

ENGL 337 – Myth
Indiana University of Pennsylvania
Fall 2016
MWF 10:10 – 11:00

Instructor: Professor Alexander Hagood (A.J.Hagood@iup.edu)

Location: HSS 114

Office: HSS 504

Office Hours: Monday, 1:00-2:00; Thursday, 1:00-3:00, by appointment if needed

Course Description: Since the dawn of time, stories have been told to explain the world around us; from events as large as the creation of the Earth to events as small as the growing of crops, people have always sought explanations for these moments that are beyond their control. These stories became central to a culture's understanding of the world in which they live, but why do we care in a world where science and reason prevail? Through this course, we will explore the mythologies of five prevailing cultures (Greek, Roman, Norse, Egyptian, and Native American), find themes that unite each of them, and analyze why they still hold relevance. We will then use what we have discovered to create two short mythologies of our own: one explaining a modern large scale event and one explaining a modern small scale event.

Course Objectives:

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

- Collaborate with peers to connect major mythological themes and concepts to a modern society.
- Expand your global identity through discussion about the cultural impact of mythology
- Connect ancient mythologies to your own lives and understand the continued relevance of myths
- Identify key figures in mythological tales, incorporating cultural information to flesh out the characters' importance.
- Examine the change in cultural values between ancient cultures and modern society
- Develop cultural awareness through research about the impact and meaning of mythologies to a society.

Required Texts:

Davidson, H. R. Ellis. *Gods and Myths of Northern Europe*. London: Penguin, 1990. Print.

Erodes, Richard, and Alfonso Ortiz, eds. *American Indian Myths and Legends*. New York: Pantheon, 1985. Print.

Homer. *The Odyssey*. Trans. Robert Fagles. New York: Penguin, 2006. Print.

Ovid. *Metamorphoses*. Trans. A. D. Melville. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2008. Print.

Pinch, Geraldine. *Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt*. Oxford: Oxford UP, 2004. Print.

Major Assignments:

- Mythological Figure Quizzes (five; each worth 2%)
- Attendance/Participation (10%)
 - o In this course, the effort input will directly correlate to the end result – your grade. Discussion and collaboration is critical in this course if you want to get the most out of this course. As per university policy, you will be allowed three (3) unexcused absences. Any absences beyond that will negatively impact your grade, as will attending class, but not contributing to discussion in a meaningful way.
- Midterm Exam (15%)
 - o At the midterm, you will take an exam that tests your knowledge of the mythology covered thus far. There will also be a short essay asking to tie what you have learned to your own life and the world around you. Start exploring how the ancient myths are still relevant in society today.
- Self-Reflection (15%)
 - o Three times during the semester, you will be expected to reflect on yourself as you have progressed through the course. The first will be at the beginning of the semester, where you will reflect on what you already know about mythology and the cultures around them. The second will be sometime during the middle of the semester, where you will reflect on the cultures you have learned about and how the mythologies impacted them. You will also use this reflection to begin developing ideas about your end of semester project and how you are starting to think about the structure of your own myth. The final reflection will be on the semester as a whole, your contributions to the course, and how you might take the information learned beyond the classroom.
- Cultural Research Presentation (20%)
 - o Part of what you should be getting from class is to bring ancient mythologies to a modern era; part of this goal involves understanding the cultures that surrounded these ancient myths to draw connections between the lives of the people and the myths that evolved because of those lives. Each unit, starting in unit two, a group will present research about the culture that will be learned about that unit. More information about grading for this will be released separately and will involve a group assessment/reflection.
- Modern Mythology Project (30%)
 - o As a class, we will be developing a modern mythology anthology. This collection will cover the major themes discussed in class and use modern perspectives to write mythologies to explain the world in a modern, United States perspective. More information about this later in the semester.

