

## **"Greeks Bearing Gifts" into the Future: Classical Myths Told and Retold**

### **Course Syllabus, USEM 24A**

Brandeis University, Fall 2007

Prof. Ann Olga Koloski-Ostrow

Department of Classical Studies, M.S. 016

This course satisfies the requirement for a University Seminar.

If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in this class, please see me immediately.

How to contact me: office address is Rabb 128; tel. (781)-736-2183 (voice mail) and Department office (781) 736-2180; email: aoko@brandeis.edu

Office Hours: Tues. and Fri. 12:30 – 1:30 p.m. in Rabb 128, and by appt.

This University Seminar (USem 24A) meets during Block H:  
Tues. and Fri. 10:40 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Required Texts (roughly in the order to be read in the course):

*Odyssey* (Homer) trans. by S. Lombardo (Hackett) ISBN 0-87220-484-7.

*Antigone, Oedipus the King* (Sophocles), in *The Three Theban Plays* trans. by R. Fagles (Penguin/Viking) ISBN 014 044-425-4.

*Electra, Medea* (Euripides), in *Medea and Other Plays*, trans. by P. Vellacott, (Penguin/Viking) ISBN 014-044-129-8.

*Metamorphoses* (Ovid) trans. by R. Humphries (Indiana University) ISBN 0-253-20001-6

*Metamorphoses* or *The Golden Ass* (Apuleius) trans. by Jack Lindsay (Indiana University) ISBN 0-253-2003609

Your own notebook (on which see below).

### **HANDOUTS, DISCUSSION SHEETS, AND NOTEBOOKS:**

Handouts include materials such as outlines, explanations of assignments, chronologies of the ancient world, glossaries, pronunciation guides, maps, formatting instructions, occasional sheets of discussion questions/problems, and/or anything deemed useful for enhancing appreciation and understanding of the texts. When questions about the texts are given in advance of reading texts, they are not intended to limit discussion sessions, but to give them some focus, and, perhaps, a point of departure for the new areas we would like to explore through interaction with each other in the course. Please be sure to obtain a full set of handouts for the course to be kept in your notebooks (preferably in some sort of loose-leaf arrangement). Your notebooks should contain a number of items: up-to-date notes on class presentations, impressions of the texts we read, ideas, and questions. If you are serious about notebooks, you will have an excellent collection of material to help you with essay assignments. This material will also help you remember in the

distant future (when you are forty-ish, starting to get gray, and settled into the second half of your life) all the pleasurable moments you will experience from your reading and your hard work in this course!

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION AND ESSAYS:**

Class attendance will be taken informally throughout the course, but students are always expected to be present and alert in class and, during those class sessions set aside for analysis of a text (or texts), to participate with informed observations, reactions, questions, and answers as often as possible. You are allowed only one excused absence. Two (or more) absences (unless the circumstances are extraordinary and discussed as well in advance as possible with your professor) WILL have a negative affect on your grade for the course. Such an attendance record will be brought to the attention of the Office of Academic Affairs. Three essays (5-6 typed, double-spaced pages each) are required. (Details will follow soon for the first essay assignment and subsequent assignments.) These essays are due on the following *fixed* dates:

Essay #1—Fri., Sept. 28, Optional Rewrite #1 due Fri., Oct. 12  
 Essay #2—Fri., Oct. 26, Optional Rewrite #2 due Fri., Nov. 9  
 Essay #3—Tues. Dec. 4, No rewrite option.

(These dates are marked with **in bold** with asterisk \* below. Pace yourselves carefully! A writing assignment that is well done takes time. A rewrite involves MORE than fixing commas and misspellings, so is also quite time-consuming.)

For every day that a paper is late you will lose one grade step from whatever grade you would have received had the paper been on time (A to A- to B+ to B to B-etc.). This system seems to assure fairness to all concerned. A validated medical excuse or certain extraordinary circumstances explained to your professor, of course, could exempt you from this penalty. Remember that you are now learning to take the pressure of university deadlines and face real consequences for missing them. Your USem, with rewrite options, is one of the kindest environments in which to learn this.

You must rewrite one of the first two essays, unless you received an "A" on both of them. You have the option to rewrite two of the three main essays in the course. Rewrites, however, are to be taken seriously. To rewrite a paper means to reconceive a problem, to rethink an approach, and to rewrite essentially ALL of the original draft, possibly starting from scratch with a new topic altogether. If you only make superficial corrections, this will NOT result in an improved grade. The better of the two grades you receive (original essay compared to the rewrite) will stand as your final grade for that particular essay. The due dates for rewrites are, as essays themselves, firm and fixed. They are listed above and below **in bold with an asterisk\***. Rewrites will also be marked a grade step down for every day that they are late.

## ROUGH COURSE GRADE DETERMINATION:

Class Participation:	20%
Essays 1, 2, 3:	60%
Other Assignments:	20%

(These involve short essays assigned in class or between classes and formal oral presentations.)

Total:	100%
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## ACADEMIC HONESTY:

Academic integrity is central to the mission of educational excellence at Brandeis University. Each student is expected to turn in work completed independently, except when assignments specifically authorize collaborative effort. It is not acceptable to use the words or ideas of another person--be it a world-class classicist, philosopher, or your roommate—without proper acknowledgement of that source. This means that you must use footnotes (or endnotes or parenthetical notes, depending on the instructor's preference) and quotation marks to indicate the source of any phrases, sentences, paragraphs or ideas found in published volumes, on the internet, or created by another student.

