

# ARTH 102: Stories and Symbols in Greek Myth

Professor Christopher Gregg

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Office: Robinson B, 373A

Office Hours: Mondays 3:00-4:00 or by appointment

## Course Description:

This course examines the iconography and major narratives of ancient Greek mythology using both primary texts in translation and ancient representations of these myths. By examining the literary tradition and the extant visual material, we will explore the function of myth in ancient Greek society, the types of sources available to modern students of mythography, and the continued presence of mythological themes in Western culture. Students will learn stories of the gods and heroes, and we will analyze these stories using a variety of methods at our disposal: in addition to considering the ancient context, we will bring in modern critical approaches, literary theories, and art historical or anthropological methodologies to expand our understanding and interpretation of the myths. Students will also learn how to visually analyze works of art, both for their style and content. This course fulfills the University's Fine Arts requirement.

## Objectives:

- To learn the major deities and mythic narratives of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations
- To recognize the visual iconography associated with Classical myth
- To interpret visual narratives with a mythic theme
- To become familiar with basic principles of art historical analysis
- To perform individual visual analysis on a work of art, both for its iconographic content and for its broader art historical significance

**Texts:** My expectation is that students will do the assigned readings for the class in the following textbooks. You may want to bring Carpenter to class every day. If you choose not to buy the texts, one copy of each textbook is available on reserve in the Gateway Library at the Johnson Center for two-hour loans.

1. Thomas H. Carpenter. *Art and Myth in Ancient Greece*. London and New York: Thames and Hudson, 1991.

2. Mark P.O. Morford, Robert J. Lenardon, and Michael Sham. *Classical Mythology*. Tenth Edition. Oxford, 2014.

**Note:** you are free to use earlier editions of this text, but the course readings and images in the syllabus are keyed to the most recent edition. If you choose to use any other edition, you are still responsible for keeping up with the readings and all the information in the most recent edition. [www.classicalmythology.org](http://www.classicalmythology.org) is the website associated with this textbook and is worth exploring for potential exam review assistance (flashcards, practice questions, etc.)

3. Susan Woodford. *The Trojan War in Ancient Art*. Cornell University Press, 1993.

## Grade Percentages:

Exam 1	Tuesday, September 30 <sup>th</sup>	25%
Exam 2	Tuesday, November 4 <sup>th</sup>	30%
Exam 3	Consult Final Exam Schedule	30%
Museum Assignment	Thursday, October 23 <sup>rd</sup>	15%

**Grading Scale:**

A+ (100-97) A (96-93) A- (92-90) B+ (89-87) B (86-83) B- (82-80) C+ (79-77)  
C (76-73) C- (72-70) D (69-60) F (59 and below)

**Exams:**

Exams will include visual analysis material. This means that slides viewed in class and images from the textbooks will comprise a significant portion of each test. When preparing for class and studying for exams, treat the visual components of each assignment with the necessary attention. The format of the exams will include identifying subjects, styles, and techniques. A review guide will be uploaded to Blackboard one week prior to each exam. Neither notes nor textbooks will be allowed for the exams themselves.

**Note-taking:**

Although the readings in your textbooks are critical for the course, class lectures will bring the material together, and it is from the class lecture that substantial portions of each exam will be drawn. You must take thorough notes in order to be prepared for the exams. If there are terms on a slide, include the term, its definition and application in your notes. This is a class based on close reading of images and that means attention to details: most people are not able to retain all of the specific details without studying copious notes taken during lecture. Do not assume that showing up to class and simply "listening" will be sufficient to prepare you for exams.

**Schedule for the Semester:** Assignments should be read for the date indicated, *carefully* and *completely before class*. My lectures will assume that you are familiar with the assigned material and will often cover additional topics: on exams, you will be responsible for information from the texts as well as lecture. Note that Carpenter functions as a visual counterpart to the literature. Pay equal attention to the images; study them; be able to recognize important elements such as attributes or iconography. Images will appear on exams. Finally, keep up with the reading: most of the assignments are relatively short, but not all, and they will accumulate quickly. Remember that most of this material will be unfamiliar--plan to read the assignments at least twice in order to reach the necessary level of understanding.

**Museum Assignment**

This course requires an independent visit to the National Gallery of Art in DC. Based on that visits, there will be an assignment: details will be distributed later. There is no make-up or alternative option for the Museum Assignment.

**Important Notes**

- **Attendance at exams is MANDATORY: no make-up exams will be offered without a doctor's excuse or other official documentation. If you miss an exam, you must contact me within 24 hours to schedule the re-take with valid documentation. Make up exams must be taken within ten academic days unless cleared with me in advance.**
- **I encourage questions and open discussion in class. Please, however, refrain from "quiet" talking to one another during lectures. It is distracting both to your classmates and to myself. If you persist in this during lectures, I will ask you to leave the classroom.**
- **Please turn off cell phones when class begins. Texting during class will be treated the same as talking during lectures.**

- **Use of electronic devices (including cell phones) during exams will be treated as an honor code violation. At the very least, you will receive a “0” on the exam.**
- **Arrive on time for class. Coming in late is disruptive for everyone. If you have a class prior to ours which causes a problem with arriving on time, please discuss it with me.**
- **Discuss any special academic needs with me at the start of the term. Do not wait until after the first exam or later!**
- **Since the material in this course is based on the art and literature of other cultures, some topics of violence, gender, and sexuality may be contrary to individual beliefs, but we will deal with them in an academic and intellectual manner.**
- **All reading assignments should be completed before class each day. The lengths of these assignments vary so keep pace with the syllabus.**
- **No extra credit assignments are offered in the course.**
- **The schedule and pace of the course may be adjusted as needed. If the need arises, a revised syllabus will be uploaded to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to keep up with the most recent version of the syllabus**

Finally, all GMU policies on academic honesty will be applicable in this class. If you are unfamiliar with these policies, please visit <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/> and acquaint yourself with them.

