

# ARTH 102: Stories and Symbols in Greek Myth

Professor Christopher Gregg

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Robinson B, 373A

Office Hours: Wednesdays 11:30-12:20 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:** Students should buy the following books. Please bring Carpenter to class every day.

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

Mark P.O. Morford, Robert J. Lenardon, and Michael Sham. *Classical Mythology*. Ninth Edition. Oxford, 2010.

**Note:** you are free to use earlier editions of this text, but the course readings and images are keyed to the most recent edition. If you choose to use any other edition, you are still responsible for all the information in the 9<sup>th</sup> ED.

[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.)

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

## Grade Percentages:

Quiz	February 10 <sup>th</sup>	10%
First Exam	February 27 <sup>th</sup>	25%
Second Exam:	April 9 <sup>th</sup>	25%
Final Exam:	See GMU schedule	25%
Written Assignment	April 13 <sup>th</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. As a preparation for the first exam, a timed, in-class quiz will be given: you will be able to use your notebooks (not textbooks) for this quiz as a check on your note-taking in the class. 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.

**Written Assignment**

1 to 2 page out of class writing assignment: details will be distributed later.

**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.**
- **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 distributed. It is your responsibility to keep up with the most recently distributed version of the syllabus

All university policies of academic integrity and honesty will be enforced in this class: it is your responsibility to know, understand and adhere to these policies.

If you have not already signed up for the Mason Alert system, which will send texts concerning weather cancellations, etc. please do so at: <https://alert.gmu.edu>

M/L = pages in the Morford, Lendardson & Sham textbook.

Blackboard: pdf files are located under Course Content on the class Blackboard page.

C = image numbers (not pages) in the Carpenter textbook.

January

Week 1	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
<b>M 23<sup>rd</sup></b>	Introduction	3-12; 17-26	None
<b>W 25<sup>th</sup></b>	Overview of Greek Art, part I <b>Note:</b> these Overviews contain essential material that you will be responsible for throughout the semester.	Blackboard reading from Stokstad	Illustrations in the reading
<b>F 27<sup>th</sup></b>	Overview of Greek Art, part II	Review previous reading	Illustrations in the reading

Week 2	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
<b>M 30<sup>th</sup></b>	Greek Religion	Blackboard: Cartledge on Greek Religion	
<b>February W 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Prometheus and Pandora	85-98	116, 117, 118
<b>F 3<sup>rd</sup></b>	Iconography and Narrative Time (Climactic, Anticipatory, Synoptic) Oedipus The Titanomachy	80-82 (Titanomachy) and 413-418 (Oedipus) Blackboard pdf reading: Woodford, 'Images of Myth'	Carpenter 95 a/b, 262-264 Illustrations from the readings

Week 3	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
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<b>M 6<sup>th</sup></b>	Gigantomachy	82-85 Blackboard pdf reading: Henle, 'The Giants are Coming!'	96, 97, 99, 113-115
<b>W 8<sup>th</sup></b>	Zeus, the Muses, Ganymede	114-118; 121-123 (Ganymede); 131- 132 (Muses)	54-60, 69, 233
<b>F 10<sup>th</sup></b>	Cadmus, Thebes and the Punishment of Dirce <b>Quiz</b>	407-412	None

<b>Week 4</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>M/L pages</b>	<b>Carpenter numbers</b>
<b>M 13<sup>th</sup></b>	Hera and her Children	121-130	100, 132, 234
<b>W 15<sup>th</sup></b>	Hephaestus and Poseidon	165-174	1, 2, 12, 13, 61-63, 88 and <b>Read</b> pages 13-17
<b>F 17<sup>th</sup></b>	Athena	176-187	98, 100, 101, 81-85

<b>Week 5</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>M/L pages</b>	<b>Carpenter numbers</b>
<b>M 20<sup>th</sup></b>	Apollo	246-269	70-73, 102, 104
<b>W 22<sup>nd</sup></b>	Apollo and Artemis	220-226; 229-231	136-138, 71
<b>F 24<sup>th</sup></b>	Artemis' Vengeance and Aphrodite	189-191; 194-205	71, 75, 130, 133, 67, 68, 90

<b>Week 6</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>M/L pages</b>	<b>Carpenter numbers</b>
<b>M 27<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><i>Exam I</i></b>		
<b>W 29<sup>th</sup></b>	<b><i>To be announced</i></b>		
<b>March F 1<sup>st</sup></b>	Minor Deities	205-212 (Eros); 294-299 (Hermaphroditus); 320-325 (Maenads, Satyrs); 325-332 (Pan, Echo and Narcissus)	93, 67, 5-9, 195-198, 135

<b>Week 7</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>M/L pages</b>	<b>Carpenter numbers</b>
<b>M 5<sup>th</sup></b>	Dionysus and Hermes	301-319; 281-294	9, 48, 49, 50-53, 77-80, 106-109, 134
<b>W 7<sup>th</sup></b>	Demeter and Hades	336-347; 378-381 ("Traditional Elements...")	41-44, 129, 121, 131
<b>F 9<sup>th</sup></b>	Perseus	546-556	144, 146, 148-157

**March 12-18<sup>th</sup>: Spring Break**

Week 8	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 19 <sup>th</sup>	Perseus and Bellerophon	558-561	158-166
W 21 <sup>st</sup>	Jason and the Argonauts	617-630	125, 271-273, 276-283
F 23 <sup>rd</sup>	Monstrous Threats to Greek Heroes	515-518 (Meleager and the Calydonian Boar); 171 (Scylla) 375 (Ixion)	284-285; 196-198; 345; 132, 254-257

Week 9	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 26 <sup>th</sup>	Herakles I	563-568	167-177
W 28 <sup>th</sup>	Herakles II	568-576	178-199
F 30 <sup>th</sup>	Herakles III	576-586	200-218, 224-229, 234

#### April

Week 10	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Theseus I	599-613	235, 237-239, 244-252, 258-259, 125
W 4 <sup>th</sup>	Theseus II	Review previous reading	
F 6 <sup>th</sup>	<i>To be announced</i>		

Week 11	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 9 <sup>th</sup>	<b>Exam II</b>		
W 11 <sup>th</sup>	Troy I	Woodford, 13-24	All Woodford images
F 13 <sup>th</sup>	Troy II <b>Written Assignment Due in Class: digital submissions not accepted.</b>	25-38	

Week 12	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 16 <sup>th</sup>	Troy III	39-64	
W 18 <sup>th</sup>	Troy IV	65-78	
F 20 <sup>th</sup>	Troy V	79-93	

Week 13	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 23 <sup>rd</sup>	<i>To be announced</i>		
W 25 <sup>th</sup>	Troy VI	94-108 (Trojan Horse)	
F 27 <sup>th</sup>	Troy VII	108-119	

Week 14	Topic	M/L pages	Carpenter numbers
M 30 <sup>th</sup>	Nostoi I	437-457	350-356

<b>May</b> <b>W 2<sup>nd</sup></b>	Nostoi II	524-544	339-349
<b>F 4<sup>th</sup></b>	Nostoi III	Review previous reading	

**Consult the Mason Bulletin for final exam schedule**

**It is the policy of the University and this department not to give early exams, so make your travel plans accordingly.**