

# ARTH 102.001: Stories and Symbols in Greek Myth

MW

Professor Christopher Gregg

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Office: Robinson B, 373A

Office Hours: 12:00-1:00 on Mondays 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 Specific to this Course:

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

These course goals are specifically designed for this course and fall under the broader headings of the Learning Outcomes for the Arts (<http://masoncore.gmu.edu/arts-2/>)

**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.

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	Wednesday, Sept. 25 <sup>th</sup>	25%
Exam 2	Wednesday, Oct. 30 <sup>th</sup>	30%
Exam 3	Wednesday, Dec. 4 <sup>th</sup>	30%

Iconography Assignment

Wednesday, October 23<sup>rd</sup>

15%

**Note: there are no extra credit options available in the class.**

**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. If it becomes necessary to change our schedule due to weather or other factors, I will upload a revised syllabus to Blackboard. There will always be a current syllabus on Blackboard and it is your responsibility to keep up with the latest version.

**Iconography Assignment**

*Specific instructions for the assignment will be provided in a separate document on Blackboard.*

Each student in the course will be required to produce an annotated image in which you apply a number of the fundamental concepts learned during the semester. This project will be run through the class Blackboard page. Under the Assignment tab, you will find the instructions document and a PowerPoint template for creating your annotated image.

The documents for the assignment will not appear until October 1<sup>st</sup>. At that point in the class, you will have all the necessary tools for analyzing and annotating your image. The assignment is then due in Blackboard on **October 23<sup>rd</sup>** by midnight. The project counts 15% of your final class grade. To successfully complete the assignment, you will need to read and follow the instructions carefully. Failure to turn in a project would mean that

your highest possible course grade is an 85 (B) if your grades are perfect on all three exams.

### 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 me. If you persist in talking during lectures, I will ask you to leave the classroom.
- Do not wear earbuds or other headphones during lecture.
- 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! I will not complete ODS forms that are emailed to me. You will need to bring hard copies of the forms to me well in advance of exam dates if you are using the ODS testing center. It is your responsibility to deal with this paperwork in a timely manner. Failure to do so may result in having to take the exam with the rest of the class.
- 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 outside of individual comfort zones, but we will deal with these subjects 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 necessary. If the need arises, a revised syllabus will be announced and uploaded to Blackboard. It is your responsibility to keep up with the most recent version of the syllabus

Please realize that these policies are designed to create the most positive academic environment possible. As long as you are respectful towards these policies, your performance in the class, your classmates, and myself, you will undoubtedly receive that same consideration.

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 for readings used 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)

### Week 1

August

Monday, 26

#### **Introduction: Stories, Symbols and Greek Myth**

MLS 3-7; 19-30 [See text Abbreviations at the end of the previous page]

Wednesday, 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.

### Week 2

September

M 2

#### **Labor Day: No classes**

Note: Tuesday, September 3<sup>rd</sup> is the last day to add classes

W 4

#### **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

### Week 3

M 9

#### **Understanding Iconography and the Creation Myths**

MLS:

C: 116, 117, 118

Blackboard pdf:

Oedipus, 420-423

95a/b, 262-264

Woodford "Images of Myth"

Titanomachy, 84-86

Prometheus, 93-94

Note: September 10<sup>th</sup> is the last day to drop a course with 100% tuition refund

W 11

#### **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!"

### Week 4

M 16

#### **Zeus and his paramours**

MLS 117-124

C 54-60, 69, 233

Ganymede 125-126

Muses 134

Cadmus and Thebes 414-416

W 18

#### **Hera and her children**

MLS 125-134

C 1, 2, 12,13, 14, 100, 132, 234

**Read in Carpenter pp. 13-17**

Week 5

M 23 **Athena and Poseidon**

MLS 170-174 (Poseidon); 179-190 (Athena)

C 61-63, 88, 98, 100, 101, 81-85

W 25 **Exam 1**

Week 6

M 30 **Apollo**

MLS 251-274

C 70-73, 102, 104

*October*

W 2 **Iconography Assignment workday: class does not meet**

Week 7

M 7 **Artemis and Aphrodite**

MLS 227-235; 193-197;

C 136-138, 71, 75, 130, 133, 67, 68, 90, 93

189-191

Eros 211

Pan, Echo and Narcissus 328-334

Hermaphroditus 298-302

W 9 **Dionysus and Hermes**

MLS 304-325; 285-298

C 6, 7, 9, 48,49, 50-53, 77-80, 106-109, 134

Week 8

**M 14 Fall Break: University closed, no classes**

Tuesday 15 Monday classes are scheduled to meet. I will announce our plans for this day the week prior.

W 16 **Demeter, Persephone and Hades**

MLS 339-349; 359-365

C 41-44, 129, 121, 131

Week 9

M 21 **The Greek Hero: Perseus**

MLS 549-555

C 144, 146, 148-162

W 23 **Bellerophon and Classical Monsters**

MLS

C 163-166, 345, 254-257, 284-285, 132, 196-198

Bellerophon 557-559

Ixion 379

Scylla and Charybdis 802

Calydonian Boar Hunt 516-519

Ixion 379

**Iconography Assignment due in Blackboard. Late penalties will apply at 2% per day, meaning that one day late a 13% is the maximum that you can get, then 11%, 9% etc.**

Week 10

M 28 **Herakles**

MLS 562-574; 576-583

C 167-192, 193-199, 200-218, 224-229, 234

W 30 **Exam 2**

Week 11

*November*

M 4 **Theseus**

MLS 596-604; 606-609 (Daedalus and Icarus)

C 235, 237-239, 244-252, 258-259, 125

W 6 **Troy, part 1**

W 7-28 (through Achilles and Chiron)

For Woodford readings, all images

Week 12

M 11 **Troy, part 2**

W 28-64

W 13 **Troy, part 3**

W 65-87

Week 13

M 18 **Troy, part 4**

W 88-108 (through the Trojan Horse)

W 20 **Troy, part 5 and Nostoi (the Returns)**

W 108-119

MLS 525-527; 449-455

C 350-356

Week 14

M 25 **To be announced**

W 27 **Thanksgiving Break; University closed, no classes**

Week 15

*December*

M 2 **Nostoi, part 2**

MLS 527-543 (Odysseus)

C 339-349

W 4 **Exam 3**

**If we are able to keep to the schedule set in the syllabus, our last exam (exam 3) will be held at our final class meeting. If weather or other issues slow down our progress, the last exam will be held on the date/time established by the GMU Final Exam Schedule.**

**To consult this schedule, see:**

<https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/fall-2019/final-exams/>

**A final announcement on the date will be made by late November.**

**Make your travel plans for the end of the semester accordingly: early exams cannot be accommodated.**