Fall 8-15-2003

ENG 3009G-009: Myth and Culture

Carol Stevens
Eastern Illinois University

Follow this and additional works at: http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2003

Part of the English Language and Literature Commons

Recommended Citation
http://thekeep.eiu.edu/english_syllabi_fall2003/110

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the 2003 at The Keep. It has been accepted for inclusion in Fall 2003 by an authorized administrator of The Keep. For more information, please contact tabruns@eiu.edu.
English 3009G Section 009
Myth and Culture
Fall 2003

Instructor: Professor Carol Stevens
Office: 3861 Coleman Hall
Office Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 11-12 and 1-2, Wed. 2-3, and by appointment
Telephone and voicemail: 581-6970
E-mail: cfcds@eiu.edu

Textbooks:
Dundes, Sacred Narrative
Hesse, Siddhartha
Leonard and McClure, Myth and Knowing
Llalungpa, Life of Milarepa (We'll actually use Eva Van Dam's graphic novel version of this)
Menchu, I, Rigoberta Menchu (ed. Burgos-Debray, tr. Wright)
Ovid, Metamorphoses (tr. Innes)
Tapahonso, Sãoni Dahataa The Women Are Singing
Tedlock, Popol Vuh
Zolbrod, Dine bahane

Course Description:
The catalog describes this course as follows: “Through comparative analysis of myths from selected cultural traditions, the course will examine relationships among mythic, historical, anthropological, and scientific ways of understanding.” What this means for us is that we will be reading foundation stories for cultures around the world, and learning as much as we can about how the stories relate to and help us understand the cultures they come from. Some lecture, much small group work, reading, writing, and discussion.

Objectives—to know:
♦ what myths are and how they function
♦ how to distinguish among kinds of myths, and distinguish myths from legends and folk tales
♦ how to understand the stories of some of the worlds great cultures
♦ how these cultures differ from and are similar to each other and our own
how myths affect the practices and beliefs in a culture

With this knowledge, you can:
♦ be more conscious of the forces and events that shape cultures and societies
♦ be able to speak and write clearly and well about myths and the cultures they represent
♦ be able to encounter myths from cultures you have not previously studied and come to some understanding of them on your own
♦ have a better understanding of the richness and diversity of cultures
♦ recognize references and allusions when you encounter them in literature and art
♦ take pleasure and enjoyment from your knowledge

Grades:
Grades will be based on 100 points total, earned as follows—
♦ A mid-term (10 points) and a final exam (15 points) for 25 points total
♦ Two papers, an analysis of a myth (15 points) and a research paper on a myth related ritual (20 points) for 35 points total
♦ One journal entry per week (2 points each) for 30 points total
♦ Participation, classwork, shorter written exercises, quizzes etc. 10 points total
Attendance, promptness, timeliness:
Attendance is required. So is participation. Class meets once a week, so an absence from one class involves missing an entire week’s work. If you’re not here, you are neither learning nor contributing. Unexcused absence will receive a 2 point deduction the first time, 4 the second and so on. Arriving late will cause a 1-point deduction the first time, 2 the second, and so on, because patterns of absence and tardiness make the work of the rest of the class difficult. Journals for the week are due at the beginning of the class meeting for which they are assigned. As they are intended as preparation for the discussion, it makes no sense to hand them in after the discussion has taken place. Handing in one of the papers late will result in a 1-point penalty for each day the paper is late. Hand the paper in a week late, and you’ve gone from, say, 20 possible points to a maximum of 13 before the paper is even graded.

Schedule:
Stay on it for readings, journals, and other written work.

Paper Format:
Out of class work should be typed, double-spaced, with one-inch margins, and stapled. No binders, folders, or covers, please. Shorter assignments should have your name, date, and course and section in the upper right-hand corner. Papers should have titles, and a research paper should have a formal title page.

Students with Disabilities:
If you have a documented disability and wish to receive academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 581-6583.

Academic Honesty:
The English Department’s Statement on Plagiarism is as follows: 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 of the English Language) has the right and the responsibility to impose upon the guilty student an appropriate penalty up to and including a grade of F for the assigned work and a grade of F for the course, and to report the incident to the Judicial Affairs Office. I expect you to do your own work, to use sources properly, to imbed them appropriately into your work, to use paraphrase, summary, and quotation as needed, with careful and correct documentation. This applies not only to books and articles, but to media and electronic sources, including all web and online sources.

Classroom courtesies:
Cell phones, beepers, pagers, and anything else that beeps, buzzes, rings or sings; off for the duration of class, please. No exceptions.

Please note: any policy statement, schedule or syllabus, is by its nature a tentative document. Changes may occur which may alter any of the polices or schedules, including those for grading, at any time. An announcement in class will be considered sufficient notification for such changes.