

CLAS 2520

Greek and Roman Mythology

CLAS 2520 Syllabus

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Syllabus

Welcome to this course on Classical mythology. The ancient Greeks and Romans were great storytellers, and their very large corpus of myths is proof of their tremendous creativity. The telling (and retelling) of these myths in literature, art, film, and television enables the ancient world to continue to influence modern culture. Mythology is also important in that these stories provide valuable insight into how ancient Greeks and Romans perceived the world around them. To study mythology involves more than memorizing stories; it is about trying to explain what these stories *mean*. This is what we try to do in this course.

This university course is intended for anyone who wants a general overview of the mythology of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations: university students who are enrolled in a degree program and members of the community at large. There are no prerequisites, apart from your interest in the subject and a willingness to devote time and energy to the topic.

You do not need to have visited Greece or Italy to take this course, nor do you need to know ancient Greek or Latin (although you will learn some Greek and Latin words). Taking this course will enhance your appreciation of Greece and Italy (or any place where ancient Greeks and Romans lived) should you visit them in the future.

Contacting your instructor

For information on contacting your instructor, as well as other important information from your instructor, see the Instructor Letter link in your course website.

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Course description

The University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar* describes this course as follows:

A survey of Greek and Roman myths of creation and the gods with attention to the nature and definition of myth; Greek and Roman legends; the connections between mythology and religious beliefs and cults; and with the literature and arts of Western civilization.

Students may not hold credit for both CLAS 2520 and the former 003.252.

We approach the material from its historical and literary perspectives. The textbook provides substantial excerpts of ancient Greek and Roman texts (in English translation), which enables us to appreciate how myth was a vast database of stories from which formed the basis for ancient literature.

Prerequisite

There is no prerequisite for this course. The course complements CLAS 1270, *Introduction to Ancient Greek Culture*, and CLAS 1280, *Introduction to Ancient Roman Culture*. Both courses are available through Distance and Online Education.

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Course Objectives

Upon completion of the course you should be able to:

- identify the major deities and heroes in Greek and Roman mythology;
- outline the main myths of each god or hero;

- explain the themes of myths;
- explain the geographical and historical contexts of myths;
- identify literary sources for myths and explain the representation of myths in ancient literature; and
- describe how myths explain particular features of ancient Greek and Roman culture.

You will also develop an appreciation of the complexity and wealth of ancient Greek and Roman mythology through the course materials and accompanying Internet resources (the latter of which is continually increasing in number and being improved upon).

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Course materials

The instructional content corresponds to the lectures and discussion that on-campus students receive in the classroom. It is designed to provide guidance and support to help you through the course. In this course outline you will find the assignments, information, and help that you would otherwise receive in the classroom.

It is important to note that the instructional content is not meant to be read as a *substitute* for the textbook. It is designed to *complement* the textbook. In this course the textbook is important in that it provides the basic narrative of many of the myths with which you will be required to familiarize yourself. The instructional content will frequently refer you back to material contained in the textbook (e.g., family trees, pictures, maps, side-texts). You are recommended to have the textbook with you for easy reference when you read the course material.

Required

Bookstore

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

- Textbook
Powell, B. P. (2015). *Classical Myth* 8th ed. Toronto, Pearson Education.
- Dictionary site to check on the spoken pronunciation of names and places referred to in the textbook and instructional content
<http://dictionary.reference.com/>

University of Manitoba Libraries

Many of the units contain a supplementary reading section. You can check for these books at the University library, and request them. See the link to the University of Manitoba Libraries in your course website.

Required hardware and software

You require the following items for your computer for this course:

1. Headset or speakers to hear audio files.

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Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

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Course overview

Overview

Classical Mythology entails the study of the stories of the gods and heroes of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. While learning these myths is entertaining (they remain some of the most enduring stories of Western culture, imitated in art and literature for nearly three millennia), they are very important, because they provide important information of the development of aspects of ancient Greek and Roman history, literature, and culture.

Our basic aim in this course is not to ask only what happens in these myths, but why these myths are constructed in this particular way.

Topics

The course is divided into fourteen units. There are five topics:

Units 1 & 2	The historical, cultural, and critical background needed for the study of ancient myth.
Unit 3	The myths of divine and human creation.
Units 4, 5 & 6	The salient features of the main gods and the myths that feature them.
Units 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12 & 13	The myths of the Greek heroes.
Unit 14	Roman myth

Learning activities

Many units contain links to external websites that feature interactive tools to allow you to learn more about particular topics. Take some time for each unit to browse through these websites. There are also PowerPoint reviews at the end of each chapter.

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Evaluation and grading

This course will be assessed by three assignments and a final take-home examination. The breakdown of the final grade will be as follows:

Distribution of marks

Evaluation	Percentage
Assignment 1	20%
Assignment 2	20%
Assignment 3	20%
Take-home examination	40%
Total	100%%

Grading scale

Letter grade	Percentage range	Description
A ⁺	93 - 100	Exceptional
A	86 - 92.5	Excellent
B ⁺	79 - 85.5	Very good
B	72 - 78.5	Good
C ⁺	65 - 71.5	Satisfactory
C	58 - 64.5	Adequate
D	50 - 57.5	Marginal
F	less than 50%	Failure

Note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

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Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Assignments

Each assignment will consist of identification questions. You will write a short paragraph—six to eight sentences—on each item. Items will include names, places, and terms that appear in the textbook and/or the instructional content.

It is very important that you submit your assignments on time. This enables the instructor to plan ahead in setting aside time to grade your assignment and to return it (with suggestions for improvement if necessary) in time for you to write the next assignment.

Note: Detailed instructions about the assignments are found in the assignment section in your course website.

Assignment due dates

Your instructor will post assignment due dates within the first week of classes on the course calendar.

Note:

If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date.

Review the guidelines on assignment due dates in the Distance and Online Education Student Handbook.

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Examination

There will be a final take-home examination in this course. The examination will be available one week before the due date in your online course. The examination will be submitted through the online submission drop-box feature in your course.

In the final examination you will be asked to write two essays on topics chosen by you from a list of five possible topics. The final examination will have the following grading structure:

Essay 1 20 marks

Essay 2 20 marks

The essay topics will be similar to those included in the assignments. You can prepare for the final examination by doing the assignments carefully and by taking special note of the instructor's comments on the assignments that are returned to you. You are also encouraged to ask the instructor questions submitted by e-mail or posted in the appropriate discussion forum in your course. The instructor will set aside time before the examination to answer questions (and will indicate the deadline for submitting questions about the examination in the discussion board).

See the sample examination in your course website.

Acknowledgements

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