English 2309.507: Introduction to Mythology

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Office: Liberal Arts North 210

Course Meeting Times and Location: Online
Office Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 10 am – 12:30 pm (Zoom), or by Zoom Appointment

Course Description:

An introduction to the mythologies of various cultures, emphasizing the role of myth in history, culture, and consciousness. Myths define a culture’s ethos and cultural practices, and yet, myths are also shaped by culture itself. Often, myths from around the world deal with questions on the nature of humanity and the divine; they engage with profound events in the heroes’ lives such as birth, death, love, hate, loyalty, betrayal, suffering, and redemption. In this course we will read a variety of myths from around the world, and will actively seek to understand the readings from multiple perspectives. We will analyze the myths by engaging with the socio-historical contexts wherein they were produced.

Because we will engage with texts that are foreign to your own context, you must remember that it is the responsibility and joy of academics to respect and become curious about other cultures. A good number of the myths, legends, and ideas we will encounter may challenge the way you see the world, and it is important that you keep an open and curious mind. The material we will discuss is based on serious academic scholarship, not upon ideologies or any religion. Therefore, I expect all of you to be curious, respectful, and analytical of the texts and worlds we will encounter.

ENG 2309 “Introduction to Mythology” (3 credits; fully online) meets online for 15 regular weeks during the semester, and also meets for the final week of the semester for a 2-hour final examination online. Students have significant weekly reading assignments and take regular reading quizzes along with the midterm and final examinations. Students make a major group presentation on a mythological subject in film or literature and are required to submit a responsive essay. These activities average at a minimum 8-10 hours of work each week to prepare for and fully participate in this course.

COVID-19 MASK POLICY

Masks (cloth face coverings) must be worn over the nose and mouth at all times in this class and appropriate physical distancing must be observed. Students not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be asked to leave the class. All incidents of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing will be reported to the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities. Students who are reported for multiple infractions of not wearing a mask and/or not observing appropriate physical distancing may be subject to disciplinary actions.

Required Texts:

• *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Benjamin R. Foster, translator; Norton Critical Editions.

**Zoom Meetings:**

• Every Tuesday and Thursday for one hour. Time is to be decided based upon student availability. Attendance is highly encouraged as we will discuss the assigned readings during each meeting.

• During zoom meetings, I require that you have your video on.

**Crucial Course Objective:**

It is my intent that students from all diverse backgrounds and perspectives be well-served by this course, that students' learning needs be addressed both in and out of class, and that the diversity that students bring to this class be viewed as a resource, strength, and benefit. It is my intent to present materials and activities that are respectful of diversity: gender, sexual orientation, disability, age, religion, socioeconomic status, ethnicity, race, culture, perspective, and other background characteristics. I encourage your suggestions about how to improve the value of diversity in this course. This course meets the following standards for diversity content and instruction in the following way(s):

1. Course content that includes readings and other materials that address various categories of social difference (gender, nationality, religion, ethnicity, race, age, sexuality, political affiliation, socio-economic status, ability, linguistic background, etc.) on the course topic.

2. Tying current events and local histories centered on the production of social difference into classroom activities.

**Course Requirements:**

As noted before, this course is a fast-moving survey that requires your commitment to steady reading. Your reading of each day’s assignment will be explicitly tested during practically every session in some manner, whether through quizzes, written responses, or through course discussions.

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

**What You Can Expect from Me**
I will strive to:
- create a challenging and engaged learning environment that will enrich your college career
- encourage you to explore new ideas, to develop your own intellectual abilities, and to strengthen your critical thinking skills
- encourage you to identify the ways in which our culture influences your lives, your self-identity, and your perceptions of others
- provide you with helpful feedback about your ideas and writing
- meet with you to discuss your work in detail anytime you request guidance

**What I Expect from You**
During the time spent in this course you should:
- Read and understand all the policies in the syllabus – contact me if you have any questions
- Refer to the calendar attached to the syllabus for any questions regarding deadlines or course requirements
- interact with other students and your professor in a respectful, mature, and thoughtful manner
- read all assigned reading and be prepared to actively participate in class discussion
- keep an open mind; the reading and viewing selections have been carefully considered as works that will contribute to your intellectual development
- feel free to contact me during my office hours if you are having difficulties with the material, or any other issues that might negatively impact your performance in this course
- be prepared to engage with difficult topics

**Course Policies:**

1. **Communication with your professor:** If you send an email I will answer it that same day if the email was sent between 8am - 3pm on weekdays. If your email was sent after those specified times, I will reply the next morning, or after the weekend. Additionally, when you email follow proper email etiquette. I do not check d2l email, so only send emails to this address: lameborsel@sfasu.edu
   **Note: I will not reply to any questions the answer to which can be found by carefully reading the syllabus or the assignment prompts.**

2. All Writing Projects **must be** turned in on d2l on the due date and time. No make-up work is allowed on major assignments. **Late work** will be penalized 10% of the grade per day that it is late.

