Introduction to Mythology
English 2309-504
Department of English, SFASU

Kimberly Verhines
E-mail: verhinesk@sfasu.edu Office Phone: 936-468-1078
Office: McKibben 137
Office Hours: Monday 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.; Tuesday 2:00 p.m. -3:00 p.m. and 8:00 p.m.-10:00 p.m.;
Wednesday 9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.

Description:
Study of Greek, Roman and Hebraic mythology, emphasizing the role of myth in history, culture
and consciousness. Prerequisite: six semester hours of freshman English.

Ancient myths shape our modern culture. Over the course of our semester, we pair ancient myths
and their modern retellings to address pressing social, political, and cultural issues. We discuss
Bacchus whose exuberant qualities are adopted by YOLO culture. We explore the connection
between Prometheus and Edward Snowden—two important whistleblowers who alert us to political
abuses—to weigh in on the current vexed debate over whether we should privilege individual privacy
or national protection. We also will identify Captain America as a modern day Aeneas to assess
different approaches to patriotism. By identifying the important and formative links between
ancient myths and their modern analogues, we can better assess the issues that matter most in eras
past and present.

Salvador Dalí. Metamorphosis of Narcissus. 1937, oil on canvas, Tate Modern, London.

Core Curriculum Policies; Academic Integrity ............................................................................................................ 2
Required Texts; Course Assignments .......................................................................................................................... 3
Grading Policy; Engaged Reading/Discussion Posts; Late Assignments .................................................................... 4
Office Hours; Resources for Academic and Emotional Wellness .............................................................................. 6
Reading Schedule ...................................................................................................................................................... 7
Description of Major Assignments ................................................................................................................................ 8
General Education Core Curriculum Objectives:
In any given semester, one or more of the following Core Curriculum Objectives for the English Foundational Component Area in Language, Philosophy, and Culture may be assessed. These objectives are:
Critical Thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
Communication Skills: Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
Social Responsibility: Intercultural competence, knowledge of civic responsibility, and the ability to engage effectively in regional, national, and global communities.
Personal Responsibility: The ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

English Program Learning Outcomes
As ENG 2309 is a core course, English Program Learning Outcomes do not apply.

Student Learning Outcomes for ENG 209:
By the end of the course, students should be able to:

1. Exhibit an understanding of and appreciation for key works in world literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication);
2. Students will demonstrate an understanding of periodization in world literature, as evidenced in daily work and quizzes, course discussions, written assignments, and/or examinations. Periodization is not merely an historical consideration, as defined by events, persons, or dates; students will demonstrate an understanding that historical, cultural, spiritual, and ethical issues, among others, shape human experiences and impact motivations (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication as well as Personal Responsibility and Social Responsibility);
3. Students will read literature with increased critical acumen, as evidenced in daily discussions of readings and in responsive essays (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Critical Thinking and Communication); and
4. Students will be able to respond to literature with facility, both orally and on paper, on important thematic considerations having to do with literary and historical milieu, culture, human responsibility, morality, ethics, and the manner and causes by which humans interact with one another (this outcome aligns to the Core objective of Social Responsibility and Personal Responsibility).

Academic Integrity (A-9.1): Academic integrity is the responsibility of all university faculty and students. Faculty members promote academic integrity in multiple ways, including instruction on the components of academic honesty as well as abiding by university policy on penalties for cheating.
and plagiarism. Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to (1) using or attempting to use unauthorized materials to aid in achieving a better grade on a component of a class; (2) the falsification or invention of any information, including citations, on an assigned exercise; and/or (3) helping or attempting to help another in an act of cheating or plagiarism. Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were your own. Examples of plagiarism are (1) submitting an assignment as if it were one’s own work when, in fact, it is at least partly the work of another; (2) submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from an Internet source or another source; and (3) incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one’s paper without giving the author due credit. Please read the complete policy at http://www.sfasu.edu/policies/academic_integrity.asp.

Withheld Grades Policy (A-54): The following is taken from SFASU’s Policy Manual (2012), “Semester Grades Policy” (A-54): At the discretion of the instructor of record and with the approval of the academic chair/director, a grade of WH will be assigned only if the student cannot complete the course work because of unavoidable circumstances. Students must complete the work within one calendar year from the end of the semester in which they receive a WH, or the grade automatically becomes an F. If students register for the same course in future terms, the WH will automatically become an F and will be counted as a repeated course for the purpose of computing the grade point average.

