

CWL 260.2—Myths of the World—“Myth as Origins”

Dr. Jacqueline Fulmer

TTH 9:35-10:50

Office:

Office Hrs.:

Website:

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COURSE DESCRIPTION & GOALS:

In this section of Myths of the World, we will learn about mythology as the study of stories of “origins”:

- (1.) The Origins of the World
- (2.) The Origins of a Group
- (3.) The Origins of a Family

Have you ever wondered why you have family members who often like to repeat the story of how your parents met, or how your family came to the United States, or even how you yourself were born?

Mythic tales become repeated over time for much the same reasons as those family stories become repeated: because myth, like other forms of folklore, represents one of the ways that we explain the world to ourselves. Sometimes the explanation takes in the whole sweep of creation, as it is viewed by particular cultural groups. Sometimes the explanation represents a cultural group’s view of its own history and beginnings. And, sometimes, the explanation represents our beginnings as individuals. These stories sometimes become the basis for a group’s, a family’s, or a person’s sense of identity.

The cultural groups whose origin stories we will analyze will include the ancient Greeks, the Chinese, the Irish, and a selection of cultures from Africa.

In the course of the semester, together we will review techniques for analyzing folklore, essays, fiction, graphic novels, and film. With these techniques, you will gain valuable intellectual tools for your continued success and enjoyment of your college (and post-college) career. Along the way, Myths of the World will provide a rich introduction to the pleasures and rewards of studying Comparative and World Literature. The ways of thinking that this field of study nurtures will help to prepare you for other studies in the Humanities, too, as well as for a deeper appreciation of the cultural backgrounds of some of your cohort at SFSU.

You may find that the more you learn about “myth-as-origin-story,” the more you may learn about why certain family members like to repeat certain stories. (Such insights may even help you out at future get-togethers!) Furthermore, learning more about the traditional stories of our own or others’ cultural backgrounds helps us all become better co-workers, better neighbors, better Americans, and better citizens of the world.

This course may be used to fulfill the following General Education (GE) requirement: Segment 2 (Arts and Sciences Core), Humanities and Creative Arts Area, Category A (Masterworks in the Humanities and Creative Areas).

COURSE REQUIREMENTS & GRADE PERCENTAGES:

Prerequisite: Grade of C or better in Eng 114 or equivalent.

Attendance and participation are mandatory, as you will help each other throughout the semester. **Come prepared to write and talk** about what you have read for class **EVERY DAY & ON TIME, according to the clock on the classroom wall.**

Midterms I & II, Pop Quizzes, and the Final Exam will be based on **LECTURES & READINGS**. **Only with detailed class notes** will you be able to pass these. I will be happy to help you save time in learning the most efficient methods of reading and note taking.

--IF you have ANY questions about the assignments, SEE ME! I'LL HELP!! Also, contact the Learning Assistance Center, HSS 348, <http://www.sfsu.edu/~lac/tutoring.htm>.)

[Note on Disability-Related Accommodations: If you need disability-related accommodations in this class, if you have emergency medical information you wish to share with me, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated, please inform me immediately. Please see me privately after class or at my office. Students who need academic accommodations (for example, a note taker), should request them from the Disabled Resource Center, (415) 338-2472 (voice or TTY). DRC is the campus office responsible for documenting disability-related needs for academic accommodations, assessing those needs, and planning accommodations in cooperation with students and instructors as necessary and consistent with course requirements. If you do not know whether or not you qualify for these services, please contact DRC, and they will help you find out.]

COURSE GRADING:

Class Participation	(20%) =	Attendance (On Time) + Quizzes + Discussion &/or Forums.
Midterm I	(20%) =	Represents the first third of the course material.
Short Papers (2)	(30%) =	2-3 typed, double-spaced pages. Careful proofreading required! (Paper #1 = 20%) (Paper #2, which is a Group Project = 10%)
Final Exam	(30%) =	Represents the last half of the course material.

