

CAMS 045 Web: Classical Mythology

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The Pennsylvania State University

Office Hours

This is an online course, so "office hours" will be replaced with ANGEL messages and, if the need arises, IM (please contact me for an appointment; AIM nickname = CAMS45Web).

Email

jkb171@psu.edu This is my email, but I request that all course correspondence use ANGEL's "Communicate" feature. Please use my regular email *only* in an emergency.

Required Texts

1. Homer. The Essential Homer. Trans. Stanley Lombardo. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 2000. ISBN: 0872205401.
2. Ovid. The Metamorphoses of Ovid. Trans. David Slavitt. Baltimore, MD: Johns Hopkins UP, 1994. ISBN: 0801847982.
3. Hesiod. Works and Days; Theogony. Trans. Stanley Lombardo. Indianapolis, IN: Hackett Publishing Co., 1993. ISBN: 0872201791.
4. Sophocles. Antigone, Oedipus the King, Electra. Trans. D. F. Kitto. New York: Oxford UP, 1998. ISBN: 0192835822.
5. Euripides. Ten Plays. Trans. Moses Hadas. New York: Bantam Books, 1984. ISBN: 0553213636.

Other required readings will be available online or through Penn State Libraries' Electronic Reserve ("ER," on which see below). While all readings in this course are required, the textbooks listed above are *optional to buy*. All readings in this course are available for free online, so purchasing the books listed above is not mandatory. You will probably, however, find it easier to read from a book than from a computer screen and some of our readings are pretty long. Typically, students who purchase the books perform better in the course.

I suggest buying the books listed above, but if you are looking to save money or clutter you don't have to. I do, though, **STRONGLY** urge you to buy two of the books on the list: Ovid and Homer. Ovid is the backbone of the course, and we will be reading much of that book. Ovid is an author you may want to be able to highlight/underline, etc. The assigned Homer book is an abridged version of the Iliad and Odyssey, so if you use another edition or the online versions, you will likely end up doing more reading than you need to (and in some cases by a lot). Homer is

not short, and so having the more concise version, as well as having it in book form may prove very useful to you.

There is also the issue of language. The online translations of our readings are old, and therefore the English is stilted and awkward to our ear.

Consider the following from the opening lines of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*:

"My soul is wrought to sing of forms transformed to bodies new and strange! Immortal Gods inspire my heart, for ye have changed yourselves and all things you have changed! Oh lead my song in smooth and measured strains, from olden days when earth began to this completed time!" (Brookes More, online version available through Perseus Project)

"Bodies, I have in mind, and how they can change to assume new shapes--I ask the help of the gods, who know the trick: inspire me now, change me, let me glimpse the secret and sing, better than I know how, of the world's birthing, the creation of all things from the first to the very latest." (David Slavitt, *ibid.*)

The second translation is remarkably more readable, I think, and because it is such an essential text to our class, it is probably worth buying. As for the other books on the list, they are shorter, and the difference between reading 250 pages on your computer and 45 pages is vast. It is your choice, though, so I leave it to you.

NB: You are *always* responsible for your reading assignments. "The server was down" or "the page wouldn't load" will never be acceptable excuses for not completing the reading, and this may mean that, if you rely on the online readings, you will need to seek out the readings at the library in a pinch. Please do not assume that a version you find online is acceptable. If you want to use an online version of a reading that is not linked out of the course, you should clear it with me first. Please also understand that the links in ANGEL to the online readings are mostly to a site hosted at Tufts University (the Perseus Project); this means that if a reading is unavailable, I can't do anything about it. Sending me an email to ask why the readings won't load is like my emailing you to ask why youtube isn't working. It's not my deal, and I

can't fix it. I have tested all the links, and they all work, but servers go down, sites have maintenance, etc. So, electing to rely on the internet versions of these texts brings with it the risk that, when you need it, the reading may not be available. The good thing about the actual books is that they are reliable and look sexy on a shelf.

