

**DEPARTMENT OF MODERN LANGUAGES
AND CULTURAL STUDIES**
<https://uofa.ualberta.ca/modern-languages-and-cultural-studies>

2017-2018 C LIT 220 B1: Mythology and Literature
(Winter Term)

Instructor: Dr. Rasoul Aliakbari
Office: Humanities Centre 4-87
E-mail: rasoul@ualberta.ca
Telephone/Fax: NA
Office hours: W 9:00AM-10:00AM
(Please email me 24 hours prior to office hours to request appointment or to set up meeting during alternative time slots)

Time: TR 11:00-12:20
Place: ED 107
Instructor's website: NA
Course's website: eClass

Course Prerequisite: none

Course-based Ethics Approval in place regarding all research projects that involve human testing, questionnaires, etc.?

Yes No, not needed, no such projects approved.

Community Service Learning component

Required Optional None

Past or Representative Evaluative Course Material Available

- Exam registry – Students' Union
<http://www.su.ualberta.ca/services/infolink/exam/>
- See explanations below
- Document distributed in class
- Other (please specify)
- NA

Additional mandatory Instructional fees (approved by Board of Governors)

Yes No

Course Description and Objectives:

Description: Myth of all kinds is increasingly used in literary fiction, films and television, advertising and publicity, videogames, children's books, and education. This course examines major bodies and themes of world myth, comparative approaches to myth, myth in everyday life, and particular uses of myth in selected earlier and modern literary works and films.

The course begins with an Introduction outlining major concepts and definitions, resources, and approaches, providing a toolkit for the course. This Introduction is followed by a reading of major myths from around the world, familiarizing students with this vast body of

literature. Then will follow a critical examination of the concepts of myth and mythology and major approaches to mythography, or the writing down and analysis of myths, as well as myth's relation to legends, folktales, modern and urban myths, literary fiction, and other media, and to religion, ritual, psychology, social relations, and political discourse. This critical outline is followed by examination of the major contributors to mythography, or the compilation and study of myths. To apply the knowledge of myth gained as the course progresses and use of myth in literature and culture, individual novels and films will be examined during the course. For particular topics week-by-week see the Schedule of Classes later in this Course Description. Particular readings and research tasks will be announced in advance by the Instructor through eClass/Bear Tracks email (so please ensure you use eClass and your U of A email account for this course). Students should create a special desktop folder or email folder for all communications from the Instructor. For particular texts and where to get them, see the Texts list later in this Course Description.

Several approaches to student learning are used. Student learning is encouraged by particular study and research assignments from the Instructor, structured full-class discussion led by the Instructor, in-class work in small groups, short in-class and written reports, and an individual written Final Course Project. Assessment and grading of students' work by the Instructor are according to contributions to classroom learning, in-class and written reports, and the final course project. To encourage individual responsibility for learning and full contribution to classroom learning, a sign-in sheet will be circulated in every class. If a class has to be missed, a student will be able to make it up by covering the missed work at an individual meeting with the instructor.

To ensure a safe learning environment, toleration and respect between students and between students and instructor are required at all times. To avoid distractions, full attention should be given to anyone speaking, food should not be consumed in class, and all internet devices must be switched off unless required by the instructor for particular in-class tasks. Disrespectful or disruptive behaviour may result in expulsion from class.

The Instructor must report any instance of plagiarism to the Arts Faculty office and may have serious consequences—see the sections “Academic Integrity” and “Academic Honesty” later in this Course Description. The Instructor will help all students achieve their academic goals by providing class-by-class guidance for reading and study, by leading full-class discussions, by ensuring structured discussion in class and in small-group tasks, by clarifying any questions or issues, by providing feedback on students' work, and by ensuring fair and respectful treatment for all. For any problems, questions, concerns, assignments, classroom environment, or other relevant matters students should consult the Instructor before or after class, during the Instructor's office hours, or by appointment or e-mail.

For details of this course's policy on attendance and assignments see the sections “Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components” and “Policy on Late Assignments.”

Objectives: At the end of this course, students will have improved valuable and transferable skills, including critical reading, research methods, communicating research in writing and speaking, collaborative research, and independent research. At the end of this course, successful students will also be able to recognize a diverse range of world myth and identify their various functions in their respective cultures and societies. As well, student will be able to conduct analytical readings and comparative approaches to these myths, and critically examine their contexts of origination, circulation, and transformation across borders of time and space.

