/25 - Homer, *Odyssey* Books 9 & 10; **Paper 4 due**

Week 11

- M 3/28 - Homer, *Odyssey* Books 11 & 12
 W 3/30 – Catch up
 F 3/27 – Catch up **Happy Triskaidekaphobia Day!**

Week 12

- M 4/4 – Exam 2
 W 4/6 – Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*
 F 4/8 - **Film: *Heroes and Men***

Week 13

- M 4/11 – Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*
 W 4/13 - Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*; **Paper 5 due**
 F 4/15 - Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*

Week 14

- M 4/18 - Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*
 W 4/20 - Sophocles, *Oedipus Tyrannus*
 F 4/22 - Euripides, *Bacchae*

Week 15

- M 4/25 - Euripides, *Bacchae*; **Paper 6 Due**
 W 4/27- Euripides, *Bacchae*
 F 4/29 - Catch up

Exam Week: May 2 - May 6

- W 5/4 - **Exam 3** - 9:30 - 11:20 AM