

## Humanities 155: Introduction to World Mythology

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Cuyamaca College  
Fall 2013, Section 1417(3 units)  
Tues: 6:00pm to 8:50pm, Room F710

Instructor: Kathryn Valdivia  
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### **WELCOME!**

Welcome to Humanities 155! I look forward to getting acquainted with each of you, and I hope that you will find this course both enjoyable and enriching. You are always welcome to come and chat with me. I am here to help you in whatever way I can in your pursuit of knowledge relating to your appreciation of world mythology.

### **ABOUT THIS SYLLABUS**

This syllabus contains information that is essential for success in this course. It is the responsibility of every student to read and be familiar with the course requirements and other information presented in this document. Any adjustments, corrections, or clarifications to this syllabus, which may become necessary, will be announced in class. Should you lose your copy of the syllabus, please access a copy of the syllabus posted on my homepage website: <http://www.cuyamaca.edu/kathryn.valdivia/>

### **PREREQUISITES**

No previous formal coursework is required to enroll in this class. However, the student must be willing to enter into reflection, participation, and anticipation of what it means to study ancient cultures and their myths. In other words, students are asked to invest in the experience of learning about mythology. This investment, while taking time and energy, should result in a worthwhile and meaningful learning experience that, hopefully, will inspire the student to pursue more advanced studies in the humanities especially as they relate to the study of mythology.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION (from College Catalog)**

Exploration of myths, legends, folklore and fairy tales as a means of understanding the way different people throughout the world have viewed themselves, their heroes, gods and supernatural beings and the world they live in. Emphasis on the symbolic meaning of the stories covered and the light they shed on our common human nature.

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION (from Instructor)**

This course examines myths from around the world with an eye towards how they continue to offer insights into the human condition, moral questions, questions about reality, human concepts of the supernatural, and human relationships. It also examines the methods used to study myth and evaluates these methods by applying them to the myths themselves.

### **COURSE OBJECTIVES (EXPECTED STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES)**

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- Describe a variety of methodologies through which myths are studied (ritual school, functionalism, structuralism, psychoanalytic, feminist, etc.)
- Understand myths from various cultures in terms of their origins, nature, categories (myth, legend, and folktale) and functions (e.g., etiological, charter, etc.)
- Identify and describe archetypes and their significance
- Understand the representation of individual, cultural, social, political, sexual, and personal identity in myth
- Appreciate the history of various cultures through acquaintance with religious beliefs, practices, and rituals
- Recognize mythological themes in modern culture, including art, architecture, literature, music, film, cartoons, humor, etc.

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### REQUIRED TEXTS

- Leonard, Scott and McClure, Michael, *Myth and Knowing: An Introduction to World Mythology* (New York: McGraw Hill, 2002)
- On Reserve in our library: Willis, Roy, ed., *World Mythology* (New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1993)

### COURSE PLAN

The methodological approach to this class will be lecture, discussion, and small group interaction. Along with lectures to stimulate discussion, we will study examples of artistic works that have been inspired by myths through a variety of media such as recordings, slides, and videos. It is essential that students come to class prepared by having assigned reading and work completed by the scheduled due dates. Coming prepared to class not only will enhance your own experience of what you are learning but it will stimulate more interesting and probing discussions.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

General Statement about Course Work: Students are expected to complete all exams, quizzes and weekly assignments by the assigned due dates published in this syllabus. This also applies to reading assignments; they should be completed before class. Assigned readings should be brought to class. Also, individual student presentations (oral reports) must occur on the date agreed upon when signing up. Due dates for all exams, assignments, and oral reports will be strictly adhered to. There will be no opportunity to make-up exams, assignments, or the final exam. A make-up for a student's oral presentation may be (not necessarily "will" be) allowed only under the most extraordinary circumstances and if schedule changes permit. "Extraordinary circumstances" would entail proof of necessity for the absence such as a doctor's note, an accident report, etc.

You will be responsible for arranging your schedule to ensure meeting all due dates. All exams are closed book and taken in class. To accommodate unforeseen circumstances, the 2 lowest grades of 10 assignments will be dropped. In other words, there will be no adverse effect on a student's final grade if the student chooses either to complete 8 assignments (of 10) or drop the 2 lowest grades of 10 assignments.