Grading Scale

A = 90%-100%; B= 80%-89%; C = 70%-79%; D = 60%-69%; F = ≤ 59%

Schedule (This schedule is tentative and subject to change as needed)

| Date | Topic | Assignment |
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| Mon., August 29 | Intro to Myth “What is Myth?” | Introductory Reflection Read: Homer – Book 1 |
| Wed., August 31 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Books 5 and 6 |
| Fri., September 2 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Books 7 and 8 |
| Mon., September 5 | LABOR DAY/NO CLASS | |
| Wed., September 7 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Book 9 |
| Fri., September 9 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Books 11 and 12 |
| Mon., September 12 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Books 15 and 16 |
| Wed., September 14 | <i>The Odyssey</i> | Read: Homer – Books 21, 22, 24 |
| Fri., September 16 | Quiz on Greek figures | |
| Mon., September 19 | ROME Culture Presentation #1 | Read: Ovid – Book I |
| Wed., September 21 | <i>Metamorphoses</i> (Creation Myths) | Read: Ovid – Books II and III |
| Fri., September 23 | <i>Metamorphoses</i> | Read: Ovid – Book V - VII |
| Mon., September 26 | <i>Metamorphoses</i> | Read: Ovid – Books XIII and XIV |
| Wed., September 28 | <i>Metamorphoses</i> | Read: Ovid – Book XV |
| Fri., September 30 | Quiz on Roman figures | |
| Mon., October 3 | EGYPT Culture Presentation #2 | Read: Pinch – Part 2 |
| Wed., October 5 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Read: Pinch – Part 3, pgs. 99-123 |
| Fri., October 7 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Read: Pinch – Part 3, pgs. 123-152(Iussas) |
| Mon., October 10 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Read: Pinch – Part 3, pgs. 152(Khentamentiu)-175 |
| Wed., October 12 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Read: Pinch – Part 3, pgs. 175-202 |

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| Fri., October 14 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Read: Pinch – Part 3, pgs. 202-215 |
| Mon., October 17 | <i>Egyptian Mythology: A Guide to the Gods, Goddesses, and Traditions of Ancient Egypt</i> | Choose group members and draft proposal for Modern Myth Project |
| Wed., October 19 | Quiz on Egyptian figures | Review for Midterm Write Midterm Reflection |
| Fri., October 21 | Midterm Midterm Reflection Due Proposal for Modern Myth | |
| Mon., October 24 | NORSE Culture Presentation #3 | Read: Davidson – Introduction, Part 1 |
| Wed., October 26 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Part 2 |
| Fri., October 28 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Part 3 |
| Mon., October 31 | Happy Halloween! <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Part 4 |
| Wed., November 2 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Parts 5 and 6 |
| Fri., November 4 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Part 7 |
| Mon., November 7 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | Read: Davidson – Part 8 and Conclusion |
| Wed., November 9 | <i>Gods and Myths of Northern Europe</i> | |
| Fri., November 11 | Quiz on Norse figures | |
| Mon., November 14 | NATIVE AMERICAN Culture Presentation #4 | Read: Eroses – Part 1, pgs. 1-41 |
| Wed., November 16 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Eroses – Part 1, pgs. 41-72 |
| Fri., November 18 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Eroses – Part 2 |
| Mon., November 21 | NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING | |
| Wed., November 23 | NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING | |
| Fri. November 25 | NO CLASS/THANKSGIVING | |
| Mon., November 28 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Eroses – Part 4, pgs. 177-210 |

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| Wed., November 30 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Erodes – Part 4, pgs. 211-242 |
| Fri., December 2 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Erodes – Part 6 |
| Mon., December 5 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Erodes – Part 9 |
| Wed., December 7 | <i>American Indian Myths and Legends</i> | Read: Erodes – Part 10 |
| Fri., December 9 | Quiz on Native American figures | |
| Mon., December 12 | In class work day Work on Modern Myth | |
| Fri., December 16 | FINAL EXAM Modern Myth Project due | 10:15AM – 12:15PM |