Required Texts:

- Aeschylus’s *Prometheus Bound* (Penguin Classics)
- Ovid’s *Metamorphoses* (Oxford World Classics)
- Virgil’s *Aeneid* (Penguin Deluxe Edition)
- History Channel’s Clash of the Gods, “Minotaur” Episode available on amazon.com
- ALL content pages, inclusive of all videos, readings, and links
  *Please purchase the exact editions of Aeschylus and Ovid (otherwise page numbers and translations will be off)*

Course Requirements: Assignment Title.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Weighted grade</th>
<th>Assignment Title</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>Engaged Reading and Discussion Posts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>Myth Reimagined in Art and Literature (Due End of Module 2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>Midterm Exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(25%)</td>
<td>Ancient Myths and Modern Debates PRESENTATION (Due End of Module 4)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(35%)</td>
<td>Ancient Myths and Modern Debates ESSAY (Due End of Module 5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(10%)</td>
<td>Final Exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

See the calendar in Syllabus and Course Schedule for a list of assignments and due dates.

====== Your running grade will be available on D2L (http://d2l.sfasu.edu); please advise me ASAP if you see anything that seems amiss.
**Grading Standard:**

A: 90-100: Students earning the grade of an A on any assignment will have completed work that obviously demonstrates an excellent understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of an A is reserved for that work which expertly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors.

B: 80-89: Students earning the grade of a B on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a more than average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a B is reserved for that work which adeptly displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand, recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. However, the level of thought, while still above average, may fluctuate in terms of analytic abilities and expression.

C: 70-79: Students earning the grade of a C on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates an average understanding of the course material and completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a C is reserved for that work which displays one’s ability to engage the ideas at hand (more so through summary and response rather than analysis), recognize and dialogue about the complications of such ideas (however, the complications recognized will focus more on surface level issues rather than the greater whole), and translate such dialogue into clear, academic prose that is free of stigmatized errors. As can be seen from this description, the level of thought will be acceptable and display that a student has read the assignment, but his/her analytic abilities and level of expression will not be nearly as complicated nor developed. Instead, C work will display a student’s hold to traditional methods of expression (simpler construction of sentence and paragraph development) and a struggle to develop complex, critical thinking skills.

D: 60-69: Students earning the grade of a D on any assignment will have completed work that demonstrates a below average understanding of course material and a lack of completion of all aspects and requirements of the assignment. The grade of a D is reserved for that work which displays one’s struggle or refusal to engage the ideas at hand, simply summarizes the work under study with no actual recognition of or dialogue about the complications of such ideas, and the translation of ideas into writing is completed in such a convoluted manner that the audience will have difficulty following the conversation.

F: 0-59: Students earning the grade of a F on any assignment will either not have completed the assignment, will have completed the assignment but not followed the guidelines, or will have completed the assignment and demonstrated a complete misunderstanding of the course material.
In this case, it will be obvious that the student has either not completed the required reading and/or given him/herself enough time to develop the work. The grade of a F is reserved for that work which does not engage the issues at hand, offers a base (not complete) summary of the work at hand with no critical engagement, and the translation of ideas into writing is either incomplete or the audience will be unable to follow the conversation. It is important to remember that a student can receive 0 out of 100 points. In the case that a student only partially completes an assignment or completes a work (in terms of page length, but not purpose) s/he may receive 0 points.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:** Classroom behavior should not interfere with the instructor’s ability to conduct the class or the ability of other students to learn from the instructional program (see the Student Conduct Code, policy D-34.1). Unacceptable or disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. Students who disrupt the learning environment may be asked to leave class and may be subject to judicial, academic, or other penalties. This prohibition applies to all instructional forums, including electronic, classroom, labs, discussion groups, field trips, etc. The instructor shall have full discretion over what behavior is appropriate/inappropriate in the classroom. Students who do not attend class regularly or who perform poorly on class projects/exams may be referred to the Early Alert Program. This program provides students with recommendations for resources or other assistance available to help SFA students succeed.

**Engaged Reading and Discussion Posts:**

Your participation grade involves readings of ALL course material (D2L tells me a lot of information about your reading practices, so I will know who is and who isn’t completing the readings) and Discussion Posts. The Discussion Posts will be evaluated according to the question posed for each prompt, the ways in which you can weave both knowledge of plot, analysis or close readings of quotations from Aeschylus, Ovid, and/or Virgil, and level of insight.

