Spring 1-15-1997

ENG 3009-012: Myth and Culture

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ENGLISH 3009C/12, MYTH AND CULTURE

Texts:

Anaya, Bless Me, Ultima
Campbell, Hero with a Thousand Faces
Coomaraswamy, Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists
Erdoes, American Indian Myths and Legends
Hesse, Siddhartha
Homer, The Odyssey
Sproul, Primal Myths
Assigned reading filed at Booth Library

COURSE COMPONENTS

1. Two Short Interpretive Essays. Two typed, imaginatively titled, double-spaced, 500-word/two page analytical responses to your assigned readings. Base your essays on a short quotation, passage, or scene by exploring the relevance of the quotation/passage/scene to the whole piece of writing (or to the portion of the work we have covered to that point). You might select a passage on which to comment on a character's behavior and personality, or on the importance of a recurring theme, pattern, or image, or on the persona's apparent position on human nature. Before you write your own paper, we as a class will work up a model of an effective interpretive essay. 80 points for the first essay; 100 points for the second.

2. Two Oral Presentation. One the days that your assigned essays are due, you will give a brief but thorough presentation of your essay (no more than five minutes). You will also be expected to pose and field questions that pertain to your essay/reading assignment throughout the entire period's discussion. 30 points.

3. One in-class written examination. Around the week of mid-term, you will take a written test based on the material read to date and on our discussion of it. 200 points.

4. One Extended Interpretive Essay. This is the culminating assignment in which you make a comparison/contrast inquiry into two or more mythological traditions regarding a particular theme or idea. Throughout the semester and
in response to your shorter interpretive essays (and in response to the essays that your classmates present), I will help you move toward a suitable topic. This five-or-six-pages essay (1250-1500 words) must be typed, double-spaced, and imaginatively titled. 300 points.

5. Final Oral Presentation. During the last class sessions, you will present a 10-minute overview of your paper to the class: your main point, key support, the shifts and turns of mind while you wrote--and lived with--this essay. 40 points.

6. Presentation Outline. To assist you and us, your audience, with the finale--the presentation of your final essay--I ask that you outline the "trip-through-the-paper" which you will take us on. More on this when the time is right. 30 points.

7. Quizzes. I will give seven unannounced quizzes over the course of the semester, but I will count only the six highest scores. Quizzes will be based on the factual content of the reading assignments. 90 points.

8. Participation. It is essential that you come to class everyday, prepared to engage in discussion and with assignments completed. Regular, active participation is worth 100 points.

If you miss more than two class sessions (one full week!), your final raw grade will drop by half for each day you are absent. I will round up or down from there to arrive at a final straight letter grade. For example, if at the end of the semester you have 801 points (the "B-" range), a third absence could drop you into the "C+" range (799-767) before your final grade is rounded up or down to a straight letter. I suggest you save up the two free days for inevitable emergencies (car trouble, trips to the doctor, the broken alarm clock), but I will ask no questions and expect no excuses.

Your work directly contributes to the success of our course; therefore, you must meet every deadline for the class to run smoothly. No make-up quizzes will be available (but don’t forget that I drop the lowest score), nor will short essays be accepted late. A late extended essay ("7" under "course components) will lose thirty points for each class day it is overdue. Regular tardiness can come to equal one absence; make it to class on time!

Grading Scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>900-1000</td>
<td>A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>800-899</td>
<td>B, B+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>799-700</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>699-600</td>
<td>D</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Please note the English Department’s policy regarding 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,"* 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.

*Random House Dictionary of the English Language

Outline and Calendar

The following schedule of readings and due dates shows the range and order of the texts we will cover. Occasionally, circumstances occur that change a course calendar. If we must alter our schedule of readings and assignments, I will put those changes in writing and make the new calendar available to you. It is your job, however, to know when changes have been made. To help you stay informed and up-to-date, I will reproduce a list of student names, phone numbers, and e-mail addresses for your use. If you must miss a class session, contact another student so that he or she can collect hand-outs for you and fill you in on what you missed and any other course news before you return to class.

Tue., Jan. 14 Introductions to the course and each other; Campbell’s Monomyth.

Thr., Jan. 16 Odyssey, Books 1-4

Tue., Jan. 21 Odyssey, Books 5-8.


Tue., Jan. 28 Odyssey, Books 13-16.


Thr., Feb. 6 Introduction to Mahabharata and Hinduism

Tue., Feb. 11 Mahabharata

Thr., Feb. 13 Mahabharata
Tue., Feb. 18 Mahabharata

Thr., Feb. 20 Mahabharata

Tue., Feb. 25 Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists, 118-168.

Thr., Feb. 27 Myths of the Hindus and Buddhists, 168-244.


Thr., Mar. 6 Siddhartha, 3-73.

Tue., Mar. 11 Siddhartha, 75-152.

Thr., Mar. 13 In-class written exam

Mon., Mar. 17 -- Fri., Mar. 21 Spring Break

Tue., Mar. 25 Genesis, assigned reading in Booth Library.

Thr., Mar. 27 African mythology in Primal Myths.

Tue., Apr. 1 Native American mythology in American Indian Myths, Legends.

Thr., Apr. 3 Bless Me, Ultima.

Tue., Apr. 8 Bless Me, Ultima.

Thr., Apr. 10 Bless Me, Ultima.

Tue., Apr. 15 Conferences

Thr., Apr. 17 Conferences

Tue., Apr. 22 Workshop; rough draft due at the start of class.

Thr., Apr. 24 Essay due at the start of class; discuss outline and presentation of final essay.

Tue., Apr. 29 Paper presentations

Thr., May 1 Paper presentations

Tue., May 6 Final Exam Period, 2:45 - 4:45; paper presentations