Introduction to Mythology
English 209.002
Department of English, SFASU

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Office Hours: SKYPE Thursday 10 pm – 11 pm
Skype name: jacqueline.cowansfa
OFFICE (LAN 255) Monday, Wednesday, Friday 11 am – 12 pm and Thursday 4 – 5 pm
All other times BY APPOINTMENT
Meeting Times and Location: Monday, Wednesday, Friday 3:00-3:50 pm TE Ferguson 171

Description:
Study of Greek, Roman and Hebraic mythology, emphasizing the role of myth in history, culture and consciousness. Prerequisite: six semester hours of freshman English.

Ancient myths shape our modern culture. In this section of Mythology, we pair ancient myths and their modern retellings to address issues of selfhood, the nature of humankind, gender, war, and nationalism in eras past and present.

General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the English Foundational Component Area in Language, Philosophy, and Culture may be assessed. These objectives are:
1. Critical Thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
4. Personal Responsibility: The ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English Program Learning Outcomes
As ENG 209 is a core course, English Program Learning Outcomes do not apply; English majors or minors, seeking to fulfill sophomore-level literature requirements, should enroll in ENG 211, 212, 221, 222, 229, 230, or 233H.

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 209:
By the end of the course, students should be able to:
1. Exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for key works in world literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication);
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of periodization in world literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. Periodization is not merely an historical consideration, as defined by events, persons, or dates; students will demonstrate an understanding that historical, cultural, spiritual, and ethical issues, among others, shape human experiences and impact motivations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication as well as Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility);

3. Students will read literature with increased critical acumen, as evidenced in daily discussions of readings and in responsive essays (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication); and

4. Students will be able to respond to literature with facility, both orally and on paper, on important thematic considerations having to do with literary and historical milieu, culture, human responsibility, morality, ethics, and the manner and causes by which humans interact with one another (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility).

Required Texts:

- Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* (Penguin Classics)
- Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games*
- Homer’s *Iliad* (Penguin Deluxe Edition)
- Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (Oxford World Classics)
- Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* (Dover Thrift Edition)
- Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* (Dover Thrift Edition)
- Virgil’s *Aeneid* (Penguin Deluxe Edition)

Please bring the appropriate text(s) with you to each class.

Course Requirements:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted grade</th>
<th>Assignment Title</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>Test 1  <em>(Monday, Feb 15)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>Capstone Essay Assignment  <em>(Friday, Mar 11)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(20%)</td>
<td>Ancient Myths and Modern Debates GROUP PRESENTATION: <em>(Week 13)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(25%)</td>
<td>Ancient Myths and Modern Debates ESSAY: <em>(Friday, April 22)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(15%)</td>
<td>Test 2  <em>(Friday, May 6)</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>Engaged Class Participation:</td>
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Your running grade will be available on D2L (http://d2l.sfasu.edu); please advise me ASAP if you see anything that seems amiss.

Students will write a core capstone essay on an aspect of mythology as defined by the instructor. Students will be graded based on their use of critical thinking skills; grammar, vocabulary, and written style; and the effect of social background on the personal choices of characters in the literary work, comparing and contrasting these choices with the modern world.
Grading Standard:
A: 90-100: Students earning the grade of an A on any assignment will have completed work that obviously demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of an A is reserved for that work which expertly displays one’s
ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors.

B: 80-89: Students earning the grade of a B on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a B is reserved for that work which adeptly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. However, the level of thought, while still above average, may fluctuate in terms of analytic abilities and expression.

C: 70-79: Students earning the grade of a C on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates an average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a C is reserved for that work which displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand (more so through summary and response rather than analysis), recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas (however, the complications recognized will focus more on surface level issues rather than the greater whole), and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. As can be seen from this description, the level of thought will be acceptable and display that a student has read the assignment, but his/her analytic abilities and level of expression will not be nearly as complicated nor developed. Instead, C work will display a student’s hold to traditional methods of expression (simpler construction of sentence and paragraph development) and a struggle to develop complex, critical thinking skills.