BOOKS:

- **CWL 260.2 Course Reader**. Copy Central Printing, 2336 Market Street (at Castro), San Francisco Tel: 415-431-6725 (Available first week of classes.)
- **Monkey: Folk Novel of China (Paperback)**, Wu Ch'eng-en (Author), Hu Shih (Introduction), Arthur Waley (Translator). Grove Press (1994). ISBN-10: 0802130860, ISBN-13: 978-0802130860.
- **Over Nine Waves: A Book of Irish Legends**. Marie Heaney. Faber and Faber (Paperback ed., 1995). ISBN-10 057117518X, ISBN-13 978-0571175185
- **Zeus Test Service Answer Sheets for Weeks 2 through 13; also have a #2 Pencil available.**
- All e-mails and ILearn website announcements about changes in the course, once broadcast, become the responsibility of the student to maintain. (<http://ilearn.sfsu.edu>)

COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1

Thurs. (First Day of Class—Jan. 24)

Introduction to Course

WEEK 2

Tues. Film: *Tales From the Hood*
 ---**Study Terms List**

Thurs. Film: *Tales From the Hood*(cont'd).

QUIZ #1 Sometime This Week--Bring a Zeus Test Service Answer Sheet.

WEEK 3

Tues. *World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, "Preface" & "Introduction," pp. xi-xviii.
 ---Look at **Notetaking & Study Tips** from *Write for College*: Entry numbers 482-486, 220-221, 489-490, 474, 502-506, 511. (These are very short entries.)

Thurs. *Sacred Narrative*, Alan Dundes. pp. 1-3, 5-13.
 Further review of Study and Notetaking tips from *Wr. for College*.

QUIZ #2 Sometime This Week (It's short!)--Bring a Zeus Test Answer Sheet.

WEEK 4

Tues. Creation Tales—China—*Best Chinese Creation Myths: Beginning of Time*, pp. 1-45.
World Mythology, Donna Rosenberg, Intro., Yin and Yang, Nu Kua, P'an Ku, & Chi Li, pp. 324-334, 676-677.

QUIZ #3 Sometime This Week (It's short!)--Bring a Zeus Test Answer Sheet.

Thurs. Creation Tales—China—"Roots: The Journey to the West," Mary Scott, pp. 363-368.
Monkey: A Folk Novel, pp. 1-31.
 Review *Write for College* tips on writing, Entry numbers: 018, 038, 039, 040.

Short Paper Due in Class (2 typed, double-spaced pages)—Thurs., February 14.

<p>QUIZZES To Come in the Following Weeks—Always Bring a Zeus Test Service Answer</p>
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WEEK 5

Tues. Creation Tales—Ireland—*World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, Intro., "The Ages of the World," pp. 368-377, 678.

Thurs. Creation Tales—Ireland—*Nine Waves*, Intro., "Midir and Etain," pp. ix-xi, 22-36.

WEEK 6

Tues. Creation Tales—Africa—*World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, Intro., "Creation," "Origin of Life and Fire," "Quarrel between Sagbata and Sogbo," pp. 508-520.

Thurs. Creation Tales—Africa—*World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, "Gassire's Lute," pp. 521-527, 684.

WEEK 7

Tues. Creation Tales—Greece—*World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, "Creation of the Titans and the Gods," "The Ages of Man," "The Labors and Death of Heracles." pp. 83-92, 100-105, 657-663. **GUEST SPEAKER Jeff Boyd—March 4 & 6.**

Thurs. Creation Tales—Greece—*Intro. to Mythology*, Thury & Deviney, "Prometheus," pp. 358-361 (and possibly some additional materials, TBA) **GUEST SPEAKER Jeff Boyd**

WEEK 8

Tues. Group Origins—China—*Monkey: A Folk Novel*, pp. 38-43, 72-77, 78-95.

Group Activity**REVIEW FOR MIDTERM EXAM I**

Thurs. Group Origins—China—*Monkey: A Folk Novel*, pp. bottom of 112-137, 279-305.

MIDTERM EXAM I—Thurs., March 13—Bring a Zeus Test Service Answer Sheet.

WEEK 9

Tues. Film: *Journey to the West, Part I: Pandora's Box*.

Group Origins—Ireland—*Nine Waves*, tales of Cuchulainn, pp.65-75, 80-98, 126-152.

Thurs. Film: *Journey to the West, Part I: Pandora's Box*.

Group Origins—Ireland—*Nine Waves*, Saints Patrick and Brigid, 225-235.

-----**WEEK 10 = SPRING BREAK, MARCH 25-28**-----

WEEK 11

Tues. Group Origins—Ireland—*Nine Waves*, Saints Patrick and Brigid, 225-235 cont. (film clips)

Group Origins—Africa—*World Mythology*, Donna Rosenberg, “Bakaridjan Kone,” pp. 528-566, 685.

