CAMS 45/45U (GH, GI):
CLASSICAL MYTHOLOGY & WESTERN ART
Special Section: Naples and Rome, Italy

Spring 2010, with Travel to Italy, May 2010


Though not specifically required to complete the assignments, a good travel guide will be of great use on
this trip - an especially helpful one is the Eyewitness Travel Guides to Naples and to Rome. The
Eyewitness guide to all of Italy would also be particularly useful, because the trip includes optional visits
to other locations.

Course Description:
This course is designed to introduce students to the myths and legends of ancient Greece and Rome, with
a particular emphasis on the rich and complex ways mythology has influenced the development of
Western Art over the centuries. We will study the stories of the gods, goddesses, and ancient heroes and
lovers from the perspective of how these figures have been depicted by painters and sculptors of the
Middle Ages, the Renaissance and the Baroque period. We will have the opportunity to see many
examples of such artistic treasures as we visit world-class collections of ancient art in Naples, Rome, and
other locations in Italy.

How this Course Works:
Students are encouraged to contact the instructor personally and often, and must be prepared to use their
Penn State e-mail accounts for communication on a regular basis. Course materials will be available on
ANGEL, the Penn State course management , and students must be prepared to use this tool. (site address
http://cms.psu.edu ). While the students in the course do not meet regularly as a group, the instructor
may schedule informational meetings via e-mail and will be available to meet with students individually
or in groups during the fall or spring semesters.

Below is a list of the required readings and written work for the course. Read through all assignment
options carefully and completely before you begin. You are free to complete the assignments in your own
time and at your own pace. Please note that two of the assignments described below (Assignments 1
& 2) are due on ANGEL on Friday, May 7, BEFORE the trip. Revised versions of these two
assignments, as well as all other work for the course will be due on Friday, August 13. Please assemble
your work in a notebook or “photo album” format.
The grade for the course will be determined by the following point distribution but also by the visual appearance of the final project. **Please be careful to note which assignments are REQUIRED and which are optional.** To earn and “A” in the course, students must complete all assignments beyond the requirements (“C” work) and in particular, must organize the work in a very clear manner – there must be a table of contents, all worksheets and assignments typed, photos clearly and completely labeled, essays must be more than the minimum stated here. Each required assignment is worth 25 points, but only a very well-written, thoughtful, and comprehensive response will earn the full points *(Hint: Be sure to answer all aspects of what each assignment is asking you to address).* **REQUIRED assignments are Assignments 1, 2, 3, and 10.** *(Please Note: You must complete these five required assignments in order to pass the course).*

In addition to the required assignments, you may choose to complete any or all of the other, optional assignments. Of course, you are encouraged to complete as many assignments as you wish; all submitted responses will be graded and added to your final score. Your final grade will be determined by adding the points you receive for each of the assignments and dividing by 2.

**Grading Scale:**

- 90 – 100 = A
- 80 – 90 = B
- 70 – 80 = C
- 60 – 70 = D
- < 60 = F

**Academic Integrity:** All students at Penn State are expected to act with civility and personal integrity; to respect other students’ dignity, rights, and property; and to help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed. Academic integrity includes a commitment not to engage in or to tolerate acts of falsification, misrepresentation, or deception, including cheating, plagiarizing, submitting another’s work as one’s own, using Internet sources or other published material without citation, or facilitating other students’ acts of academic dishonesty. Students charged with a breach of academic integrity will receive due process, and if the charge is found valid, academic sanctions may range, depending upon the severity of the offense, from a failing grade for the assignment to a failing grade for the course. The University’s statement on academic integrity, from which this paragraph has been excerpted, is available at [http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html](http://www.psu.edu/dept/oue/aappm/G-9.html)

**Note to Students with Disabilities:** In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, it is Penn State’s policy to provide reasonable academic adjustments for students with documented disabilities. If you have a disability-related need for modifications in this course, contact Sharon Manco, 610-892-1461, 127 Vairo Library, sam26@psu.edu. This notification should occur by the end of the first week of the semester. Students may visit [www.equity.psu.edu/ods/](http://www.equity.psu.edu/ods/) for complete information.

