REL 341-001-Theories of Myth

Spring 2024

Credit Hours: 3

Lecture

Contact Information

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Course Description

From Hercules to Achilles, to Odysseus, and from Oedipus Rex to Medea, myths of the ancient Greek world are as popular today as they were thousands of years ago. Why do we re-tell those ancient myths today? What makes something a myth? What's the difference between a myth and a story? How did scholars try to explain the origin and function of myths? Do we produce myths today? The course will address those questions by looking at several myths of the ancient Greco-Roman world but also will look at the theories scholars developed in order to understand those stories. The course examines the history of differing theories of myth, conceived as a sub-type of narrative. Writing proficiency is required for a passing grade in this course. A student who does not write with the skill normally required of an upper-division student will not earn a passing grade, no matter how well the student performs in other areas of the course.

Core Attributes: Writing
Required Texts

NONE / NO TEXT REQUIRED
Subtitle: NONE / NO TEXT REQUIRED

Other Course Materials

This course has no required books but PDF readings that will be available through the course’s Blackboard site.

Student Learning Outcomes

• Students describe myths of the ancient Greek world.
• Students describe, analyze, and discuss theories of myth.
• Students write abstracts summarizing assigned reading material.
• Students implement the above knowledge in writing assignments and power-point presentations. Written assignments require coherent, logical, and carefully edited prose. These assignments require students to demonstrate higher-level critical thinking skills, such as analysis and synthesis.

Outline of Topics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
<th>Reading Assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 22</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>What is Myth?</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Staley Myth and the Classics</td>
<td>Abstract 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jan. 29</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Assignment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 5</td>
<td>McCutcheon <em>Myth</em></td>
<td>Abstract 2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Feb. 12</td>
<td><em>Lincoln Theorizing Myth</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 19</td>
<td><em>Lincoln Theorizing Myth</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feb. 26</td>
<td><em>Lincoln Comparative Studies in Myth</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 4</td>
<td><em>Lincoln Comparative Studies in Myth</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mar. 11</td>
<td>SPRING BREAK</td>
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<td>Mar. 18</td>
<td><em>Touna Hippolytus</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mar. 25</td>
<td>Barthes’s “Mythologies”</td>
<td>Reading Presentation</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 1</td>
<td><em>Ancient Greece on TV</em></td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 9</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 8</td>
<td>*Lincoln’s “Between History and Myth”</td>
<td>Reading Presentation Abstract 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Apr. 15</td>
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<td>Project Presentations</td>
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<td>Apr. 22</td>
<td></td>
<td>Project Presentations</td>
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<td>Apr. 29</td>
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<td>Final Paper Due</td>
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**Exams and Assignments**

1. **Abstracts (50%)**

You will be required to write **10 abstracts** on the reading of the day (see tentative schedule below), that accurately describe the argument of the reading for that week, avoiding all assessment, commentary, or quotation, and which has to be followed by one question (worth 1% out of
4%); each abstract should be between 250-300 words. Each abstract is worth 5% of your course grade for a total of 60%. Abstracts should be uploaded on blackboard a day before our scheduled class time **no late abstracts will be accepted.**

1. **Presentations (30%)**

Throughout the course each student will have to make 2 presentations (assigned during the first day of class). Each presentation will worth 10% of your course grade for a total of 20%.

- **Reading Presentation I: (10%)** Each student will choose one reading (to be assigned on the first day of class) and be prepared to lead a discussion. Presenters are expected to introduce the author of the article and summarize its arguments and conclusion use a power point.

- **Project Poster Presentation II: (20%)** You will require to make a poster presentation of your final paper (whether ancient or modern).

1. **Final Writing Assignment (20%)**

At the end of the course you will be required to write a paper of minimum 1500 words (about 5 double spaced pages with Time New Roman 12) applying things taught in the course at the piece of data/myth you presented in class (see Presentation II). Your final paper is a demonstration of things you learned so far in the course and thus your ability to use and synthesize that knowledge. A rubric will be made available after all project presentations have been completed.

### Grading Policy

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Weight</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>10 Abstracts (5% each)</td>
<td>50%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Reading Presentation</td>
<td>10%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Poster Presentation</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>1 Final Writing Essay</td>
<td>20%</td>
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### Policy on Missed Exams and Coursework

Late work will only be accepted with permission from the professor and only within reasonable time after the due date. There is no guarantee that late assignments will be accepted—that is up to the
professor’s discretion on a case-by-case basis and points may be deducted for late submissions. If an emergency arises, and you foresee having to miss multiple assignments, you must make arrangements with the professor.

**Attendance Policy**

Attendance and participation are key to succeed in the course. You are responsible for doing the required readings and assignments in a timely manner.

**Generative AI Tools**

AI use is not allowed

All submitted work must be produced by the students themselves, whether individually or collaboratively. Use of a generative AI tools such as ChatGPT to complete an assignment constitutes academic misconduct.

**Notification of Changes**

The instructor will make every effort to follow the guidelines of this syllabus as listed; however, the instructor reserves the right to amend this document as the need arises. In such instances, the instructor will notify students in class and/or via email and will endeavor to provide reasonable time for students to adjust to any changes.

**Statement on Academic Misconduct**

Students are expected to be familiar with and adhere to the official [Academic Misconduct Policy](#).

**Statement On Disability Accommodations**

The University of Alabama is committed to ensuring the full participation of all students in its programs. If you have a documented disability (or think you may have a disability) and need reasonable accommodation(s) to participate in this class, contact the Office of Disability Services (or ODS; 205-348-4285, ods@ua.edu, Houser Hall 1000, www.ods.ua.edu) as soon as possible. If you have been approved to receive
accommodations through ODS, please meet with your instructor or College designee during office hours or by appointment to review your accommodation letter and discuss how accommodations can be implemented in this course.

Severe Weather Protocol

Please refer to the Severe Weather Guidelines located on the Office of Emergency Management website.

Pregnant Student Accommodations

Title IX protects against discrimination related to pregnancy or parental status. If you are pregnant and will need accommodations for this class, please review the University's FAQs on the UAct website.

Religious Observances

Under the Guidelines for Religious Holiday Observances, students should notify the instructor in writing or via email during the first two weeks of the semester of their intention to be absent from class for religious observance. The instructor will work to provide reasonable opportunity to complete academic responsibilities as long as that does not interfere with the academic integrity of the course. See full guidelines at Religious Holiday Observances Guidelines.

UAct Statement

The University of Alabama is committed to an ethical, inclusive community defined by respect and civility. The UAct website provides extensive information on how to report or obtain assistance with a variety of issues, including issues related to dating violence, domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, sexual violence or other Title IX violations, illegal discrimination, harassment, hate or bias incidents, child abuse or neglect, hazing, threat assessment, retaliation, and ethical violations or fraud.

Wellness Resources
College can be a stressful time. If you or someone you know is facing a challenging time or dealing with academic or personal stress, anxiety, depression, or other concerns, we strongly encourage and support you to seek assistance or to help friends find the care that they may need by reviewing the [Campus Resource List for Students](#).

If you are experiencing a personal crisis and need urgent assistance, you can also contact the following resources:

**Counseling Center**

Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-3863).

Weekends, holidays, after-hours (contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak with the on-call counselor).

You may also text BAMA to 741-741 to text with a trained volunteer.

**Women and Gender Resource Center**

Monday-Friday during routine Center hours (205-348-5040).

Weekends, holidays, after-hours: contact UAPD at 205-348-5454 and ask to speak to the on-call advocate for the WGRC.