Thurs. Group Origins—Africa—“Bakaridjan Kone” continued.

WEEK 12

Tues. Group Origins & Creation Tales—Comparisons
Group Activity

Thurs. Group Origins & Creation Tales—Comparisons

WEEK 13

Tues. Family Origins Stories—Alan Dundes, *Folklore Matters*, “Preface,” “Defining Identity through Folklore,” pp. vii-ix, 1-39.

Thurs. **Discuss and Begin Group Interview Project**

WEEK 14

Tues. Family Origins Stories—
Film: *The Secret of Roan Inish*

Thurs. Film: *The Secret of Roan Inish* (cont'd)

WEEK 15

Tues. Family Origins Stories—
Film: *To Sleep With Anger*

Thurs. Film: *To Sleep With Anger* (cont'd)

Group Interview Project Due in Class Typed (2-6 pages, depending upon group size)

WEEK 16

Sharing Selections of Group Projects in Class

WEEK 17 End of Semester Review and Review for Final Exam

OUTLINE OF CLASS WORK:

(1.) YOU MUST ARRIVE & BE SEATED BY 9:35 PM! NO LATES! If you have another engagement across campus, etc., leave a little early & learn the Campus Shuttle schedule. Otherwise, you may need to postpone taking this course. **Time management is vital to success in any career!**

(2.) You must read ALL reading assignments by the day for which they are scheduled. Also, you increase your chances of passing, even doing well, if you:

----**underline or circle important words** in the text and jot symbols and notes in the margins.

----**jot down questions** to ask me in class or during office hours.

----**briefly skim your notes from last class during the moments before the next lecture.**

These techniques really work! You save time, every time!

(3.) You must be prepared for Pop Quizzes EACH WEEK on thematic points in the materials, historical points, critical terms, &/or major character details. If you follow the tips for success in #(1.), you will do well. –Visit me in office hours to ask questions! It helps!

(4.) Everyone should plan to contribute to class discussions. (If you are unused to class participation, I will be happy to help you with ways to make it easier.)

(5.) Prepare for the Midterms and the Final by reviewing your class and textual notes every week. Prepare for Pop Quizzes by reviewing your notes outside of class & just before class starts each day.

(6.) Your work must be ready to hand in at the beginning of class on the day in which it is due. If the assignment is due by e-mail or by iLearn, then the work is due no later than NOON that “due date.” I do not accept work that is slid under my door nor under the door of the Dept. office. (The maintenance staff, may, in fact, throw this work away!) I do not accept work sent to my department mailbox. I do not accept late group work.

In emergency situations, I may adapt these rules, IF I am contacted in advance. Furthermore, you may need to provide official documentation (with contact information) to vouch for medical, family, legal, or other emergencies.

Contrary to popular image, “lecture courses” are not a matter of simply showing up for the midterm and final. If you miss the unannounced quizzes and short assignments, & ***if you do not read the materials thoroughly or do not attend, you will fail and have to repeat the class.***

Why waste your money and your valuable time? Come to every class, and feel free to see me throughout the semester for assistance. You will save time (and resources) in the long run!

CLASS PROTOCOL:

1. You are responsible for all material, syllabus changes, procedures, or assignments explained in class or e-mailed to you from the instructor. YOU MUST SEND ME ANY CHANGES to YOUR SFSU-REGISTERED E-MAIL ADDRESS.

2. **In-class writing assignments and homework often include questions on material presented only in class**, so your attendance reflects your performance in these areas.

3. Participation in class activities will make up a significant portion of your grade.
4. By the same token, careful reading of the course's texts outside of class will affect your grade, too. Some portion of quizzes and all exams may include some material not discussed in class. This represents how college exams normally operate.
5. I have to enforce a strict **NO Lates** policy. The class (and I) will not want to lose time from a speaker having lost place due to interruption. Nor will I want to inform habitual latecomers of what they had missed in the beginning of class.

If you have a special need or a one-time occurrence that requires you to be late or leave early—SEE ME AHEAD OF TIME. If I have your name written down ahead, and if I can prepare ahead of time for the disruption of someone leaving early or arriving late, I will be better able to prevent loss of class time due to interruption.

