Molly Ierulli

COLT 0811I - Fall 2014

Classical Mythology and the Western Tradition

MWF 10:00 – 10:50 a.m.

Office Hours: W 11:00-12:00, Marston Hall B6, **and by appointment.**

Course description:

This course will read classical texts that expound the fundamental mythological stories and elements of the Western tradition, then will read selected texts from the Renaissance through the twentieth century that utilize these myths. Ancient texts covered will include the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, Hesiod's *Theogony* and *Works and Days*, Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and plays by Euripides. Later texts will include Shakespeare's *Venus and Adonis*, Milton's "Lycidas", and lyric poetry by Keats, Browning, Swinburne, Rilke, Auden, and Yeats, concluding with utopian and dystopian representations of Greece and Rome in popular culture. There are no prerequisites. This course is suitable for anyone wishing to understand the classical background to Western literature.

Course goals:

To introduce students to the fundamental myths of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

To read some of the most important ancient literary texts that outline and depict these myths.

To read Western texts that use these myths, and understand how these myths underlie many of the major works of later literature (Renaissance through 20th century).

Course objectives:

Students will develop a grasp of classical mythology, not as a list of facts but as an understanding of a complex and influential symbolic and metaphorical way of describing the world, theorizing and interpreting the relation of the human to the divine, and will utilize this understanding to interpret and analyse texts from later cultures and literatures.

Course requirements and grading policy:

2 papers: 1st paper 5-6pp., 20%; 2nd paper 7-8 pp., 25%)

Midterm exam, 15%; final exam 25%

Class attendance and participation 15%

Texts:

Hesiod, *Theogony and Works and Days*

*Epic of Gilgamesh*

Ovid,  *Metamorphoses*

Euripides I (Chicago Series)

Euripides III (Chicago Series)

G.B. Shaw, *Pygmalion*

Kossman, ed., *Gods and Mortals*

Renault, *The King Must Die*

**Course Calendar**

3 Sept Introduction

5 Hesiod, *Theogony*

8 Hesiod, *Theogony*

10 Hesiod, *Works and Days*

12 Hesiod, *Works and Days*

15 *Epic of Gilgamesh* 1-3

17 *Epic of Gilgamesh* 4-7

19 Euripides, *Alcestis*

22 Euripides, *Medea*

24 Euripides, *Hippolytus*

26 Euripides, *Heracles*

29 Euripides, *Children of Heracles*

1 Oct Euripides, *Ion*; **short paper due**

3 Euripides, *Trojan Women*

6 Euripides, *Iphigenia among the Taurians*

8 Lyric: Sappho and Bacchylides

10 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 1-2

13 Holiday - No class

15 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 3-4

17 Review for Midterm Exam

20 **Midterm Exam**

22 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 5-6

24 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 7-8

27 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 9-10

29 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 11-12

31 Ovid, *Metamorphoses* Books 13-15

3 Nov Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*

5 Shakespeare, *Venus and Adonis*

7 Milton, "Lycidas"

10 Keats, "Ode on a Grecian Urn", "Ode to Psyche"

13 E. B. Browning, "The Dead Pan" and "A Musical Instrument"

**slightly longer paper due**

12 Tennyson, “Ulysses,” “Tithonus”

14 *Gods and Mortals* (20th century lyric)

17 *Gods and Mortals*

19 *Gods and Mortals*

21 George Bernard Shaw, *Pygmalion*

24 Renault, *The King Must Die*

26 No class - Thanksgiving

1 Dec Renault, *The King Must Die*

3 *The Hunger Games* (book or movie - your choice)

5 Last Class – review for exam