**Questions and Assistance:** Please feel free to contact me by email, phone, or on campus either in the fall or the spring semester, or any time during the trip to Italy to discuss any help you need with the reading or other assignments, or to talk about any questions you may have about the material we are covering. Because we will not be holding traditional class meetings, if you find any of the reading materials difficult or confusing, or if you would simply like to talk with me about your responses and ideas to the readings or to the assignments, it is particularly important that you seek me out. I want you to get the most out of the experience of this trip and this course so please don’t let your questions go unanswered!
The Course Assignments to be Completed BEFORE the Trip:

1. The Personalities of the Gods (REQUIRED) (25 points)
Read: the “Introduction to Classical Mythology” (pp. 13-23), and Chapters 1 and 2 in Hamilton before the trip: Pay particular attention to the section on the Roman gods on pages 44-47.
Write: Find and describe in detail representations of four distinct Classical gods and goddesses in paintings in the Gods and Heroes in Art text. How does the physical representation of each deity relate or not relate to the reading you have done concerning the deity’s personality and deeds? What does the physical representation of each deity suggest to you about how the Greeks and Romans perceived his or her personality? Be sure to provide a detailed and well-developed discussion for each of the four gods and goddesses you choose to write about. Finally, if you were producing a film about these particular deities, what actor or actress would you cast for each role, and why?
(Here are Examples from the Gods and Heroes in Art text [Note that this text refers to the gods’ Roman names rather than their Greek names. See the chart below of the gods’ Greek and Roman names for clarification.] Examples: Apollo, Bacchus, Ceres/Proserpina, Cupid, Diana, Juno, Jupiter, Mars, Mercury, Minerva, Neptune, Pan, Pluto, Saturn, Venus, and Vulcan.)

2. Pre-trip Museum Visit (REQUIRED) (25 points) Visit the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York City, or the National Gallery of Art in Washington, DC. (Other collections will be considered if you can determine that there are at least 15 examples of art in the collection which relate to Greek and Roman Mythology.) Go to the museum website before your visit and locate at least 15 examples of works of art—paintings, sculpture, decorative art objects, etc.—that interpret Greek mythological characters or stories. When you visit the location, try to find as many of these works as possible and spend some time looking at them. Describe at least five works of art you have found in the museum that reinterpret some aspect of Classical Mythology. Finally, using the list provided on ANGEL of the examples in the Gods and Heroes text that can be found in museums in Naples and Rome, compare one example of a work you have studied during this visit with a work you hope to see while in Italy. Please include proof of your museum visit—a button or receipt, with the assignment.
The Course Assignments to be Completed DURING the Trip:

3. Museum and Site Visit Assignments in Naples, Rome, and Pompeii (REQUIRED). (30 points). Using the following list of sites and artworks in Naples, Rome, and Pompeii, plan to visit as many of these as possible during our trip. Be sure to take photos of the sites you visit whenever possible to display later alongside your response to this assignment. You must visit and complete the questions for at least 3 of the following 4 sites for the full 30 points. (Please note that you are welcome to add or substitute relevant artwork you may see in museums or in outdoor locations in Naples and in Rome if you wish.) [*NOTE: Complete list of individual works at each site to be developed.]

a) National Archaeological Museum of Naples

b) The Ruins at Pompeii

c) The Ruins at Herculaneum (Ercolano)

d) The Roman Forum

e) The Capitoline Museums, Rome

f) The Ruins at Ostia Antica and of Hadrian’s Villa at Tivoli
The Course Assignments to be Completed AFTER the Trip:

4. The Mis-Adventures of the Gods (optional) (15 points) Complete both A and B:
   A) In Hamilton (use the Index) and in Gods and Heroes in Art, Find and describe the stories of two of the loves of Jupiter. In what disguise does Jupiter appear to each, and what ultimately happens to each of these characters? Choose one representation of each figure in art, and discuss the particular point in each character’s story that the artist has chosen to depict. Why do you think the artist chose this particular point in the story? (Possible choices: Antiope, Aurora (the story of Tithonus), Callisto, Danaë, Europa, Ganymede, Io, Latona, Leda, and Semele).
   B) In Hamilton (use the Index) and in Gods and Heroes in Art, Find and describe the stories of two mythological figures whose lives are somehow altered by their contact with a god or goddess. What happens to each character, and why? Choose one representation of each figure in art, and discuss the particular point in each character’s story that the artist has chosen to depict. Why do you think the artist chose this particular point in the story? (Possible choices: Actaeon, Adonis, Arachne, Argus, Clytie, Coronis, Daphne, Endymion, Hyacinthus, and Marsyas).

