

Mythology and Religion

Code: 104214
ECTS Credits: 6

2025/2026

Degree	Type	Year
Ancient Studies	OT	4

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Teaching groups languages

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Prerequisites

[PREVIA 1: esta guía docente hace un uso del lenguaje en su registro formal académico según los usos establecidos, las convenciones gramaticales y el sentido común.]

[PREVIA 2: esta guía está redactada en catalán. Las versiones castellana e inglesa son traducciones. En caso de ambigüedad resultado de la traducción, siempre se tendrá en cuenta la literalidad de la versión original en catalán]

La asignatura no presupone conocimientos previos por parte de los alumnos, pero será conveniente que ya estén familiarizados con los mitos griegos a nivel básico. Se trabajará sobre documentos en griego y, ocasionalmente, en latín, pero se facilitará su traducción para que la asignatura pueda ser seguida también por alumnos que no tengan suficiente dominio de las lenguas antiguas.

Objectives and Contextualisation

Mythology and religion are so closely linked in ancient societies that it is often difficult to distinguish the "religious" from the "profane." Life was myth and religion and beliefs and rites penetrated all spheres of private and public life of ancient peoples. Greece was especially prolific in creating a rich and complex mythological universe that must be thoroughly understood if one wants to delve deeper into the study of Greek texts, Greek literature, history and society, as well as philosophy and politics. This interdisciplinary dimension is essential for good training in Humanities in general, and in Classical Studies in particular.

In Greek (and Latin) literary texts, then, myth, worship, and rites are ubiquitous, to such an extent that it is impossible to attain an adequate capacity for interpretation without the knowledge of this whole frame of mythical-cultic references. On the other hand, significant progress has been made in this field over the last fifty years. With the competition of diverse disciplines such as anthropology, psychology and sociology, the understanding we are reaching of the meaning of Greek myth and rite and its impact on the individual, family and society, make this discipline one of the most appealing to any student who aspires to in-depth knowledge that transcends the traditional approach, perhaps more attentive to the mythological anecdote and its various symbolic and iconographic interpretations.

We propose two general objectives:

1. Reflect on the myth and its relation to ritual from different perspectives.
2. Carry out a critical analysis of textual and iconographic documents.

Competences

- Be able to express oneself orally and in writing in the specific language of history, archaeology and philology, both in one's own languages and a third language.
- Students must be capable of communicating information, ideas, problems and solutions to both specialised and non-specialised audiences.
- Students must develop the necessary learning skills to undertake further training with a high degree of autonomy.
- Understand and interpret the evolution of ancient societies in the Mediterranean from Egyptian civilisation to the disbanding of Western imperial Rome through analysis of the political, historical, social, economic and linguistic factors.

Learning Outcomes

1. Apply the principles of ancient rhetoric to oral and written discourse in the mother tongue.
2. Autonomously searching, selecting and processing information both from structured sources (databases, bibliographies, specialized magazines) and from across the network.
3. Critically analyse ancient sources.
4. Establishing relationships between science, philosophy, art, religion, politics, etc.
5. Explain the main characteristics of Greek idiosyncrasy.
6. Preparing an oral and written discourse in the corresponding language in a proper and organized way.

Content

BLOCK I: GENERALITIES

1. Introduction to Greek myth and religion
2. The myths
3. Worship practices. The rituals. Ritual typology
4. Sacred spaces: shrines.

BLOCK II: THE OLYMPIC RELIGION

5. Introduction to the Olympic religion: gods, heroes and other deities
6. Zeus, Hera and related heroes
7. Poseidon, Athena and related heroes
8. Apollo, Artemis and related heroes
9. Aphrodite, Hermes and other related deities and heroes.
10. Dionysus and Dionysism.

Activities and Methodology

Title	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Type: Directed			
Exposició de temes d'acord amb la programació de l'assignatura	32	1.28	3, 2, 6, 4, 5
Participació en discussions	15	0.6	1
Type: Supervised			
Exposició oral	14.5	0.58	3, 1, 4
Treball cooperatiu	15	0.6	3, 2
Type: Autonomous			
Lectura de bibliografia	25	1	2
Recerca de material	20	0.8	2

The teaching methodology of this subject will consist of combining the theoretical explanations of each of the topics with comments from textual and iconographic documents that serve to illustrate and apply the knowledge acquired and, what is more important, to know the sources of 'this knowledge'.

Throughout the course, a selection of texts will be provided for working in class. Other complementary ones may be added, depending on the needs and interests of the students.