Tentative Schedule Please see the Reading Schedule (Lessons tab) and the Calendar for specific due dates. You can always rely on the course calendar (Calendar tab) for due dates, times, etc. This calendar is fixed and reliable. If you see a conflicting date in an email (sometimes I make mistakes) or somewhere else in the course, feel free to clarify with me, but *the calendar is correct*.

Course Requirements

Your grade in this course is determined based on the following:

1. Quizzes:.....20%
2. Midterm Exam:.....25%
3. Paper:.....20%
4. Discussion Boards:.....10%
5. Final Exam:25%

Quizzes: Most but not all lectures have a corresponding quiz. Quizzes are found in the Quiz folder, under the Lessons tab. The quizzes are based on lectures *and* readings. Because you are, for the most part, self-paced in this course, quizzes can be completed when you want. **BUT**: all quizzes that correspond to lessons that fall before the midterm (up to and including Lesson 11) must be completed BEFORE the midterm posts. Likewise, all quizzes that fall before the final exam must be completed prior to that test. No quiz may be taken after its deadline. When the deadline hits, the quizzes disappear from ANGEL and are no longer accessible. All deadlines are posted on the Calendar. Please follow these dates carefully.

Midterm: Your midterm will cover all lecture and reading material through Lecture 11. Your midterm will look like a large ANGEL quiz, consisting of multiple choice, true-false, matching, ordering, ID, and similar examination elements. Please consult the Midterm Folder under the Lessons tab for more details. Please check the Calendar for all dates.

Paper: You must write a 4-6 page paper for this course on a posted topic. The topic and guidelines for the paper are in the Paper folder (under the Lessons tab). Late papers will be accepted with a penalty of 5% per hour late. Hour one starts one minute after the due time. Please see the Calendar for due dates.

Discussion Boards: 10% of your grade in this course is based on "discussion." Because we do not meet in a traditional classroom, we must rely on electronic discussion. You will be randomly assigned to an ANGEL "Team" (there are 5 teams) sometime during the first weekend of the course. Once teams have been assigned, you must contribute to the message board each week (*at least one post and at least one reply*). The idea here is to create, however small, a community for you to discuss the course material. The message boards are *not* an appropriate place to ask questions about deadlines, paper expectations, etc. (these should be directed to me via ANGEL mail). Obviously you should not use the message boards for anything other than class discussion. Students who abuse this forum will be warned and they will lose points.

While there is a weekly minimum (1 post and 1 reply), there is no maximum to how much you can post/reply. In fact, the more the better because the goal of the message boards is to create ongoing and engaged conversations about the readings, lectures, or other relevant ideas. You are welcome to keep a thread alive as long as you want (but do remember that a new post is due each week, so contributing to an ongoing conversation does not excuse you from your weekly original post.

You must make all your own posts (there are no "team" posts). The teams are set up to divide the work and to reduce the anonymity of a large, online course. This message board activity makes up 10% of your final grade. All of your posts, whether they are replies or posts, should be well thought out, well written, and show that you are engaging in the course material. 3 sentences to 1 paragraph is sufficient length. "Achilles is a brat. I prefer Brad Pitt" is not a good post. "I find Achilles to be a let down as a hero because of X, Y, and Z" is a good post. The message boards should not dominate your life, but they should be thoughtful, critical, and show that you are taking the course seriously. 10-15 minutes per week is a sufficient commitment to your team's discussion board.

Grading Policy

A: 100-94
A-: 93-90
B+: 89-87
B: 86-83
B-: 82-80
C+: 79-77
C: 76-70
D: 69-60
F: 59 or below

NB: I do not round up grade percentages. If a student has worked particularly hard, been an especially strong message board contributor,

etc., I *might* bump that student from, say, 93.6% to the 94% needed for an A, but I will **never** bump your grade more than .5 points, no matter what. If you've got an 88.75, do not expect me to grant you the 1.25 points needed to get to an A-. It's unfair to the students who worked hard to get the higher grade.

