

CL102Q
Classical Mythology
MWF 12:50 - 1:40 Seney Hall 209

Dr. Henry Bayerle
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CL102 (Classical Mythology) surveys some of most famous literary products of Classical Antiquity and the ways in which they were read and used over the centuries, from Plato and Aristotle to twenty-first century critical theorists. Special attention will be paid to the ways in which the following topics develop in western literature: imitation in art, the definition and social function of heroes, the political use of myth, and gender roles.

This is a Continuing Writing (WRT) and an Inquiry (INQ) course. We will explore the ways in which classicists try to answer two questions: Why do people tell stories? How did the Greeks understand their own myths?

SCHEDULE

Week 1: Introduction to Myth and Heroes
8/24 – 8/26

Week 2: Myth and Oral Poetics
8/29 – 9/2
Reading: Homer, *Iliad*

Week 3: Heroes as Symbols and Role Models
9/7 – 9/9
Reading: Homer, *Iliad*
The Homeric Hymn to Apollo

Week 4: Story-Telling and Structuralism
9/12 – 9/16
Reading: Homer, *Odyssey*

Week 5: Imitation and Reality
9/19 – 9/24
Reading: Homer, *Odyssey*
Selections from Plato, *Republic*
The Homeric Hymn to Aphrodite

Week 6: Tragedy and Justice

9/26 – 9/30

Reading: Aeschylus, *The Oresteia*

Week 7: The Role of Tragedy: Horror in the Polis

10/3 – 10/7

Reading: Sophocles, *Oedipus the King*

Selections from Herodotus, *History*

Week 8: The Role of Tragedy: The Search for Meaning

10/12 – 10/14

Selections from Aristotle, *Poetics*

Selections from Sigmund Freud, *The Interpretation of Dreams*

Friday, October 14: MIDTERM EXAM

Week 9: Thesis and Antithesis

10/17 – 10/21

Reading: Sophocles, *Antigone*

Week 10: Using Madness: The Irrational Hero

10/24 – 10/28

Reading: Euripides, *Bacchae*

Selections from Friedrich Nietzsche, *The Birth of Tragedy*

Week 11: Mirrors of Men's and Women's Experiences

10/31 – 11/4

Reading: Euripides, *Hippolytus*

Week 12: The Political Function of Myth

11/7 – 11/11

Reading: Selections from Plato, *Republic*

Week 13: Reacting to the Past

11/14 – 11/18

Reading: *Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C.*

Week 14: Reacting to the Past

11/21

Week 15: Imitation and Originality / Roman Appropriation of Greek Myth

11/28 – 12/2

Reading: Selections from Ovid, *Metamorphoses*

Week 16: Consolidation

12/5

Your Tasks

1. Reading all text assignments before class. By “reading” I mean not only reading all of the words on the pages but also underlining important passages, making marginal notes in the texts themselves, and/or taking notes on index cards or in a notebook. Think of this as “active reading.” By reviewing your notes before class you can more effectively participate in class discussion.
2. Participating actively in class discussions (you can do this only if you have read actively beforehand).
3. Preparing two short presentations.
4. Writing four papers.
5. Taking a midterm and a final exam. These exams will involve identifying names and passages from your reading and answering essay questions.

Attendance policy

I expect you to attend every class. More than three unexcused absences will lower your final grade by one percentage point for every class you miss.

Grading Policy

Participation in Class Discussions	25%
Papers	30%
Midterm Exam	15%
Final Exam	30%

Required Text:

Ovid, *Metamorphoses*, trans. R. Humphries

Threshold of Democracy: Athens in 403 B.C., Mark C. Carnes

The Republic (Penguin Classics), Plato, trans. by Desmond Lee