



**Pegasus**

## **Classical Mythology/English 2105**

Instructor: C. Hudson [chudson@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:chudson@lakeheadu.ca)

Required text: Classical Mythology, Morford/Lenardon/Sham 10th edition OUP 2014

Long ago, in the time of gods and heroes....

This Classical Mythology course is intended to give you some knowledge of the most important Greek and Roman myths as well as the literature in which we discover all those gods, goddesses, mortals, heroes and monsters.

Important theories, ancient and modern, about the meaning and role of myths for individuals and societies will be presented, and students will be expected to be able to apply them to the myths we are studying. Classical mythology has inspired and informed western literature for thousands of years and this course relies on extensive use of classical literature in translation. In addition, some major ancient sites associated with myths and legends will be examined to see how the mythology fits into historical contexts.

## **Learning & Skills Outcomes**

Learning Outcome A: students will acquire extensive knowledge of classical myths and will be able to apply, compare and contrast theories of myth analysis, as well as identify motifs, terms and names found in classical literature

Learning Outcome B: students will be able to communicate effectively about the connections between cultural values and the literature, history, scientific thinking, philosophy and religious practices embedded in classical mythology

Learning Outcome C: students will be able to identify the range and nature of primary sources that contribute to the transmission of classical mythology

Skills Outcome 1: students will be able to assess, compare and use diverse primary sources

Skills Outcome 2: students will be able to recognize motifs and themes, analyze, interpret and apply theory to literary materials

Skills Outcome 3: students will be able to research, think critically, explain and justify ideas in writing

## **Readings & Lecture Schedule**

### **Week 1**

Myths: Interpretation & background      ch: 1 & 2  
Creation Myths      ch: 3  
Zeus & mortals      ch: 4

### **Week 2**

The Olympians, Zeus, Hera & children      ch: 5  
The nature of the gods & Poseidon      ch: 6 & 7  
Athena      ch: 8  
Aphrodite & Eros      ch: 9

### **Week 3**

Artemis      ch: 10  
Apollo      ch: 11  
Hermes      ch: 12  
Dionysus      ch: 13

### **Required Readings**

**Mid-term Exam online on Weeks 1-3 - see dates**

**below**

### **Week 4**

Demeter & the Eleusinian Mysteries	ch:14
Views of the afterlife	ch: 15
Orpheus, Orphism & mystery religions in Roman times	ch: 16
Introduction to Greek Sagas	pg. 409--413

**Week 5**

Theban Saga	ch: 17
Mycenaean Saga	ch: 18
Trojan Saga & Iliad	ch: 19
The Returns & the Odyssey	ch: 20

**Week 6**

Perseus & the legends of Argos	ch: 21
Heracles	ch: 22
Theseus & Attica	ch: 23
Jason, Medea & the Argonauts	ch: 24
Roman mythology	ch: 26

**Final Exam online on Weeks 4-6 - see dates**

**below**

**Dropbox Assignments and Review Quizzes: Timetable & Values**

Website Assignment 1 - due online no later than July 11th at 11:30 pm  
(eastern) 5% opens July 4th

Website Assignment 2 - due online no later than July 18th at 11:30 pm  
(eastern) 5% opens July 4th

Website Assignment 3 - due online no later than July 25th at 11:30 pm  
(eastern) 5% opens July 4th

Essay/critical review due online no later than August 9th at 11:30 pm  
(eastern) 30% opens July 4th

Review Quiz 1 - opens July 17th at 12:30 AM - closes July 20th at 3 PM  
(eastern) 7.5%

Review Quiz 2 - opens August 10th at 12:30 AM - closes August 13th at 3 PM  
(eastern) 7.5 %

**Exams: Timetable & Values**

**Dates**

**Exam**

### **Online Mid-term Exam**

Opens July 21st at 12:30 AM and closes July 22nd at 3 PM (eastern)

Online Mid-term exam  
on Weeks 1-3

3 hours in  
duration 20%

### **Online Final Exam**

Opens Sunday August 14th at 12:30 AM and closes Monday August 15th at 11:30PM (eastern)

Online Final Exam on  
Weeks 4-6

3 hours in  
duration 20%

## **Dropbox Assignments**

**3 Website-based Assignments - see links in the Modules of the week in which each assignment is due for details.**

**1 Short Essay OR Critical Review - description:**

Each student must write:

**ONE Short Essay**

**OR**

**ONE Critical Review**

This assignment - whether it is the Short Essay or the Critical Review - must be no less than 1500 words in length and must include: a title page, footnotes (or end-notes) and a Bibliography. These do not count towards your 1500 word total. Chicago format please.

**Sources:** You are required to use at least ONE primary source (all required primary documents can be found in your textbook)

**AND**

at least ONE secondary source – such as your Classical Mythology textbook, an article from an academic journal, an academic book etc. Lectures and course website materials should also be treated as a secondary sources.

### **Short Essay Topics**

1. Choose TWO theories of interpreting myths that we have studied and ONE Greek myth. Apply both theories to this myth in order to illustrate

how different theories can produce different interpretations of the same myth.

2. Discuss the contrasting portrayals of Aphrodite and Artemis in Euripides' Hippolytus showing how this contrast arises from the nature of each of these goddesses.
3. Show how the story of Euripides' Bacchae illustrates the nature of Dionysus himself with direct evidence from the text of the play.
4. Relate the myth of Demeter and Persephone (as told in the Homeric Hymn to Demeter) to the rituals and events of the mysteries at Eleusis using direct textual references.
5. How has archaeology helped (or not) in evaluating the legend of the war at Troy?
6. Using examples from primary sources illustrate how the Romans used legend to explain the foundation of their city and connect themselves to a glorious past.

**Critical Review Topics** These books are widely available in libraries, online and in paperback.

Apply your knowledge of Classical Mythology using your course textbook, lectures and other course materials to write a critical review of ONE of the following books:

1. The Penelopiad by Margaret Atwood
2. The Lightning Thief by Rick Riordan
3. Gods Behaving Badly by Marie Phillips

A critical review is more than a description or plot summary of the book - although a very brief plot summary is a good start. A critical review requires you to apply your knowledge of mythology and to identify to the reader (me) important aspects of the book that let you show off your knowledge of the original mythology by which it is inspired. You must include your informed opinion as to the effectiveness (success/failure) of the author's choices to conform to or to deviate from the original mythology - which you should identify - and suggest reasons as to why the authors may have made changes in the