Prerequisite(s):
None

Calendar Description:
An examination of the nature and function of myth in Classical Antiquity. The course shows how the narrative and symbolic structure of myths orders individual and communal experience. The myths that have influenced Western civilization receive special emphasis.

Objective:
The course will study the Greek myths as traditional tales which, in addition to their narrative interest, convey attitudes of the early Greeks to their natural environment, the institutions of their society and dominant forms of thought (of any of which no prior knowledge is expected). Ancient and modern interpretations of these myths will be studied. The myth-making of Plato will be shown to elucidate some of the functions of the earlier myths and Lévi-Strauss' comprehensive theory of myth will elucidate further functions. Myths which are basic to later works of poetic and plastic art will be given special emphasis.

Learning Outcomes:

Upon successful completion of this course an assiduous student will be able to:

1. Connect specific myths to the cultures that produced them
2. Identify the histories and functions of the gods and heroes of classical myth
3. Identify the literary and the visual iconography of major gods, heroes, and legends of classical myth
4. Discuss the ways in which morality deconstructs the idea of absolute interpretation or objective reading
5. Identify the ways in which collection, transcription, and scholarship constantly reinterpret an oral tradition for new generations

*Please note: This is a preliminary web course description only. The department reserves the right to change without notice any information in this description. The final, binding course outline will be distributed in the first class of the semester.
7. Examine the ways in which variant versions of a story focus attention on the invariant elements
8. Explore a variety of scholarly approaches to mythology in discussion and writing
9. Develop an appreciation for the range and diversity of mythology and folklore
10. Identify recurring mythological themes and motifs
11. Recognize the role of myth in the arts

Method of Presentation:
This is a fully on-line asynchronous course: there will be no regularly scheduled meetings or lectures. As in all DE courses, students are expected to devote the necessary time regularly (roughly 10 hours/week) to succeed while managing their own schedule. In this course there is a series of small multiple-choice quizzes. These quizzes are intended to help you “check in” to see how you are doing with the course materials. It is important that you use these quizzes as they were intended—to help you identify what you know and where you need further improvement or clarification and further reading. If you treat these quizzes as merely hoops through which you have to jump, you are in danger of gaining a false sense of your strengths. Under these circumstances, you will be doubly dissatisfied. Your course mark and your course experience will not be what you’d hoped them to be—and that is not good for you, or your course instructor. Plan to work away at the course content each week. Build time into your plan to account for the work you’re going to need to do for the other course assessments. Be active on the discussion boards.

Texts Required:
Title: Classical Mythology, 11th Edition
Author: Morford, Mark P.O., Robert J. Lenardon, and Michael Sham
Edition: 11th edition
ISBN: 9780190851644

Assessment:

12 Quizzes (score highest 10 x 3% each) 30%
4 Online discussions (5% each) 20%
Research paper:
• proposal and outline 5%
• annotated bibliography 10%
• rough draft 10%
• Final draft 25%