D: 60-69: Students earning the grade of a D on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a below average understanding of course material and a lack of completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a D is reserved for that work which displays one’s struggle or refusal to engage the ideas at hand, simply summarizes the work under study with no actual recognition of or dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and the translation of ideas into writing is completed in such a convoluted manner that the audience will have difficulty following the conversation.

F: 0-59: Students earning the grade of a F on any assignment will either not have completed the assignment, will have completed the assignment but not followed the guidelines, or will have completed the assignment and demonstrated a complete misunderstanding of the course material. In this case, it will be obvious that the student has either not completed the required reading and/or given him/herself enough time to develop the work. The grade of a F is reserved for that work which does not engage the issues at hand, offers a base (not complete) summary of the work at hand with no critical engagement, and the translation of ideas into writing is either incomplete or the audience will be unable to follow the conversation. It is important to remember that a student can receive 0 out of 100 points. In the case that a student only partially completes an assignment or completes a work (in terms of page length, but not purpose) s/he may receive 0 points.

Missed Classes:

Much of the learning and intellectual growth of this class occurs because of student interaction, discussion, and feedback. For this reason, consistent attendance is necessary for the course to succeed as a whole. While I strongly encourage students to attend all classes, each student is permitted 2 unaccounted absences during the semester. All further absences will deduct 2.5% from your participation grade per class missed unless a documented excuse is provided.
Late Policies:

- **All Written Assignments:** Work handed in after the stated due date without a documented excuse will result in a 3% deduction for each day the work is late. Weekends count as two days or 4% deduction.

- **Myths and Modern Debates Group Presentation:** If you do not attend the group presentation on your specified date without a documented excuse you will receive a **zero grade** for this assignment weighted 20% of your overall grade.

- **Final Test:** If you do not take your final test without a documented excuse, you will receive a **zero grade** for this test worth 15% of your grade.

Office Hours and Skype Policy:

In the interest of increasing accessibility and the productiveness of office hours, I hold office hours both in my office (LAN 255) and over Skype (jacqueline.cowansfa). If you wish to meet with me over skype, you **must** be in a **neutral**, quiet environment where our meeting can be conducted without distraction and without invasion of any location you wish to remain private. Our online skype meetings will proceed as though they are in my office, which require an adherence to appropriate social and professional etiquette.

Cell Phone Policy:

Please turn all cell phones on “silent” during class unless you are expecting an emergency call or text. If your cell phone rings during class, I reserve the right to change your ringtone to the Justin Bieber song of my choice. If you send a text message during class, I reserve the right to send a text message from your phone to my darling mother in Canada. **If your cell phone usage becomes a frequent issue, I will deduct percentage points from your participation grade.**

Classroom Conduct

This course is designed to be engaging, insightful, rigorous, and fun. Please come to class open to new ideas and methodologies, willing to share and participate in discussion, and, whenever possible, ready to laugh.

Food is permitted, provided you dispose of any remains in an appropriate fashion and keep the classroom clean. If you have any extreme allergies, please let me know and I will bar any food that may cause you any issues.

Reading, Writing, and Researching Resources:

AARC Policy: The AARC is located in the Steen Library and offers tutoring, workshops, and other online resources to improve your reading, writing, and research skills, regardless of your academic discipline. If you would like a tutoring session, please sign up for one ahead of time either in person or online at [https://library.sfasu.edu/aarc](https://library.sfasu.edu/aarc).

Tutoring sessions provide strategies to improve your writing skills, but your writing consultant will not assess content nor will s/he proofread your work. For your tutoring appointments, please bring in a typed draft so you can easily jot down your writing consultant’s feedback. If possible, bring the assignment instructions with you to your tutoring session. Finally, please enjoy this wonderful academic resource!
Resources for Mental and Emotional Health:
The rigors of university pose unique forms of stress—stress that can significantly compound life’s other challenges. If you are experiencing mental and emotional distress or if you just need to gain a new perspective on personal issues, please book an appointment at SFA’s Counselling Services. These services are FREE to any enrolled student. Do make use of this excellent resource.

Counselling Services: [http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/) 3rd floor, Rusk Building, 936.468.2401

How to book an appointment: [http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/104.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/104.asp) Call 936.468.2401

Acceptable Student Behavior: Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.

Academic Integrity (A-9.1): Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at

[http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp](http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp).