Violations of University policies on academic integrity, described in Section Three of Rights and Responsibilities, may result in failure in the course or on the assignment, or in suspension or dismissal from the University. If you are in doubt about the instructions for any assignment in this course, it is your responsibility to ask for clarification.

I shall report all instances of cheating, plagiarism, or other alleged dishonesty to the Office of Campus Life for possible referral to the Student Judicial System. The adjudication process is also outlined your handbook, Rights and Responsibilities. A record of any offense remains in a student's disciplinary file in the Office of Student Affairs throughout his or her career at Brandeis. Please know that I take this code very seriously. If you have any questions about my expectations, please ask me before you turn in questionable work.

Homework Assignments for fall semester (possibly subject to modification)  
If marked **in bold with \*** = **IMPORTANT due date.**

**DUE DATE: August**

Aug. 31, Fri.

Introductions: to your Professor, to each other, to the texts, and to goals for the course (yours and mine). Please buy books—at least the Lombardo translation of the *Odyssey* and complete *Iliad* assignment by next class: *Iliad* (Fitzgerald translation on Moodle): Bks./Scrolls 1, 3, and 6.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 1

**DUE DATE: September**

Sept. 04, Tues.

How to read an ancient text. Background to the Homeric epics.

Introduction to the *Iliad*.

*Iliad* (R. Fitzgerald trans.): Bks./Scrolls 1, 3, and 6.

Sept. 07, Fri.

Composing and Performing ancient myth.

Selections from Michael Wood's *In Search of the Trojan War*.

*Iliad* (R. Fitzgerald trans.): Bks./Scrolls 9 and 12.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 2

Sept. 11, Tues.

*Iliad* (R. Fitzgerald trans.): Bks./Scrolls 16 and 18.

Sept. 14, Fri.

**Rosh Hashanah no class**, but please read

*Iliad* (R. Fitzgerald trans.): Bks./Scrolls 22 and 24.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 3

Sept. 18, Tues.

Final *Iliad* thoughts (including discussion of Bks./Scrolls 22

and 24 from previous Friday's readings). Introduction to the *Odyssey*.

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 1-3.

Sept. 21, Fri.

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 4-6.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 4

Sept. 25, Tues.

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 7-9.

**\*Sept. 28, Fri., Essay #1 due in class**

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 10-12.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 5

**DUE DATE: October**

Oct. 02, Tues.

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 13-15.

Oct. 05, Fri.

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 16-18.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 6

Oct. 09, Tues.

**Brandeis Thursday, no class**, but please read

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 19-21.

**\*Oct. 12, Fri., Rewrites of Essay #1 due in class.**

FILM selection (*Odyssey*)

*Odyssey* (S. Lombardo): Bks./Scrolls 22-24, including discussion of Bks./Scrolls 19-21 from Tuesday, October 9.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 7

Oct. 16, Tues.

Introduction to tragedy: *Oedipus the King* (Sophocles)  
(trans. R. Fagles)

Oct. 19, Fri.

*Antigone* (Sophocles) (trans. R. Fagles)

\_\_\_\_\_end week 8

Oct. 23, Tues.

*Medea* (Euripides) (trans. P. Vellacott)

**\*Oct. 26, Fri., Essay #2 due in class**

FILM selections (on *Medea*)

\_\_\_\_\_end week 9

Oct. 30, Tues.

Introduction to Rome and her writers.

*Metamorphoses* (Ovid) Bks. 1, 4, 6.

**DUE DATE: November**

Nov. 02, Fri.

*Metamorphoses* (Ovid) Bks. 7, 8, 11.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 10

Nov. 06, Tues.

*Metamorphoses* (Ovid) Bks. 12, 13, 14

**\*Nov. 09, Fri., Rewrites of Essay #2 due in class.**

Final thoughts on *Metamorphoses*

*Metamorphoses* (Ovid) Bks. 15.

\_\_\_\_\_end week 11

Nov. 13, Tues.

The Roman Novel—Petronius and Apuleius

*Satyricon* (Petronius), Dinner Party of Trimalchio.

Nov. 16, Fri.

*Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (Apuleius)(Lindsay trans.)

Intro. pp. 5-29, Bks. 1-4, pp. 31-104 (74 pages)

\_\_\_\_\_end week 12

Nov. 20, Tues.

*Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (Apuleius)(Lindsay trans.)

Bks. 4, 5-9, pp. 105-211 (106 pages)

**Nov. 22-23, Thurs. and Fri.**

**Thanksgiving Break, no classes**

\_\_\_\_\_end week 13

Nov. 27, Tues.

*Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (Apuleius) (Lindsay trans.)

Bk. 10, pp. 212-234 (22 pages)

Nov. 30, Fri.

*Metamorphoses* or *Golden Ass* (Apuleius)(Lindsay trans.)

Bk. 11, pp. 235-255 (20 pages)

\_\_\_\_\_end week 14

**DUE DATE: December**

**\*Dec. 04, Tues., Essay #3 due in class**

Final Thoughts on Apuleius

Dec. 07, Fri.

Course Wrap-Up

Student Presentations of Final Papers

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end week 15