

Fall 8-15-2003

# ENG 2603-001: Backgrounds in Western Literature

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## Syllabus

English 2603  
Fall 2003

Christhilf  
Office: CH 3030  
Phone: 581-6285  
Hours: TTh 4:45-6:15  
W 12:00-1:00

Required Books with abbreviations: Harris and Platzner, eds. Classical Mythology. Second Ed. (CM)  
Ovid. Metamorphoses. Trans. by Humphries. (M)  
Homer. The Iliad. Trans. by Lattimore.  
Homer. The Odyssey. Trans. by Fitzgerald.  
Aeschylus. Oresteia. Trans. by Meineck. (O)

Course Purpose: The purpose of the course is to transmit knowledge of the beliefs of ancient Greeks and Romans. These beliefs are expressed in their myths and legends, which will be read, discussed, and analyzed in writing. The overall approach is that in their myths people seek to answer questions that are basic to human life: Why are we here? Why is life pleasant--or painful? What is the best way to live?

- Aug. 26 Course Description and Introduction.  
Aug. 28 Historical Backgrounds of Classical Mythology. CM, 3-25; and 34-43.
- Sept. 2 Creation Myths. Hesiod's Theogony. CM, 49-55; and 67-79 l. 610.  
Sept. 4 Creation Myths. Hesiod's Theogony. CM, 79 l. 611-82; and CM, 118-29.
- Sept. 9 Zeus (or Jove) and Hera (or Juno). M, "Four Ages," "Jove's Intervention," and "Lycaon," 5-11; "Jove in Arcady," 40-45; "Baucis and Philemon," 200-04.  
Sept. 11 Apollo. CM, 158-69. M, "Apollo and Daphne," 16-21; "Phaeton," 28-40.
- Sept. 16 Artemis (or Diana) and Athena (or Minerva). M, "Minerva," and "Niobe," 129-43; "Actaeon," 61-64.  
Sept. 18 Aphrodite (or Venus) and Hermes (or Mercury). CM, 96-99; and 134-37. M, "Pygmalion," 241-43; "Adonis," "Atalanta," and "Fate of Adonis," 251-58.
- Sept. 23 Ares (or Mars) and the Trojan War. CM, 255-72.  
Sept. 25 Homer's The Iliad, Books One, Three, and Six.
- Sept. 30 The Iliad, Books Eight and Nine.  
Oct. 2 The Iliad, Books Sixteen and Eighteen.
- Oct. 7 The Iliad, Books Nineteen and Twenty-Two.  
Oct. 9 The Iliad, Book Twenty-Four.
- Oct. 14 Midterm Examination.  
Oct. 16 Homer's The Odyssey. CM, 342-51. Odyssey, Books One and Two.

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(continued)

- Oct. 21 Odyssey, Books Five, Six, Seven, and Eight.  
Oct. 23 Odyssey, Books Nine, Ten, Sixteen, and Seventeen. Assign Course Paper.
- Oct. 28 Odyssey, Books Eighteen through Twenty-One.  
Oct. 30 Odyssey, Books Twenty-Two through Twenty-Four.
- Nov. 4 Aeschylus's Oresteia. CM, 423-27; and 522-38. Aeschylus's Agamemnon;  
O, 2-36.  
Nov. 6 Aeschylus's Agamemnon; O, 36-66.
- Nov. 11 Aeschylus's Libation Bearers; O, 68-113. Course Paper due.  
Nov. 13 Aeschylus's The Furies; O, 116-60.
- Nov. 18 Aeschylus's The Furies.  
Nov. 20 Demeter (or Ceres). CM, 84-90; and 101-16.
- Nov. 24 through Nov. 28. Thanksgiving Recess.
- Dec. 2 Dionysus (or Bacchus). CM, 184-203. M, "Pentheus and Bacchus," 73-80.  
Dec. 4 Euripides, The Bacchants, CM, 434-44; CM, 446-64.
- Dec. 9 The Bacchants, CM, 464-78.  
Dec. 11 "Teachings of Pythagoras," M, 367-79.
- Final Exam.

Course Requirements: The final grade will be determined on the basis of a midterm exam, a final exam, and a paper, each of which will count one-third. The exams will be essay-type; will be written in class; and will cover the readings in the course. The paper will explain a theme or a character in one of the course readings. It should approach 1000 words, and be typed, double-space, in accordance with an acceptable manual of style, such as the MLA Handbook ( which is available at the Booth Library Reference desk). Both the paper and the exams will be given a letter grade on the basis of the English Department's "Guidelines for Evaluating Themes at Eastern." The course is writing-intensive which means that you may choose to submit your paper for your electronic writing portfolio.

Absence from an exam or lateness in submitting the paper will result in a penalty unless the student has a valid excuse from a physician. In the case of absence from an exam, the penalty will be reduction of the grade for make-up work by two letter grades; in the case of paper lateness, the penalty will be reduction of the grade by one letter for each class day that passes before the paper is submitted.

Reading quizzes may also be given, and would be used as an index of participation in the course. There will be no make-up quizzes. In addition, attendance will be taken, and be used as in index of participation. Students are encouraged to take notes in class. If a student has a documented disability and wishes academic accommodations, he or she should contact the coordinator of the Office of Disability Services.

Statement concerning plagiarism: Any teacher who discovers an act of plagiarism-- "The appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and/or thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work" (Random House Dictionary)--has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty, up to and including immediate assignment of a grade of F for the course.