Also, I do not believe in extra-credit, so please don't ask me whether there's anything extra work you can do for that little extra push. This is an ideological issue for me, so I will not offer extra-credit to anyone, even if you're looking at a D, and "if I get a D my parents will pull me out of State..." I do not offer any form of extra credit to any student. So, if you're worried about your grade, about whether you're going to make a cut-off that is necessary for your scholarship, your parents' approval, or for any other reason, do not wait until you've taken the final. Email me early! We can discuss study strategies, I can help you with your paper, etc. I want you all to succeed and to do well in my class, but I also need to protect the integrity of this course, and the integrity of those students who worked hard all term to earn satisfactory grades. Let me help you do well by keeping in touch with me if you're struggling or if you need help, or if you find yourself in an extenuating circumstance. I'm unbending in my policies (I have to be in an internet course), but I'm not a despot. *If you have a genuine emergency, family situation/tragedy, etc., I will gladly work with you to make it all easier.* I will not, however, take sympathy on you after you've failed the work. If something is going on that makes it so that you can't focus and succeed, let me know before it's too late. For this reason, I strongly urge you to check your gradebook frequently. It's better if you catch a mistake or a problem in your grades early. There is nothing I can do for you if you wait until the last day of class to tell me about this or that situation that you think I should take into consideration. Check your grades weekly, and let me know of a problem right away.

Academic Integrity Students are expected to behave within the guidelines of academic and personal integrity. Penn State defines academic integrity as the pursuit of scholarly activity in an open, honest and responsible manner. All students should act with personal integrity, respect other students' dignity, rights and property, and help create and maintain an environment in which all can succeed through the fruits of their efforts (Faculty Senate Policy 49-20).

Dishonesty of any kind will not be tolerated in this course. Dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students.

Students who are found to be dishonest will receive academic sanctions and will be reported to the University's Judicial Affairs office for possible further disciplinary sanction.

It is YOUR responsibility to familiarize yourself with College and University policy on academic integrity if you are not already familiar with it. PLEASE don't assume you know the policies if you have not encountered them before. I refer you to <http://www.psu.edu/ufs/policies/> for a rundown.

I have reported at least one student to the College of Liberal Arts almost every semester since Fall 2002. It is disrespectful to me when you cheat, and it's disrespectful to your classmates, and the University. It also makes Penn State look bad nationally, and that damages the value of your degree. If you are even the least bit unsure of what constitutes academic dishonesty, there is an iStudy module in the Lessons tab that will help you learn the rules and expectations. This learning tool is not required, but it is suggested that you go through it, even if you're a senior, even if you're a freshman, even if you're too cool for school. Wouldn't it suck to get an F in this class and maybe get kicked out of the University because you didn't want to take a little time to educate yourself?

Exam Policy

Your exams in this course are online, and administered through ANGEL. Basically, your exams look like big ANGEL quizzes. Your exams will include matching, true/false, multiple choice, and multiple select. Your exams are timed (75 min), so it is advisable that you plan your time carefully, so that you don't run out of time. After the time limit, the exams auto-submit (plus, because the exams are administered through ANGEL, the timer will be unforgiving). For more information about your midterm and final, please refer to the Midterm and Final Exam folders under the Lessons tab, and the Calendar.

**Disability Access
Statement**

Neither I nor Penn State discriminates against students. If you have any special needs that must be met for you to have success in this course, please inform me as soon as possible. This request includes physical access, as well as accommodation of learning differences/challenges. I will gladly accommodate any needs you have.

**Additional
Information**

Using Electronic Reserve (ER):
Electronic Reserve is a wonderful service available through the Penn State Libraries. All you need to use ER is an internet connection and Adobe Acrobat Reader (which is a free download, and preloaded on many computers). There are two good ways to access this library tool. [Click here for more info!](#)