5. In the Beginning: Classical Views of Creation (optional) (15 points)
   Read: Chapter 3 in Hamilton. Write: Briefly compare the way the ancient Greeks and Romans imagined the creation of the universe and the world to the account we are given in Genesis in the Old Testament, or to the account of creation in any other ancient religion of your choice. Be sure to pay close attention to the details of each account and indicate what they may signify in your opinion. If you would prefer, you may discuss the stories of Prometheus and Pandora and any similarities you may see between these myths and the story of creation from another culture or religion. (See also the Pandora and Prometheus entries in the Gods and Heroes in Art text).

6. Pluto and the Underworld (optional) (15 points)
   Read: Hamilton, pp. 39-40 and pp. 236-240; Gods and Heroes in Art: Entries for Pluto and Proserpina. Write or Create: (Choose only one; either A or B)
   A) You hold the keys to the knowledge of the Underworld. Construct a global description, or “guide,” for one who does not know, to the variety of Greek and Roman notions of the world beyond. Explain and interpret who and what that person can expect to find and experience there. Be sure to make use of material from your reading in describing what an underworld journey would be like in as much detail as possible.
   B) Create a model or picture of the underworld of the Greeks or your own vision of the underworld – you can make a 3-model, painting, or collage. Explain and interpret your depiction in a brief essay.

7. The Heroes and Heroines of Mythology (optional) (15 points)
   Read: Choose to read two chapters of your choice from the following five in Hamilton: Chapter 9 (Perseus), 10 (Theseus), 11 (Hercules), 12 (Atalanta), or pp. 268-277 (Oedipus). Write a response to only one of the following (A or B):
   A) Using the “Hero Pattern” (provided below), which lists elements that are common to the tales of heroes in classical myths, describe the ways in which the two heroes or heroine of your choice conform to this pattern, and the ways in which they do not conform. What similarities and differences can you see between the two stories you have read? Why would these stories have been of interest to the ancient Greeks and Romans? Referring if you can to the “Hero Pattern,” describe the contemporary idea of a hero. Has the idea changed since the ancient world? How and why?
   B) Find a few representations of both of the heroes or heroine you have chosen to study in Western art. Describe the depiction in detail, and discuss how and why you feel this figure was important or significant in some way to the ancient Greeks and Romans. In each case, What particular episode in this figure’s
story has each artist chosen to depict? What do you think this particular hero/heroine and his/her story represented to this artist? (In the *Gods and Heroes in Art* text, look for Perseus/Medusa, Theseus/Ariadne/Minotaur; Hercules/Deianeira/Hylas; Atalanta; Oedipus.)

8. **Famous Lovers in Mythology** (optional) (15 points)

Read: In Hamilton (use the Index) and in the *Gods and Heroes in Art* text, Choose three stories from the following list [Note that some stories are in one text and not in the other]: Orpheus & Eurydice, Hero & Leander, Cephalus & Procris, Galatea & Acis, Glaucus & Scylla, Narcissus, Philemon & Baucis, Psyche & Cupid, Pyramus & Thisbe, Orpheus & Eurydice, Ceyx & Alcyone, Baucis & Philemon, and Pygmalion & Galatea).

Write: Briefly summarize each story you have chosen to study, then write a brief comparison/contrast discussion of the three. What similarities do these stories have? Do they tend to end in a transformation for one or both of the lovers involved, and if so, why? What, if any, role do the gods play in the fates of these figures? What do you think the purpose of each particular story is? What importance would each story have had to the ancient Greeks and Romans? Why would these stories continue to appeal to artists over the centuries?

9. **Two Famous Adventurers: Ulysses and Aeneas** (optional) (15 points)

Read: Hamilton, Chapters 15 and 16; Study the art in the *Gods and Heroes in Art* text for the “Homeric poems,” pp. 259-297; and the entries for Aeneas and Dido.

Optional: View the video of “The Odyssey,” available in the Vairo Library.