3. It is your responsibility to keep the deadlines and turn in your assignments, quizzes, discussions in the right place on the online course interface.
4. **Plagiarism**, or turning in work that is not one’s own, runs counter to the most basic purposes of higher education. The minimum penalty for plagiarism will be failure of the assignment. In repeated cases, the penalty is failure of the course and filing paperwork with the academic dean. See SFA policy regarding plagiarism.

5. All work needs to adhere to **MLA format** with appropriate documentation.

6. You may not use essays or assignments you have previously written.

7. I will not accept emailed assignments, unless I have instructed you to do so.

8. All students will be graded on their ability to: 1. Achieve the goal of the specific assignment 2. Efficiently and effectively communicate through writing 3. Properly format the work and 4. Avoid stigmatized grammatical and syntactical errors. Each assignment will vary, but these four factors will always determine part, or all, of your grade.

**Acceptable Student Behavior:**

Online 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. Insulting, dismissive, and insensitive posts will not be tolerated. I expect you all to engage in a responsible way online, respecting everyone and treating everyone with dignity.

Students who disrupt the learning 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 online 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.

**What is Academic Dishonesty/Plagiarism:**

Academic dishonesty includes both cheating and plagiarism. Cheating includes but is not limited to:

- using or attempting to use unauthorized materials on any class assignment or exam;
- falsifying or inventing of any information, including citations, on an assignment;
- helping or attempting to help other student(s) in an act of cheating or plagiarism.

Plagiarism is presenting the words or ideas of another person as if they were one’s own. Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to:

- submitting an assignment as one's own work when it is at least partly the work of another person;
- submitting a work that has been purchased or otherwise obtained from the Internet or another source;
• incorporating the words or ideas of an author into one's paper or presentation without giving the author credit.

Withheld Grades Semester Grades Policy:

Ordinarily, 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.

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, and Room 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 the SFA website.

AARC:

The Academic Assistance and Resource Center provides free peer tutoring for many entry-level courses. The AARC provides on-call tutoring at walk-in tables, 1:1 appointments, online writing lab, and student instructor reviews and learning teams both led by students who have successfully completed the course.

Tutors can guide writers on specific kinds of sentence level support and overall essay coherence by offering suggestions that do the following:

• clarify grammar rules,
• explain writing conventions,
• provide samples of writing that exemplify the topic being discussed,
• and guide writers as they revise and edit their own sentences.

Hours of Operation:

• 1:1 appointments: Semester long and one time only appointments are available. Check the AARC website to sign up.

• Virtual Walk-in Table VIA Zoom: An AARC tutor is available to chat through a Zoom online meeting room from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. Monday-Thursday and 1-5 p.m. on Sunday. Visit the AARC Tutoring Services page for the registration link.

• Walk-In Tables: Available 1 to 6 p.m. Monday through Thursday.
Online Writing Lab (OWL): Log in to your Brightspace by D2L account and view your list of ongoing courses for more information.

**Discrimination/Harassment Policy:**

No one will be discriminated against or harassed on the basis of gender, age, size, ethnicity/race, religion, disability, or any other categories. If discrimination/harassment takes place (either reported or observed) involved students will be required to conference with me prior to returning to class. More information on this topic can be found here on the SFA website.

**Counseling Services:**

Counseling is a free service for all students at SFA. Mental health and safety is crucial to everyone’s well-being and success, and if you are having issues with stress, anxiety, panic, lack of focus, or any other issues due to life events, etc., please do not hesitate to contact the counseling office. Below you will find all the pertinent information:

Location: 3rd floor of the Rusk Building
Phone: 936-468-2401
counseling@sfasu.edu
Office Hours: Monday-Friday 8:00 am-5:00 pm

**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:

1. Critical Thinking: Creative thinking, innovation, inquiry, and analysis, evaluation and synthesis of information.
2. Communication Skills: Effective development, interpretation and expression of ideas through written, oral and visual communication.
4. Personal Responsibility: The ability to connect choices, actions and consequences to ethical decision-making.

**English Program Learning Outcomes:** As ENG 209 is a core course, English Program Learning Outcomes do not apply; English majors or minors, seeking to fulfill sophomore-level literature requirements, should enroll in ENG 211, 212, 221, 222, 229, 230, or 233H.

**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);

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).