

California State University, Sacramento
HRS151, sec. 1, World Mythology
Fall 2009

Monday and Wednesday 12:00 – 1:15 PM, MND 4004

R. Diane Anderson, Instructor

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Open Office Hours: MW 1:30 - 2:30 PM Also by appointment

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UNRESOLVED ISSUES ARISING FROM THE FURLOUGH PROCESS MAY AFFECT THE COURSE CALENDAR
I WILL UPDATE YOUAS SOON AS I HAVE NEW INFORMATION

REQUIRED TEXTS

- *World Mythology*. Donna Rosenburg
 - *The Epic of Gilgamesh* (Penguin Classics). N.K. Sandars, Translator
 - *Popol-Vuh*. Dennis Tedlock, Translator
 - *Beowulf*. Seamus Heaney, Editor; Daniel Donoghue, Translator
- **Course Description:** This course provides an introduction to the nature and function of myth. The specific literature studied will be exclusive of classical mythology and because of the breadth of subject matter will vary in content. At least four areas of mythology will be covered each term. 3 units.
 - **Course Content:** This course will examine various theories of myth making, and the meaning of myth, as myth is associated with religion and culture. Some of the areas of myth the class will address during this semester are Mesopotamian, Egyptian, Indian, Chinese, Germanic, Norse, Mesoamerican and Native American.
 - **Writing Requirements:** Two papers are required for this class. The first paper is 2-3 pages in length; the second, 5-6 pages. Topics will be provided in class.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Read, analyze, and discuss myths from different cultures.
- Learn the various theories by which world mythology can be classified and be able to recognize these theories in myth, cross culturally.
- Discover and discuss what common themes and parallels unite myths from different cultures and better understand how these can exist in cultures about which there is no known contact.
- Discover how world peoples view themselves and how mythology, religion and history serve as mirrors, reflecting universal human hopes, fears, and biases.
- Examine how the concepts of gender are reflected in world mythology and what variety exists among cultures with respect to gender roles.
- Examine how world societies characterize their relationship with the natural world, how they explain its creation and processes and in what ways these questions are evident in various systems of mythology.

*** FOR GENERAL NOTES ON FORMAL WRITING ASSIGNMENTS, PLEASE SEE SEPARATE HANDOUT. ***

LAPTOP POLICY: Many discussions have included both the positive values and the negative distractions of using laptop computers in the classroom. The debate continues and still there is no consensus. Therefore each instructor must make his or her own policy. I will decide about the use of laptops in my classroom on a case-by-case basis and only with my personal approval. You must see me about using your laptop in class and make your case for permission to do so.

E-MAIL ETTIQUITE: When corresponding with your instructor by e-mail, your messages are not truncated and abbreviated text messages. They call for the use of business informal language. That is, use capital letters when called for, use correct punctuation and SIGN YOUR NAME. I will not rely to e-mail messages that do not meet these standards.

ATTENDANCE AND TARDY POLICY: Students are expected to attend all sessions of the class, prepared to discuss the reading assignment for the day. It is necessary, both for your own education and as a courtesy to the other members of the class, to attend class regularly and punctually. An attendance sheet will be distributed for your signature at each class meeting. It is your responsibility to sign this sheet. Numerous absences and/or chronic tardiness will adversely affect your participation grade. When applicable, I will implement the *Department Attendance Policy*.

GRADING

Preparation and Participation	35 points	A = 100-93%	C = 76-73%
Midterm #1	50 points	A- = 92-90%	C- = 72-70%
Midterm #2	50 points	B+ = 89-87%	D+ = 69-67%
Paper #1	50 points	B = 86-83%	D = 66-62%
Paper #2	60 points	C+ = 79-77%	F = 59% and below
Presentation	35 points		
Occasional in-class assignments	20 points		
<u>Final Exam</u>	<u>50 points</u>		
Total Possible	350 points		

Details of the policy in regard to plagiarism are explained in the separate *Writing Guide* handout. The way in which plagiarism affects your grade in this class is as follows. If I determine through my own investigation that a student has committed an act of plagiarism, the student will receive an F on the assignment, the possibility of an F in class and a referral to Student Affairs for possible university disciplinary action.