Write: Answer both A and B:

A) Both the Greek hero Ulysses (Odysseus) and his Trojan enemy Aeneas meet with a variety of adventures when they leave Troy at the end of the long and arduous Trojan War. Compare and contrast the story of Ulysses’s adventures with those of Aeneas. Describe the similarities and differences that you see between the two stories. What do you imagine the Roman poet Vergil’s reasons were for transforming the tale of Homer’s much older epic Greek poem, *The Odyssey*, into a similar and yet distinctly different Latin epic poem for the Romans? What changes does he specifically make for a later, Roman audience, and why does he do so? What do you think the story of Aeneas represented for the ancient Romans?

B) Using the *Gods and Heroes in Art* text, discuss in detail one representation of Ulysses or some aspect of his story in art, and a representation of Aeneas and his story. What episodes in these heroes’ lives are depicted and why? Why do you think these particular moments in myth captured the imagination of these particular artists?

10. **Creative Mythology Assignment (REQUIRED)** (25 points)

**CHOOSE ONLY ONE OF THE FOLLOWING FOUR CHOICES:**

A. Many of the themes found in Classical mythology can also be found in the myths of other cultures. Choose a myth from another culture and compare/contrast it with a similar Classical myth. How do the similarities and differences between these two myths reflect similarities and differences between these two distinct cultures? Be sure to attach a photocopy of the non-Classical myth that you to which you are referring. Include illustrations of both myths or deities.


B. Much of Classical mythology survives in Western culture, often in really unusual ways. Take a particular myth as it is portrayed in such a source as a Shakespeare play, an opera, a painting or work of
sculpture that you see in Italy or in the Philadelphia Museum of Art [although not one of the ones that you have already written about], or some aspect of modern pop culture, etc., and show how the work you are discussing elaborates upon or alters the idea of the myth. In addition, discuss how this particular use of the myth reflects the attitudes, values, and historical context of the author or artist and of the period and culture in which the work was produced.

C. Many ancient myths are “etiological,” meaning that they are intended to explain how some aspect of nature or of human culture came into being. Write your own myth in which you explain the origin of some plant, animal, or natural phenomenon as the result of the actions or metamorphosis of a human character or characters. While you should feel free to invent that human character or characters, include in your myth at least two actual Classical deities, making sure that your characterization of those deities is consonant with the ancients’ impression of their personalities.

D. Create your own artistic interpretation of a Classical myth in the medium/media of your choice (painting, collage, film, sculpture, story, poetry, etc.)

11. Phaethon and Icarus (optional) (5 possible points)
Read: Hamilton, pp. 136-9 (Phaethon), and pp. 144-45 (Daedalus and Icarus); Gods and Heroes in Art
Text: Phaethon and Icarus.
Write: Briefly summarize these two myths and describe the similarities between them. Next, describe a work of art depicting each, and discuss why you think artists would find these two myths so compelling. What do the myths represent or symbolize about the human experience?

12. Figures of Italian Legend (optional) (5 possible points)
Read: Choose three legendary figures from the section in the Gods and Heroes in Art text, “Characters and History from Ancient Rome,” pp. 324-375. (Note: Do not choose Aeneas or Dido).
Write: Briefly summarize the legends surrounding these figures. What do you think these legends represented to the ancient Romans, and why did they become an important aspect of Roman folklore? Next, describe a work of art depicting a scene from each legend, and discuss why you think artists would find these legends so compelling.
CAMS 45: Classical Mythology and Western Art

Evaluation Sheet

Name____________________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment Number</th>
<th>Points Received</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. The Personalities of the Gods <em>(Required)</em> (25 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Pre-Trip Museum Visit <em>(Required)</em> (25 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Museum/Site Visits in Naples &amp; Rome <em>(Required)</em> (30 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. The Mis-Adventures of the Gods (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. In the Beginning: Creation (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Pluto and the Underworld (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Heroes and Heroines (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Famous Lovers (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Famous Adventurers: Ulysses and Aeneas (15 points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>10. Creative Mythology Assignment <em>(Required)</em> (25 points)</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Phaethon and Icarus (5 Points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Figures of Italian Legend (5 Points)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TOTAL POINTS**

\[
\text{divided by 2 = FINAL SCORE:}
\]