#### Abbreviations on the Syllabus

MLS: Morford, Lenardon and Sham textbook page numbers

C: Carpenter textbook (**image numbers**, not page numbers)

W: Woodford textbook page numbers

(Note: readings for a particular date should be read before class on that date)

#### August

T 26 **Introduction: Stories, Symbols and Greek Myth**

MLS 3-7; 19-30

Th 28 **Greek Art: Painting and Architecture**

Blackboard pdf: from *The Art of Greece and Rome*, excerpts pp. 23-37; 43-49; 95-96

**Note:** the scan of the text includes some scrambled word-forms. Most of these are understandable through context. Any term that you would be held responsible for will be covered in lecture.

#### September

T 2 **Greek Sculpture and Greek Religion**

Blackboard reading from *The Art of Greece and Rome*, excerpts, pp. 4-11; 18-22; 55-65  
MLS 155-164

Th 4 **Understanding Iconography and the Creation Myths**

MLS:

Oedipus, 420-423

Titanomachy, 84-86

Prometheus, 93-94

C: 116, 117, 118

95a/b, 262-264

Blackboard pdf:

Woodford “Images of Myth”

T 9 **Pandora and the Gigantomachy**

- MLS 86-88; 90-91;  
93-97
- C 96, 97, 99,  
113-115, 119
- Blackboard pdf:  
Henle: "The Giants are Coming!"
- Th 11 **Zeus and his paramours**  
MLS 117-124 C 54-60, 69, 233  
Ganymede 125-126  
Muses 134  
Cadmus and Thebes 414-416
- T 16 **Hera and her children**  
MLS 125-134 C 1, 2, 12,13, 14, 100, 132, 234  
**Read in Carpenter pp. 13-17**
- Th 18 **Athena and Poseidon**  
MLS 170-174 (Poseidon); 179-190 (Athena) C 61-63, 88, 98, 100, 101, 81-85
- T 23 **Apollo**  
MLS 251-274 C 70-73, 102, 104
- Th 25 **Artemis and Aphrodite**  
MLS 227-235; 193-197;  
189-191 C 136-138, 71, 75, 130, 133, 67, 68, 90, 93  
Eros 211  
Pan, Echo and Narcissus 328-334  
Hermaphroditus 298-302
- T 30 **Exam 1 [material from the beginning of the semester through Apollo]**
- October
- Th 2 **Dionysus and Hermes**  
MLS 304-325; 285-298 C 6, 7, 9, 48,49, 50-53, 77-80, 106-109, 134
- T 7 **Demeter, Persephone and Hades**  
MLS 339-349; 359-365 C 41-44, 129, 121, 131
- Th 9 **The Greek Hero: Perseus**  
MLS 549-555 C 144, 146, 148-162
- T 14 **Tuesday, October 14<sup>th</sup>**: Monday classes meet. Tuesday classes do not meet this day. Treat as an "Academic Monday" and follow your course schedule for a normal Monday [this balances the Monday lost to Labor Day]
- Th 16 **Bellerophon and Classical Monsters**  
MLS C 163-166, 345, 132, 254-257  
Bellerophon 557-559  
Ixion 379  
Scylla and Charybdis 802
- T 21 **A boar, women with spears, and a Golden Fleece**  
MLS C 284-285, 196-198, 125, 271-273, 276-283

Calydonian Boar Hunt 516-519  
Jason and the Argonauts 615-620

- T 28 **Herakles, part 1**  
MLS 562-567 C 167-192
- Th 30 **Herakles, part 2**  
MLS 568-574; 576-583 C 193-199, 200-218, 224-229, 234
- Th 23 **Theseus**  
MLS 596-604; 606-609 (Daedalus and Icarus) C 235, 237-239, 244-252, 258-259, 125  
**Museum Assignment due in class. No digital submissions accepted. Late penalties will apply.**

#### November

- T 4 **Exam 2 (Artemis & Aphrodite through Herakles)**
- Th 6 **To Be Announced**
- T 11 **Troy, part 1**  
W 7-28 (through Achilles and Chiron) For Woodford readings, all images
- Th 13 **Troy, part 2**  
W 28-64
- T 18 **Troy, part 3**  
W 65-87
- Th 20 **Troy, part 4**  
W 88-108 (through the Trojan Horse)
- T 25 **To Be Announced**

#### **Thanksgiving Break November 26-30**

#### December

- T 2 **Troy, part 5 and Nostoi (the Returns)**  
W 108-119  
MLS 525-527; 449-455 C 350-356
- Th 4 **Nostoi, part 2**  
MLS 527-543 (Odysseus) C 339-349

**Exam period for Fall 2014: December 10-16<sup>th</sup>**  
**Consult the GMU exam schedule for date and time of this exam.**  
<http://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2014/exams/>  
**No early exams will be given, so make your travel plans accordingly.**