



REL3325: Religions of Classical Mythology



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General Information

Course Description and Purpose

This course explores the sacred narratives and beliefs of ancient (B.C.) Mesopotamian, Egyptian, and Mediterranean cultures, with emphasis on the nature and function of myth and its place in religious development.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students will be able to:

1. trace the historical trajectory of mythic development from Mesopotamia throughout the Mediterranean region;
2. describe key texts of ancient mythologies;
3. discuss the relationship of mythology, narrative, and religion;
4. recognize and analyze the mythic pattern of the hero's journey; and
5. critically read mythology with respect for its role in culture.

Important Information

Policies

Before starting this course, please review the following pages:

[Policies](#)

[Netiquette \(Links to an external site.\)](#)

[Technical Requirements and Skills](#)

[Accessibility and Accommodation](#)
[Panthers Care & Counseling and Psychological Services \(CAPS\)](#)
[Academic Misconduct Statement](#)

Course Prerequisites

Review the [Course Catalog \(Links to an external site.\)](#) webpage for prerequisites information.

Textbook and Course Materials

A Short History of Myth

Karen Armstrong

Any edition, many used copies available at Amazon and other online sellers. This small book provides a useful, general overview of the historical development of myth. This book should be read before the midterm exam.

Thou Art That

Joseph Campbell

Any edition, many used copies available at Amazon and other online sellers. This short collection of lectures by Campbell provides a great deal of insight into the nature and functions of myth. This book should be read before you write your paper.

Additional Required Material:

Texts: Accounts of the various myths of ancient cultures are assigned and available online in multiple versions.

Videos: Supplementary video material is assigned and available online.

Expectations of this Course

This is an online course, which means most (if not all) of the course work will be conducted online. Expectations for performance in an online course are the same for a traditional course. In fact, online courses require a degree of self-motivation, self-discipline, and technology skills which can make these courses more demanding for some students.

Students are expected to:

- **review the getting started page** located in the course modules;
- **introduce yourself to the class** during the first week by posting a self-introduction in the appropriate discussion;
- **take the practice quiz** to ensure that your computer is compatible with the learning management system, Canvas;
- **interact** online with instructor and peers;
- **review** and follow the course calendar and weekly outlines;
- **respond** to discussions by the due date specified. **No late work will be accepted;**
- **submit** assignments by the corresponding deadline.

Course Communication

Good communication is vital to successful online courses.

If you want an answer to your question or have a problem, this is the way to get me. DO NOT try to communicate with me about course housekeeping or problems through the Discussion! If you do not email me at that address, I cannot guarantee I will receive your message. Please notify me via email if you believe you have encountered a quiz or test question that has been mis-graded or for which there is no clear answer listed.

Technical Problems: Generally, I cannot solve technical problems with the content or settings of the course and have to refer them to FIU Online. Your best bet is to contact them first. If you can't resolve the problem, email me and I will get it fixed. Be patient!

Discussion Forums

You are expected to read all assigned material and be prepared to discuss it intelligently in the Discussion Forum, the main mode of interaction for the course. Anyone may begin a discussion at any time but you are also expected to comment on the week's course material.

Try to engage each other in direct conversation. Say what you think! Post on, things that surprised you, things that annoy you, things you thought were cool. Imagine we're all in class interacting and sharing our ideas. Pick an idea, motif, story, etc., that struck you as particularly interesting and begin a conversation. What we want are conversations that take us beyond the assigned material. You will be graded on your participation and on the quality of your postings. A key factor in your grade will be the extent to which your posts are interesting, original, in-depth, insightful--how much they actually add to the conversation. Another factor is frequency; get on the Forum regularly. Show some signs of life! I will also be looking at how much you engage your classmates, rather than just putting something up there to fill the hole. And please--don't even bother posting, "I liked this," or "I found this interesting," and such--that kind of post will reduce your grade, not help it. Try to make each post at least 100 meaningful words.

Original postings should be completed by Friday at 11:59pm and response postings must be completed by Sunday at 11:59pm. This ensures that there are enough original postings for other students to respond to during the week.

Assessments

In order to mitigate any issues with your computer and online assessments, it is very important that you take the Practice Quiz from each computer you will be using to take your graded quizzes and exams. Assessments in this course are not compatible with mobile devices and should not be taken through a mobile phone or a tablet. For more information, please review the important information about quizzes page.