Schedule of Classes:

The following schedule is subject to change. Scholarly materials may be added to the reading program weekly. For updates, students are advised to regularly check the schedule on eClass.

9 Jan	Introduction: Definitions, Resources, Issues, Tools
11 Jan	Further Introduction; Leeming, <i>The World of Myth</i>
16 Jan	Leeming, <i>The World of Myth</i>
18 Jan	”
23 Jan	”
25 Jan	”
30 Jan	”
1 Feb	”
6 Feb	”
8 Feb	”
13 Feb	”
15 Feb	”
	READING WEEK
27 Feb	Leeming, <i>The World of Myth</i>
1 Mar	”
27 Feb	Myth and Medieval Literature: <i>Gawain and the Green Knight</i>
1 Mar	”
6 Mar	”
8 Mar	”
13 Mar	”
15 Mar	Myth and Modern Literature: Wells, <i>War of the Worlds</i>
20 Mar	”
22 Mar	”
27 Mar	”
29 Mar	Brazil’s Culture of Myth and Film: <i>Black Orpheus</i>
3 Apr	”
5 Apr	India’s Culture of Myth and Film: <i>Sita Sings the Blues</i>
10 Apr	”
12 Apr	Review

Texts:

Required:

David A. Leeming, *The World of Myth: An Anthology*, second edn (Oxford)
available through U of A Bookstore

[Gawain and the Green Knight ebook available through U of A Library](#)

[H. G. Wells, War of the Worlds ebook available through U of A Library](#)

Black Orpheus film available through Kanopy database at U of A Library

Sita Sings the Blues film available through Kanopy database at U of A Library

Grade Distribution (see “Explanatory Notes”):

Contributions to classroom learning	20%
In-class and written report on myth	20%
In-class and written research report	20% (due in class on agreed dates)
<u>Final Course project</u>	<u>40% (due Thursday 12 April)</u>
Total	100%

NOTE: There is no final exam.

Date of Deferred Final Exam (if applicable): not applicable

Explanatory Notes on Assignments:

Contributions to classroom learning: Attendance is necessary: if you are not in class you cannot contribute. Note: if a student must miss a class, advise the instructor in advance if possible, and the missed class may be made up by meeting individually with the instructor. In addition, students should contribute to full-class discussions and small-group work. These contributions may occur verbally or in the form of informal writing opportunities as devised by the Instructor. While some people are more confident and outspoken than others, everyone should learn how to contribute concisely and cogently to a discussion sharing research and ideas.

In-class reports: Each student will give an oral report twice during the course, on a topic of the student’s choice. Student will as well submit to the Instructor the written version of their report on their date of presentation. The written reports will be 7 to 8 pages each. Criteria for such reports will be distributed early in the course. The first round of such reports will be scheduled by the instructor; the second round will occur at the choice of the individual student in consultation with the instructor. The instructor will give individual constructive feedback. Two rounds are offered so that the student can learn and improve from the first round, Instructor’s feedback, and other students’ reports. This assignment will also prepare the student for the individual Final Course Project.

Final Course Project: On the last day of classes each student will submit a Final course Project. This should be equivalent to about a ten-page essay. The topic will be chosen by the student in consultation with the Instructor. The project should take what the student has learned in the course and apply that to the topic of the student’s choice. Criteria for assessment include originality, cogency (persuasiveness), coherence (organization), correctness, and clarity.

Required Notes:

“Policy about course outlines can be found in the [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#) of the University Calendar.”

Academic Integrity:

“The University of Alberta is committed to the highest standards of academic integrity and honesty. Students are expected to be familiar with these standards regarding academic honesty and to uphold the policies of the University in this respect. Students are particularly urged to familiarize themselves with the provisions of the Code of Student Behaviour (online at www.governance.ualberta.ca) and avoid any behaviour that could potentially result in suspicions of cheating, plagiarism, misrepresentation of facts and/or participation in an offence. Academic dishonesty is a serious offence and can result in suspension or expulsion from the University.”

Learning and Working Environment:

The Faculty of Arts is committed to ensuring all students; faculty and staff are able to study and work in an environment that is safe and free from discrimination and harassment. It does not tolerate behaviour that undermines that environment. The Department urges anyone who feels that this policy is being violated to:

- Discuss the matter with the person whose behaviour is causing concern; or
- If that discussion is unsatisfactory, or there is concern that direct discussion is inappropriate or threatening, discuss it with the Chair of the Department.

