

CLAS 1500 Classical Mythology



[MyWeb page with syllabi and more about me](#)

Prof. John Stevens

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Hours: Same day email response; available via WebEx TTh 9:40-10:40, 12:30-2 and by appt.

Course Description. Major myths of ancient Greece and Rome, their meanings and functions in ancient cultures and literatures. Objectives:

- Knowledge of the names of the gods in Greek and Roman mythic traditions, their attributes, the main topics of myth (theogony, the hero, descents to the underworld, the Trojan war cycle) and of the primary authors and texts for classical myths. Ability to recognize gods and their attributes in works of art.
- Understanding of the main uses of myth, to explain causes (aetiological), often through cosmology (an account of the universe), theogony (genealogy of the gods), or etymology (*nomen/omen* – one's name is one's fate); and by allegory to explain aspects of human nature (psychology).
- Appreciation of the differences between myth and religion/philosophy (poetic truth of fiction vs. belief in truth; *mythos* vs. *logos*), and of the problems of anachronism (judging the ancient world by modern standards).
- Analysis of the applied uses of mythology, e.g., the Trojan war as a study of man's relationship to the city (political philosophy); foundation myths that portray the cultural ideals of a city (iconography); philosophical myths that imagine what lies beyond experience (metaphysics) such as the soul, god, and death, etc.

GenEd Objectives:

- **Knowledge of Classical Humanities.** Students can describe the cultural ideals of Classical civilizations found in texts related to mythology.
- **Close Reading of Classical Texts.** Students can perform a close reading and contextualization of texts, or close study of artifacts of material culture for their elements related to mythology.
- **Evaluation of Classical Cultures.** Students can use the critical skills of the discipline of Classics to identify and evaluate analytically the values and world view of classical cultures exemplified in myth and how they resemble and differ from our own.

Rather than a required textbook (~ \$200), all readings are from out of copyright open-source translations and provided in Canvas. The optional text for the course is only meant for those who feel the need of a general reference. It will not help with quizzes or tests:

Robert Graves, *The Greek Myths*, Complete Edition (Penguin Classics 2012) 978-0-14-310671-5

Assignments and Grading:

15 unit quizzes, 1% each,	15%
Test 1 over units 1-7	40%
Test 2 over units 8-15	45%

Grade ranges:	B+ 86.50-89.49	C+ 76.50-79.49	D+ 66.50-69.49	
A 92.50-100	B 82.50-86.49	C 72.50-76.49	D 62.50-66.49	
A- 89.50-92.49	B- 79.50-79.49	C- 69.50-72.49	D- 59.50-62.49	F 0-59.49

All assignments and course materials are in Canvas. This is a self-paced course: for each unit there is 1. an introduction and reading from a translation of an original ancient text; and 2. a recorded lecture: listen, study it more than once, and master the material. 3. A unit quiz with questions on readings and the recorded lecture. Items in the module must be completed in order, i.e., quizzes will not be viewable until you have completed the readings and viewed the lecture.

The quizzes and tests can be completed any time until the end of the course. Though the due date is the last day, there is a recommended schedule under the 'Assignments' tab, which will show on your course calendar the dates by which unit quizzes and tests should be completed to stay on a good schedule. These are not actual due dates, so you may work ahead or catch up later if you fall behind. I will send periodic reminders as well. Test 1 should be taken immediately after unit 7 while the material is still fresh in your mind, before learning new material from units 8-15.

You get two attempts at each quiz, no time limit. Quiz questions are re-used on tests but will be randomized. One-third of test questions are new but should be among the easier questions if you have done the readings and listened to the lectures. Tests (1 attempt) have a 90 min. time limit and when you open them in Lockdown Browser, its video recording feature, Respondus Monitor, automatically comes on. You will need access to a computer with a camera and microphone to take the tests. If you have a condition that makes you unable to concentrate on tests while being recorded, you may need to drop this course or consult DSS for options. There is a module with links and instructions on the use of Lockdown.

The use of Lockdown browser with video proctoring is required for tests. This means you must have access to a computer with a webcam, microphone, and reliable internet. If this is your first time using it, review the module provided on how to download and use Lockdown. You will be asked to provide proof of identity at the beginning of the test. Images of your ID and your face will be recorded and stored for review by the instructor. By registering for this course, you consent to the use of these systems and the collection of this personal information for the purposes of proctoring and maintaining the integrity of the exams administered in this course.

If the video recording of your test reveals problems, your attempt may be voided and you may be required to retake the test or face receiving a 0, which would result in failure. Among the things that the video flags or that are impermissible: your face not visible, looking away at notes or a second screen, poor lighting or extraneous noises that obscure the recording, other people in the room with you, headphones, phones or other electronic devices, sound not recorded.

In the event of a disruption to ECU educational services, this course will continue in Canvas, though there may be alterations to deadlines in the event of closures that affect online programs. Monitor [ECU Alert](#) for information.