**Late Policies:**

- **All Written Assignments and Discussion Posts:** Work handed in after the stated due date without a documented excuse will result in a **10% deduction for each day** the work is late. Weekends count as two days or **20% deduction**. Work will **not be accepted** without a documented excuse if it is **over 4 days late**.

- **Myths and Modern Debates Essay:** I cannot accept the final essay after the end of Module 5. If your paper is not submitted by **9 pm at the end of Module 5** without a documented excuse, you will receive a **ZERO for that assignment**.

*You are welcome to get ahead on the readings and discussions posts if it helps you better schedule your time*
Office Hours and Zoom Policy:

I am here to help! If you wish to meet with me over Zoom, you must be in a neutral, quiet environment where our meeting can be conducted without distraction and without invasion of any location you wish to remain private. Our online meetings will proceed as though they are in my office, which require an adherence to appropriate social and professional etiquette.

Reading, Writing, and Researching Resources:

AARC Policy: The AARC is located in the Steen Library and offers tutoring, workshops, and other online resources to improve your reading, writing, and research skills, regardless of your academic discipline. If you would like a tutoring session, please sign up for one ahead of time either in person or online at https://library.sfasu.edu/aarc.

Tutoring sessions provide strategies to improve your writing skills, but your writing consultant will not assess content nor will s/he proofread your work. For your tutoring appointments, please bring in a typed draft so you can easily jot down your writing consultant’s feedback. If possible, bring the assignment instructions with you to your tutoring session. Finally, please enjoy this wonderful academic resource!

Resources for Mental and Emotional Health:

The rigors of university pose unique forms of stress—stress that can significantly compound life’s other challenges. If you are experiencing mental and emotional distress or if you just need to gain a new perspective on personal issues, please book an appointment at SFA’s Counselling Services. These services are FREE to any enrolled student. Do make use of this excellent resource.

Counselling Services: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/ 3rd floor, Rusk Building, 936.468.2401

How to book an appointment: http://www.sfasu.edu/counselingservices/104.asp Call 936.468.2401

Students with Disabilities: To obtain disability-related accommodations, alternate formats and/or auxiliary aids, students with disabilities must contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS), Human Services Building 325, 468-3004 / 468-1004 (TDD) as early as possible in the semester. Once verified, ODS will notify the course instructor and outline the accommodation and/or auxiliary aids to be provided. Failure to request services in a timely manner may delay your accommodations. For additional information, go to http://www.sfasu.edu/disabilityservices/.

** As you will notice, the reading load tapers off as the written and oral assignments come due. I have structured the course this way to allow you maximum time to complete and polish your
assignments. I will, however, be keeping track of your reading the entire course, so do stay on track with your readings all semester long. **

Assignments (see “Assignments” on D2L for full prompts)

Engaged Reading and Discussion Posts (10%):
With reference to at least one quote from assigned readings, answer the discussion board prompts in complete sentences and (relatively) polished prose. Word length is specified on each prompt.

Myth Reimagined in Art and Literature (10%) (Due End of Module 2):
The lecture on Narcissus’s appropriation by Caravaggio, Waterhouse, and Dali demonstrate how the meanings of myths change as they are reimagined throughout history. In this 3-4 page assignment, you will choose one mythological figure and analyze how, why, and to what ends s/he has been reimagined in art or literature. You will perform a close reading of a myth and a visual analysis/close reading of a subsequent piece of art or literature inspired by that myth.

Midterm Exam Open Note (10%)

Ancient Myths and Modern Debates PRESENTATION (25%) (Due End of Module 4)
In this presentation, you will explicate the language of a given myth, delineate its relationship to a modern debate, and posit arguments for each side of this debate. This presentation will be between 6-8 minutes long, recorded (youtube or screencastomatic are easiest—but see privacy settings below) and posted on the presentation discussion board.

Ancient Myths and Modern Debates ESSAY (35%) (Due End of Module 5)
Building on your presentation, you will craft a 6-8 page argumentative essay that articulates a connection between an ancient myth and a modern debate, stakes a unique thesis, constructs substantive and well-supported arguments about this debate, and works to persuade your reader of your conclusions with clear prose.

Final Exam Open Note (10%)