Withheld Grades Policy (A-54): The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2012), “Semester Grades Policy” (A-54): At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Students with Disabilities: To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building
Part 1: Ancient Myth in Modern Times

Week 1:
W Jan 20: Introduction and overview of syllabus
F Jan 22: Dionysus/Bacchus, the god of the vine, in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*: Book III: Semele ad the Birth of Bacchus pg 58-60 and Pentheus and Bacchus pgs 66-73; Book IV Daughter of Minyas pgs 74-75; Book IX The Death of Orpheus pgs 249-252; and Book IX Midas pgs 252-255

Week 2:
M Jan 25: Bacchus and YOLO culture in Drake’s “The Motto” (feat. Lil Wayne) and The Lonely Island’s “YOLO” (feat. Adam Levine and Kendrick Lamar)
W Jan 27: Narcissus and Echo in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses*: Book III pgs 61-66
F Jan 29: Narcissus and Selfie Culture (see D2L)

Week 3:
M Feb 1: Diana, goddess of the moon and the hunt, and Persephone Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Book I pg 15; Book III pgs 55-58; Book V pgs 109-116.
F Feb 5: Diana and Theseus in Suzanne Collins’ *The Hunger Games* Chapters 1-10

Week 4:
M Feb 8: *The Hunger Games* Chapters 11-20
W Feb 10: *The Hunger Games* Chapters 21-end
F Feb 12: Loki in *Poetic Edda* “Lokasenna” (D2L)

Part 2: Mythology and Humankind

Week 5:
M Feb 15: TEST 1
W Feb 17: Creation narratives in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Book I pgs 1-14
F Feb 19: Scylla in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* “Scylla and Minos” Book VIII pgs 171-175; “Scylla and Glaucus” Book XIII pgs 324-327

Week 6:
M Feb 22: Daedalus and Icarus in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Book VIII pg 177-178; Arachne in Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* Book VI pgs 121-125
W Feb 25: Pandora in Hesiod’s *Theogony and Works & Days* (online)
F Feb 27: Futurama’s “The Farnsworth Parabox” Season 5, Episode 10

Week 7:
M Feb 29: Prometheus in Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* First Half
W Mar 2: Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* Second Half
F Mar 5: *Prometheus* in Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* Chapters 1-7

Week 8:
M Mar 7: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* Chapter 8-17
W Mar 9: Writing Workshop
F Mar 11: Mary Shelley’s *Frankenstein* Chapters 18-end CAPSTONE DUE

Week 9:
M Mar 14: SPRING BREAK
W Mar 16: SPRING BREAK
F Mar 18: SPRING BREAK

Week 10:
M Mar 21: *Oedipus* in Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* First Half
W Mar 23: Sophocles’ *Oedipus Rex* Second Half
F Mar 25: EASTER

Part 3: Founding Myths and Politics

Week 11:
M Mar 28: Achilles, Patroclus, and Helen of Troy in Homer’s *Iliad* Book I
W Mar 30: Homer’s *Iliad* Book XVI and Book XVIII
F Apr 1: Homer’s *Iliad* Book XIX and Book XXI

Week 12:
M Apr 4: Homer’s *Iliad* Book XXII and Book XXIV
W Apr 6: Hulk in *The Avengers* and *Avengers: Age of Ultron*
F Apr 8: GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Week 13:
M Apr 11: GROUP PRESENTATIONS
W Apr 13: GROUP PRESENTATIONS
F Apr 15: GROUP PRESENTATIONS

Week 14:
M Apr 18: Writing Workshop
W Apr 20: Juno (Hera) and Aeneas in Virgil’s *Aeneid* Book I and Book II
F Apr 22: Dido in Virgil’s *Aeneid* Book III and Book IV MYTHS AND MODERN DEBATES PAPER DUE

Week 15:
M Apr 25: Virgil’s *Aeneid* Book VII and Book VIII
W Apr 27: Virgil’s *Aeneid* IX and X
F Apr 29: Virgil’s *Aeneid* Book XI
Week 16:
M May 2: Virgil’s *Aeneid* Book XII
W May 4 Captain America, Marvel Comics #1 (online)
F May 6: TEST 2