SCHEDULE AND ASSIGNMENTS:

This syllabus is subject to adjustments with appropriate prior notice **

Week 1

Mon/Aug 31 Introduction to World Mythology

Wed/Sept 2 Myth Making, Theory and Meaning
Rosenburg, *World Mythology* (WM), pp. xi-xxi

Week 2

Mon/Sept 7 LABOR DAY HOLIDAY NO CLASS MEETING

Wed/Sept 9 Mesopotamian Creation Myth
WM *The Enuma elish*, pp. 2-11
Sandars, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, Introductory material, pp. 7-60

Bring *The Epic of Gilgamesh* to class throughout our entire reading and discussion of the work.

Week 3

Mon/Sept 14 DEADLINE FOR SUBSCRIBING TO LISTPROC
Mesopotamian Myth cont.
Sandars, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, pp. 61-107

Wed/Sept 16 Mesopotamian Myth cont.
Sandars, *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, pp. 108-119

Week 4

Mon/Sept 21

MIDTERM #1

Wed/Sept 23

Egyptian Myth
Creation & Flood Stories LectureWeek 5

Mon/Sept 28

“Osiris, Isis, and Horus”
WM pp. 12-21

Wed/Sept 30

India’s Myths
“The Creation, Death, and Rebirth of the Universe”
WM pp. 291-295
“The Ramayana”
WM pp. 296-309Week 6

Mon/Oct 5

India’s Myths cont.
“ The Ramayana”
WM pp. 309-321

Wed/Oct 7

India’s Myths cont.

Week 7

Mon/Oct 12

India’s Myth continued

Wed/Oct 14

PAPER #1 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS
Chinese Myth
“ The Creation of the Universe and the Human Beings”
WM pp. 324-329
“ Chi Li Slays the Serpent”
WM pp. 330-334Week 8

Mon/Oct 19

Chinese Myth cont.

Wed/Oct 21

Norse Myth
“ The Creation, Death, and Rebirth of the Universe”
WM pp. 458-474
“The Theft of Thor’s Hammer,” and “Sigurd the Volsung”
WM pp. 475-505Week 9

Mon/Oct 26

MIDTERM #2

Wed/Oct 28

Germanic Myth
Beowulf, pp. xv-xxxviii, pp. 3-22
WM pp. 381-386*****Bring *Beowulf* to class throughout our entire reading and discussion of the work. *****Week 10

Mon/Nov 2

Germanic Myth cont.
Beowulf, 22-63

Wed/Nov 4

Germanic Myth
Beowulf, pp. 22-43

Week 11

Mon/Nov 9 Germanic Myth
Beowulf, pp. 43-78

Wed/Nov 11 Germanic Myth cont.
Beowulf, pp. 63-78

Week 12

Mon/Nov 16 **PAPER #2 DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF CLASS**
 Mesoamerican Myth Intro to Pol Vuh, pp. 21 –30 through ¶s 1 and 2
 FILM

Wed/Nov 18 GROUP REPORTS

Bring *Popol-Vuh* to class throughout our entire reading and discussion of the work.

Week 13

Mon/Nov 23 GROUP REPORTS

Wed/Nov 25 GROUP REPORTS

Week 14

Mon/Nov 30 GROUP REPORTS

Wed/Dec 2 Native American Myth
 “The Emergence (Navajo)”
 WM, pp. 615-621
 “Lodge-Boy and Thrown Away (Crow)”
 WM pp. 622-624
 “The Woman Who Fell From the Sky (Iroquois)”
 WM pp,625-633

Week 15

Mon/Dec 7 Native American Myth cont.
 “Raven and Sources of Light”
 WM pp. 625-636
 “Sedna”
 637-641
 “Caught by a Hair-String”
 WM 643-652

Wed/Dec 9 Conclusions

Final Exam

Date: Friday, December 18

Time: 10:15 AM– 12:15 PM

Place: MND 4004

Materials: Blue Book(s) and 2 pens or pencils