Exams

Exams are intended to assess your comprehension, retention, and knowledge of the materials covered in lectures and the assigned texts. The midterm (Exam 1) will cover the first half of the course; the final (Exam 2) covers only the second half. You have only 1 attempt to take each exam. Exams will be available for a 1 week period from 12:01 am to 11:55 pm. There will be one hundred (100) questions on each exam. Once you open the exam, you will have 2 hours to complete and submit the exam. Once the time expires, you cannot save any more answers but only can submit it. Failure to take the exam in the allotted time period will result in a zero (0).

Exam questions will be taken from the quizzes, but since there are more questions in the database than the number of questions on the exam, you will probably get different questions than you did on the quizzes. Multiple choice questions are randomized across students so no two students will have the same questions.

Quizzes

There are 14 quizzes throughout the semester. See the course calendar for the availability dates. The 24-hour availability period for each quiz starts at 12:00 am and ends at 11:55 pm. Each student has one attempt at each quiz. There will be 10 questions, worth 10 points each. The quiz will be different for each student. To take a quiz, click on "Quizzes" under "Course Menu." Once you open the quiz, you will have ten (20) minutes to save all the answers and submit it.

The quizzes will reflect the lectures AND the assigned reading. Please study all course material prior to the quizzes and be prepared. You need to do the quizzes and exams by yourself. Any interaction with others in any form will constitute cheating, and will have serious repercussions. I may not catch everyone who does this, but I sure catch a lot of them.

Assessments will be graded immediately with student submission and answers hidden until after the assessment due date.

Assignments

Part 1. List all the recurring themes, symbols, metaphors, and patterns you have detected throughout the mythologies discussed in class (whether or not the lessons actually addressed them specifically.)

Part 2. Which do you think are most significant? Why? What do you think they are metaphorically conveying? Why would they recur in so many myths?

Part 3. What does Joseph Campbell have to say about the phenomenon of recurrent mythological themes? Do you agree with him? Why or why not? (You can dispute his position if you wish. Lots of people have.)

Note: This assignment is for an analytical paper, not just a few short answers. I will be looking for:

Your recognition of the patterns in the myths we have covered

Your understanding of the basic myth theory we have discussed and that is addressed by Campbell

Your response, in detail, to Campbell’s claims and conclusions. Do you agree that “every one of the major Old Testament mythological themes has been found” in these Mesopotamian myths? Why or why not?

Correct formatting, citations and annotations, according to a recognized standard (Chicago, MLA, etc.)

Your overall paper should be at least 5 pages or more long, with no more than 1.5 spacing. I will be on the lookout for filler and overgenerous margins and font size. I will be even more on the lookout for plagiarism.

I have no problem with your going online for your research. I would caution you, however, to carefully cite any website you have used. Be sure to consult reputable sites and sources; there are many sites addressing these topics that are unreliable and/or flat wrong.

In support of Academic Integrity at Florida International University, Turnitin will be used to review the papers that you submit in this course. Turnitin does not determine whether plagiarism has taken place or not. Turnitin will also not be used as a punitive tool or measure. The instructor of this class will use the reports that Turnitin generates as a basis for the thorough evaluation of the authenticity and originality of your work and the work of your classmates. Submitting a Turnitin assignment is similar to submitting a regular online assignment. You can submit your assignment as a text entry or upload any supported file type: Text (.txt), Microsoft Word (.doc/.docx), Microsoft PowerPoint (.ppt/.pptx), Postscript (.ps), Portable Document Format (.pdf), Rich Text Format (.rtf), HyperText Markup Language (.html), WordPerfect (.wp), Hangul (.hwp), or Open Office (.odt/.ods/.odp).

Review the detailed [Turnitin Student Canvas Guide \(Links to an external site.\)](#) on how to submit your assignments and how to review the Grademark comments (feedback) from your professor.

Grading

Course Grades Distribution Table

Course Requirements	Number of Items	Weight
Quizzes	14	25%
Exams	2	25%
Discussion/Participation	1	25%
Term Paper	1	25%
Total		100%

Letter Grade Distribution Table

Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%	Letter	Range%
A	95 or above	B	83 - 86	C	70 - 76
A-	90 - 94	B-	80 - 82	D	60 - 69
B+	87 - 89	C+	77 - 79	F	59 or less