**Attendance:** Regular attendance and active participation in class discussions are requirements. I reserve the right to drop a student from the roster who has missed more than 3 class sessions. In regards to our class meetings, "participation in class discussions" means that you are prepared to discuss the reading assignments, reflections on your work, comments on the work of others, questions from material you want to pursue further, etc.

**Assignments:** Throughout the semester, typically weekly, a worksheet with multiple choice, t/f and short-answer questions will be due; it will be based on the week's readings. Such questions ultimately seek to find if you have comprehended the assigned material. The assignments will serve as a study device to assist with the comprehension of the material for the week as well as a means to differentiate between topics. Your assignments are a part of your grade! What you do not submit by the due date will be counted against your final grade. **Late assignments, electronic submittals, or hand-written work will not be accepted or acknowledged.** Cumulatively, the assignments are worth 20% of your final grade and this is based on the 8 highest grades of 10 assignments. These assignments are located on our course page. Print each one out, complete it, and submit it in class, hard copy, by the due date: <http://www.cuyamaca.edu/kathryn.valdivia/mythology/mythologyhomepage.asp>

**Exams:** There will be a total of five exams this semester. Most of the exams (including final) will cover only 1 chapter; only the final exam covers 2 chapters. Each exam will be taken in class as scheduled. The exams will consist of objective questions (multiple choice, true/false, matching, fill-in-the-blank) and short essay questions (including some questions from the weekly assignments). A Scantron form (long skinny green ones) will be required for the objective portions of the exams. Essays will be announced in class prior to the quiz or exam; students are to prepare their answers, type, and submit a printed, double-spaced copy on the day of the exam. **(No electronic or hand-written submittals will be accepted. No submittals of essays after the date of the exam will be accepted.)**



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<b>WORLD MYTHOLOGY – SCHEDULE OF CLASSES – Fall, 2013</b>				
<b>Week</b>	<b>Dates</b>	<b>Topic</b>	<b>Reading Assignment</b>	<b>Submittals</b>
1	8/20	Getting Started / Study of Myths & Mythology: early history of discipline	Intro to class Ch 1, 1-7	Questionnaire
2	8/27	Study of Myths & Mythology: during the Enlightenment and into 20 <sup>th</sup> c onward	Ch 1, 7-28	Ch 1 Asgnt 1
<b>Exam #1 – Chapter 1</b>				
3	9/3	Creation Myths: types of stories	Ch 2, 32-47	
4	9/10	Creation Myths: types of stories, cont'd	Ch 2, 32-47	
5	9/17	Creation Myths: Nigerian, Norse and Greek	Ch 2, 47-67	Ch 2 Asgnt 2
6	9/24	Creation Myths: Iroquois, Sumerian, Hindu, and Hebrew	Ch 2, 68-90	Ch 2 Asgnt 3
7	10/1	Creation Myths: Mayan	Ch 2, 90-99	Ch 2 Asgnt 4
<b>Exam #2 – Chapter 2</b>				
8	10/8	The Female Divine as Archetype and literary character; The Female Divine: Hawaiian	Ch 3, 102-132	
9	10/15	The Female Divine: Sioux, Sumerian and Vietnamese	Ch 3, 132-154	Ch 3 Asgnt 5
10	10/22	The Female Divine: Hindu, Roman and Gnostic	Ch 3, 154-181	Ch 3 Asgnt 6
<b>Exam #3 – Chapter 3</b>				
11	10/29	The Male Divine: Images of masculine; Hindu, Sumerian and Nigerian	Ch 4, 185-232	
12	11/5	The Male Divine: Norse and Aztec	Ch 4, 232-243	Ch 4 Asgnt 7
<b>Exam #4 – Chapter 4</b>				
13	11/12	Trickster Myths: Embodiments of Ambiguities: African, Yoruba, Wasco, Iroquois	Ch 5, 247-271	Ch 4 Asgnt 8
14	11/19	Trickster Myths: Apache, Blackfoot, Norse, and Oceania	Ch 5, 272-301	Ch 5 Asgnt 9
15	11/26	Trickster Myths: Greek, Malaysian, and Haida	Ch 5, 301-318	Ch 5 Asgnt 10
16	12/3	Sacred Places: Gulliford's Nine Categories of Sacred Places and Deloria's Four Categories of Sacred Sites	Ch 6, 320-324	

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17	12/10	<b>Final Exam #5: 6:00pm to 8:00pm</b>	<b>Final Exam #5</b>	<b>Final Exam #5</b>
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