For additional advice or assistance regarding this policy you may contact the [Office of the Student Ombuds](#). Information about the [University of Alberta Discrimination and Harassment Policy and Procedures](#) is described in [UAPPOL](#).

Academic Honesty:

All students should consult the information provided by the [Student Conduct & Accountability Office](#) regarding avoiding cheating and plagiarism in particular and academic dishonesty in general (see the [Academic Integrity Undergraduate Handbook](#) and [Information for Students](#)). If in doubt about what is permitted in this class, ask the instructor.

Students involved in language courses and translation courses should be aware that on-line “translation engines” produce very dubious and unreliable “translations.” **Students in languages courses** should be aware that, while seeking the advice of native or expert speakers is often helpful, **excessive editorial and creative help** in assignments is considered a form of “cheating” that violates the code of student conduct with dire consequences.

An instructor or coordinator who is convinced that a student has handed in work that he or she could not possibly reproduce without outside assistance is obliged, out of consideration of fairness to other students, to report the case to the Associate Dean of the Faculty. See the [Academic Discipline Process](#).

Recording of Lectures:

Audio or video recording, digital or otherwise, of lectures, labs, seminars or any other teaching environment by students is allowed only with the prior written consent of the instructor or as a part of an approved accommodation plan. Student or instructor content, digital or otherwise, created and/or used within the context of the course is to be used

solely for personal study, and is not to be used or distributed for any other purpose without prior written consent from the content author(s).

Attendance, Absences, and Missed Grade Components:

Regular attendance is essential for optimal performance in this course. In cases of potentially excusable absences due to illness or domestic affliction, notify your instructor by e-mail within two days. Regarding absences that may be excusable and procedures for addressing course components missed as a result, consult sections [Attendance](#) and [Examinations](#) of the University Calendar. Be aware that unexcused absences will result in partial or total loss of the grade for the “attendance and participation” component(s) of a course, as well as for any assignments that are not handed-in or completed as a result.

In this course, attendance is an essential component of Contributions to Classroom Learning. For details, see above section “Contributions to Classroom Learning” in “Explanatory Notes on Assignments.” Missed assignments will be graded zero.

Policy for Late Assignments:

To be fair to all members of the class, late or incomplete work will be penalized by an appropriate reduction in the grade for that component of the course. A late assignment will result in deduction of one grade level for each day late (e.g., a B becomes a B minus, then a C plus, etc.). Extenuating circumstances, preferably explained in advance, may be taken into consideration by the Instructor once during the course.

Student Accessibility Services:

If you have special needs that could affect your performance in this class, please let me know during the first week of the term so that appropriate arrangements can be made. If you are not already registered with [Student Accessibility Services](#), contact their office immediately (1-80 SUB; Email sasrec@ualberta.ca; Email; phone 780-492-3381).

Grading:

Assessment of the individual course components may be in the form of numerical marks or letter grades. The final letter grade will be based on "a combination of absolute achievement and relative performance in a class" (University Calendar, [Evaluation Procedures and Grading System](#)). The University Grading Procedure mandates that "a student's level of achievement of the goals/outcomes of a course, their grade, and the descriptor of that grade must be aligned" (<https://policiesonline.ualberta.ca/>). The following guidelines have been adopted by the Department of Modern Languages and Cultural Studies:

“MLCS Undergraduate Grading Scale”

Descriptor	Letter Grade	Grade Point Value	%
Excellent. A+, A or A- is earned by work which is superior in content and form and demonstrates an exceptional grasp of the subject matter. The grade of A+ designates work that far exceeds course expectations. Grades in the A range are normally achieved by a small number of students.	A+	4.0	97-100
	A	4.0	93-96
	A-	3.7	90-92
Good. B+, B or B- is earned by work that demonstrates a thorough comprehension of the course material and a good command of relevant skills. Grades in the B range are normally achieved by the largest number of students.	B+	3.3	87-89
	B	3.0	83-86
	B-	2.7	80-82
Satisfactory. C+, C or C- is earned by work that demonstrates an adequate grasp of the course material and relevant skills. Grades in the C range designate work that has met the basic requirements of the course.	C+	2.3	77-79
	C	2.0	73-76
	C-	1.7	70-72
Poor/Minimal Pass. D+ or D is earned by work that demonstrates minimal familiarity with the course material. Grades in the D range generally indicate insufficient preparation for subsequent courses in the subject matter.	D+	1.3	65-69
	D	1.0	60-64
Failure.	F	0.0	0-59