6. The following practices may cause eviction from the lecture hall or a severe grade drop at the end of the semester:

- **Reading the newspaper, online texts, e-mail or other materials during the lecture.**
- **TEXTING OR TALKING ON CELL PHONES.**
- **Talking to your neighbor during the lecture, especially in the back of the hall, especially during class discussions or activities (This equals lack of respect for what fellow students have to say).**
- **Arriving late.**
- **Leaving class early.**
- **Getting up in the middle of class. Please use the restroom, phone, etc. BEFORE class time.**
- **Playing music or video games.**
- **Creating disruption during the final few minutes of class by putting away papers and zipping backpacks.**
- **Looking at your neighbor's exam or quiz, i.e., cheating.* (Furthermore, people who text each other answers to quiz or exam questions should expect immediate failure in the course.)***

In other words, what some students taking large college classes do not always realize is that instructors are not TV characters on a screen, oblivious to what you do in the privacy of your seat. We CAN SEE YOU TOO!

Not only that, in the minds of most instructors, *your* expression of questions, comments, and other input remains *as important* to the success of a class as the performance of the instructor.

—I look forward to your participation & input this semester!

[*--"Plagiarism, defined broadly, is the **presentation of another's words and/or ideas as one's own without attributing the proper source**. It is grounds not only for failure of a given piece of work, which could result in failure for the entire course, it could also result in being reported to the administrative body responsible for student conduct violations and being subject to disciplinary action by that body. The same holds true for other forms of academic dishonesty or "inappropriate conduct." [All items in quotes derived from the "SFSU Political Science Dept.'s Policy Statement on Plagiarism" and www.sfsu.edu/~collhum/plagiarism.]

[Academic dishonesty includes allowing another person to write or substantially alter your work for you, then submitting it as your own work. This category also includes copying answers from someone else's exam, with or without that person's knowledge.]

--"**Plagiarism includes** copying material from books, journals, newspapers and magazines as well as taking material from websites and through the internet."

--"**Plagiarism includes** privately purchasing or obtaining papers from any sources which one then presents as one's own."

--"**Plagiarism can be intentional or unintentional.** It is part of each student's responsibility to familiarize themselves with the rules regarding questions of plagiarism."

--"**It is not acceptable to submit an assignment which is simply a paraphrasing of extracts from other authors:** the work submitted must include some intellectual contribution of the student's own."

--"**Re-submission of previously graded work** — the submission of the same piece of work for assessment in two different courses by the student author — is not acceptable practice if it is not acknowledged and explicitly approved by the instructor(s)."

--"**The following are not excuses for plagiarism:** 'I didn't realize it was plagiarism;' 'It was readily available on the web;' 'I didn't mean to;' 'I've been under pressure;' 'I didn't know how to cite my sources properly' or 'I have serious (emotional, physical, mental) problems which excuse my acts of plagiarism.'"]

SHORT PAPER & GROUP PROJECT PROTOCOL:

A. TYPING: On ordinary 8 1/2" by 11" paper, **double-spaced, with 1" margins** on all sides.

B. THESIS STATEMENT: **All written assignments must have an introduction that describes the main point** of the paper (= the thesis statement). Make sure that each paragraph begins with a sentence that describes the content of *just that paragraph*. Do the paragraphs make sense in the order that they appear? If they do not, then rearrange the paragraphs until they read more clearly. Have someone else read your thesis and paragraphs to make sure everything reads clearly.

C. FORMAT:

1. Name and date on **first page**, top right corner, and no cover pages.
2. **MUST be stapled** when turned in. (Will take points off.)
3. **MUST have page numbers.**
4. Formatted using a standard **12-point Times-style font** or in a **10-point Helvetica-style font**. Decorative, tiny, widely spaced, or larger point sizes will not be accepted.

D. PROOFREAD:

1. Check for typos, spelling, usage, grammar, capitalization, title formats, citation formats, punctuation, and sentence structure. Use dictionary in addition to spellchecker and read about usage quirks and homonyms.
2. Check the paper again with the instructions. Did you cover each part of them?
3. **Read it out loud to yourself at least once and also have someone else read your paper.**

Errors that do not reflect professional writing: Mixing "it's" for "its," other Apostrophe Errors, Spelling Errors, Verb/Noun (or Pronoun) Disagreement, and Possessive Use Errors.—If you do not recall these details from your previous composition courses, come see me! We'll review these items together.