

## CLL 215.60: Classical Mythology

Winter 2010

TWRF 9:30-12:55

*These things never happened, but are always.*

Instructor: Kristin Hole

Email: [khole@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:khole@ic.sunysb.edu)

Office: Humanities Building, Room 2117

Office Hours: T-F 17:00-18:00

**Course Description:** The purpose of this course is twofold: a) To give students a solid knowledge of the myths of ancient Greek culture, as well as key works of literature; b) To begin to explore how these characters and stories are referenced in contemporary culture, and how their original meanings are altered or re-contextualized through this process.

### **Grading:**

Attendance and Participation: 15%

Presentation: 15%

Mythology References/Quizzes: 40%

Final Exam: 30%

**Attendance:** Due to the intense schedule of the class, attendance is **mandatory**. Students are allowed one absence; each following absence will result in 5 points off the final grade. Missing more than four (4) classes will result in a failing grade for the course.

**Presentations:** Students are required to give one presentation on a given god, goddess, or other figure from Greek mythology during the term. Presentations will normally be done in groups. We will determine as a class the specifics of the presentations during the first couple of classes.

**References/Quizzes:** You will be given four quizzes during the term that will count for 10% each of your final grade. **Make-up quizzes will not be given.** As an alternative to the quizzes, you have the option of submitting up to four "Mythology References", also worth 10% each. This will involve finding allusions to the characters or gods that we discuss in this class in films, novels, or the media. Students should hand in approximately one page of writing that explains the context of the reference, its origin in Greek mythology, and how it is being taken up in the film/article/story/etc. in question (i.e. Is the meaning altered in its re-appropriation? Are certain aspects of the myth focused on at the expense of others? Try to look critically at the uses of myth in contemporary culture). Any combination of quizzes and mythological references will be accepted, as long as you complete four in total.

### **Required Texts:**

(Available at University Bookstore and Stony Books)

Homer, *The Odyssey* (trans. by Robert Fitzgerald)

Sophocles, *The Complete Plays* (trans. Paul Roche)

Euripides, *Medea and other Plays* (trans. Richard Rutherford)

Aeschylus, *The Oresteia* (trans. by W.B. Stanford and Robert Fagles)

## Course Schedule:

### Week 1

Tues. January 5:  
Introductions, pre-Greek civilizations, *the Iliad*  
**Screening:** *Troy*

Wed. January 6:  
Creation myths, Zeus' rise to power, and the *Telemachia*  
**Reading:** *Odyssey* Books I-VII  
**Presentation:** Zeus

Thurs. January 7:  
Fairytale and the Afterlife  
**Reading:** *Odyssey* Books VIII-XIV  
**Presentations:** Ares, Hephaestus, Hades

Fri. January 8:  
Odysseus' Revenge  
Quiz I  
**Reading:** *Odyssey* Books XV-XXIV  
**Presentations:** Athena, Artemis

### Week 2

Tues. January 12:  
Contemporary Interpretations of the *Odyssey*  
**Screening:** *O Brother, Where art Thou?*  
**Reading:** Excerpts from Margaret Atwood, *The Penelopiad* and *Mud Poems* (BB)  
**Presentation:** Hera

Weds. January 13:  
The Birth of Tragedy  
Quiz II (on the *Odyssey*)  
**Reading:** Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and Aristotle, excerpts from *The Poetics* (BB)  
**Presentations:** Dionysus, Apollo

Thurs. January 14:  
The "woman" in Sophoclean tragedy  
**Reading:** Sophocles, *Antigone*  
**Presentations:** Heracles, Hermes, and Centaurs

Fri. January 15:  
Family dysfunction in ancient Greece  
Quiz III  
**Reading:** Aeschylus, *Agamemnon*  
**Presentations:** Poseidon, the three Fates and Nine Muses

### Week 3

Tues. January 19:

Competing definitions of justice

Quiz IV (Aeschylus)

**Reading:** Aeschylus *The Libation Bearers* and *The Eumenides*

**Presentations:** Satyrs, Pan, Echo and Narcissus

Wed. January 20:

**Reading:** Euripides, *Hyppolitus*

**Presentations:** Aphrodite and Eros

Thurs. January 21:

One last tale of revenge!

(and final exam review)

**Reading:** Euripides, *Medea*

Fri. January 22:

**Final Exam**

#### **Americans with Disabilities Act:**

If you have a physical, psychological, medical or learning disability that may affect your course work, please contact Disability Support Services, ECC (Educational Communications Center) Building room 128, (631) 632-6748. The staff will work with you to determine what accommodations are necessary and appropriate. All information and documentation is confidential. Students requiring emergency evacuation are encouraged to discuss their needs with their professors and Disability Support Services. For procedures and information, go to the following web site: <http://www.ehs.sunysb.edu/fire/disabilities/asp>

#### **Plagiarism Policy**

Plagiarism is simply the use of others' words and/or ideas without clearly acknowledging their source. As students, you are learning about other people's ideas in your course texts, your instructor's lectures, in-class discussions, and when doing your own research. When you incorporate those words and ideas into your own work, it is of the utmost importance that you give credit where it is due. Plagiarism, intentional or unintentional, is considered academic dishonesty and all instances will be reported to the Academic Judiciary. To avoid plagiarism, you must give the original author credit whenever you use another person's ideas, opinions, drawings, or theories as well as any facts or any other pieces of information that are not common knowledge. Additionally quotations of another person's actual spoken or written words; or a close paraphrasing of another person's spoken or written words must also be referenced. Accurately citing all sources and putting direct quotations of even a few key words in quotation marks are required. For further information on plagiarism and the policies regarding academic dishonesty go to the Academic Judiciary website at <http://naples.cc.sunysb.edu/CAS/ajc.nsf>.

#### **Blackboard**, <http://blackboard.sunysb.edu>

I will post my information, this syllabus, your grades, and any announcements on Blackboard, so don't ask me for any of these things until you have checked Blackboard. You can also email me from this site. If you have never used Blackboard, your initial password is your SOLAR id# and your username is the same as your Sparky Webmail username, which is generally your first initial and the first seven letters of your last name.

For help or more information see:

<http://www.sinc.sunysb.edu/helpdesk/docs/blackboard/bbstudent.php>. For problems logging in, you can call: 631-632-9602 or e-mail: [helpme@ic.sunysb.edu](mailto:helpme@ic.sunysb.edu)