The East Carolina Creed reflects the University's expectation that students exhibit personal and academic integrity. Cheating, plagiarism, falsification, multiple submissions, and attempting or assisting with an academic integrity violation is a violation of the [Academic Integrity policy](#) and the expectations set forth in the Creed. Students are expected to know and adhere to the Academic Integrity policy. Penalties for violating the Academic Integrity policy can include a grade penalty up to and including an F for the course.

East Carolina University seeks to comply fully with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Reasonable accommodations will be made for students with verifiable disabilities. In order to take advantage of available accommodations, students must be registered with the Department for Disability Support Services located in Slay 138, 252-737-1016. [Accommodation Information & Processes](#).

If you have an illness or a personal emergency, you must e-mail me in a timely fashion and explain your situation. I reserve the right to request documentation to evaluate whether your excuse was serious and unavoidable. I will submit grades the day after the course ends; so, if you miss a test and do not contact me, you risk failure or an incomplete.

Intro	How to take this course, what myth is and how it is used. Greek and Roman names and attributes of the Olympians and other major gods.
Unit 1	Hesiod's <i>Theogony</i> . Fictional nature of myth, creation myth, Zeus and his order of <i>dikê</i> (justice), total war, cunning, evil, and punishment in Tartaros. (116-210, 453-819, 886-962) Hesiod, <i>Works and Days</i> , The Five Ages of Man. (106-201)
Unit 2	Homeric Hymn to Demeter. (A)etiological Myth, <i>Nomen / omen</i> .
Unit 3	Achilles in the Trojan War. Homer, <i>Iliad</i> Bk. 1.1-245, 350-430, 494-530; Bk. 18.50-145 skim Bk. 21.1-32, 210-390; Bk. 22.250-405
Unit 4	The Trojan Horse. Vergil, <i>Aeneid</i> 2.1-558; Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> 4.270-289
Unit 5	The monsters of the <i>Odyssey</i> Bk. 5.95-281 Bk. 9.38-115, 215-500 Bk. 10.1-145, 210-400 Bk. 12.37-259
Unit 6	House of Atreus. Aeschylus, <i>Agamemnon</i> , 40-247, 810-1611
Unit 7	Royal House of Thebes Family Tree Foundation of Thebes by Kadmos / Cadmus Europa, Cadmus and the Sowing of the Dragon's Teeth Sophocles, <i>Oedipus the King</i> 85-150, 220-462, 711-832, 1236-1285
	Test 1
Unit 8	Dionysos / Bacchus, irrational god of tragedy, fertility, and civilization.

	Euripides, <i>Bacchae</i> 1-169 Orpheus, Midas, Silenus. Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 10.1-85; 11.1-145 Zagreus myth and Orphism Mystery religions
Unit 9	Perseus and Andromeda, Medusa, and Athena, mentor of heroes. Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 4.604-803. Imperial iconography in ancient Athens. Sculpture of the Parthenon (temple to Athena the Virgin). Pediments; statue of Athena <i>Parthenos</i>
Unit 10	Foundation myth of Rome. Romulus and Remus. Mythologized History. Livy, <i>Histories</i> 1.1-1.13. Vergil <i>Aeneid</i> 1.223-96, 8.26-151
Unit 11	Herakles/Hercules. Labors from Temple of Zeus at Olympia Hercules in pastoral pre-Rome. Vergil <i>Aeneid</i> 8.184-369 Apotheosis (becomes divine). Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 9.1-272
Unit 12	Myths of Plato. <i>Symposium</i>: Aristophanes' myth of the <i>androgyne</i> (189d-193b pp.473-6) <i>Republic</i>: Ring of Gyges (II.359c-360b pp.1000); The cave (VII.514a-515e pp.1132-3); Myth of Er (X.614b-621d pp.1218-23). <i>Timaeus</i>: Atlantis (24e-25d pp.1232-33).
Unit 13	Cretan Myth and Theseus. Pasiphae and the Bull Daedalus and Icarus. Vergil <i>Aeneid</i> 6.1-55 Theseus and the Minotaur. Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i>. 8.152-235 Theseus and Ariadne. Catullus 64.50-264 Labors of Theseus.
Unit 14	<i>Katabasis</i> (Hero's descent to the underworld). Homer, <i>Odyssey</i> Bk. 11.1-225, 485-505 The 'Golden Bough' and Elysium. Vergil <i>Aeneid</i> 6.98-155, 264-94, 384-416, 535-751, 886-901
Unit 15	Apollo as sun god, the Roman emperor, and the return of the Golden Age. The Shield of Aeneas. Vergil <i>Aeneid</i> 8.671-731 Apollo and Daphne. Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 1.438-567 Fall of Phaethon. Ovid, <i>Metamorphoses</i> 2.1-328 Myth and Astrology
	Test 2