The students must read three of the Homeric Hymns: the Hymn to Demeter, the Hymn to Apollo and the Hymn to Aphrodite. The hymns will also be commented on in class, with the participation of the students, and the reading and comment will be evaluated in the partial exams.

The students, in groups of 2 or 3, will choose a topic from among those proposed in the attached list and make a written summary, a short selection of texts and images to comment on and a presentation to the class using the same format of ordinary classes.

Proposal of topics for the assignments (students will have to choose one, or propose a different one):

Mystery Cults:

1. The myth of Orpheus and Orphism
2. Orphic conceptions: the immortality and transmigration of the soul
3. Orphic cosmogonies and their relationship with Hesiod's Theogony
4. Cults and mysterious initiations: Eleusis, Cybele, the Cabirs.
5. Orphic Dionysus

Myths and cults of minor heroes and deities

6. The myth and the cult of Pelops
7. The cult of Heracles and its relationship with some of its myths
8. Theseus: myth and cult
9. The cult of Achilles
10. Other myths and cults of heroines: Atalanta, Deianira.
11. Agricultural rites: the worship of nymphs and related myths
12. The myth and the cult of Pan

Rites of transition

13. Rites of the life cycle: births, marriage, funeral rites
14. Initiations and rites of passage.
15. River cults.
16. The Spartan (and/or Cretan) agogé.

17. Homoerotic initiation: the myths of Ganymede and Pelops
 18. Rituals of ambiguity and sexual identity: Ceneu, Tiresias, Hermaphroditus, Achilles in Scyros.

Myths and rites of purification

19. Conceptions of impurity and purification. Purification rites
 20. Purification in myth: The cases of Odysseus and Orestes
 21. Myths of human sacrifices: Iphigenia
 22. The Scapegoat (Pharmacós)
 23. Katapontismos: Phaeton, Hippolytus, Mytilus and Ino-Leucôtea, etc.
 24. The foundation of colonies as purification rites.

USE OF AI

This subject allows the use of AI technologies exclusively for support tasks such as bibliographic or content-based searches. Other specific situations may be contemplated, as deemed appropriate by the teacher. The student must clearly (i) identify which parts have been generated using AI technology; (ii) specify the tools used; and (iii) include a critical reflection on how these have influenced the process and final outcome of the activity. Lack of transparency regarding the use of AI in the assessed activity will be considered academic dishonesty; the corresponding grade may be lowered, or the work may even be awarded a zero. In cases of greater infringement, more serious action may be taken.

Annotation: Within the schedule set by the centre or degree programme, 15 minutes of one class will be reserved for students to evaluate their lecturers and their courses or modules through questionnaires.

Assessment

Continous Assessment Activities

Title	Weighting	Hours	ECTS	Learning Outcomes
Exposició oral	30	25.5	1.02	3, 1, 2, 6, 4, 5
primer examen parcial	35	1.5	0.06	3, 6, 5
segon examen parcial	35	1.5	0.06	3, 6, 5

ORDINARY EVALUATION

The final grade of the subject will be the average between

- Oral presentation of a topic prepared by the student from the list provided in this guide (30%)
- 1st partial exam (35%)
- 2nd partial exam (35%)

It is important for the student to bear in mind that the assessment includes regular attendance in class and the completion and delivery of the activities proposed in class within the established deadlines. Continued non-attendance without justification and the fact of not delivering the activities within the deadline presupposes the loss of the right to continuous assessment.

A student who has not taken any of the written tests will be considered "Not presented".

UNIQUE ASSESSMENT

It will consist of three activities

- Oral presentation of a topic prepared by the student from the list provided in this guide (30%)
- Written theoretical exam on the syllabus (35%)
- Written commentary on two texts (35%)

REASSESSMENT

To participate in remediation, students must have been previously evaluated in a set of activities whose weight is equivalent to a minimum of 2/3 of the total grade (CONTINUED ASSESSMENT) or submit all the tests planned (SINGLE ASSESSMENT).

At the reassessment, the student will be able to recover the grade corresponding to the two partial exams and the oral presentation.

If the mark for any of the parts that can be reassessed is lower than 3, it will be necessary to recover it, even if the average mark for the subject is approved.

The revaluation can only be done if the partial exams or the oral presentation are suspended and the average grade for the subject is lower than 5, or if one of these tests could not be completed in its moment for a reason that can be justified with an official document.

A date of an assessment activity can only be changed if the absence or non-delivery can be justified with an official document.

On carrying out each evaluation activity, lecturers will inform students (on Moodle) of the procedures to be followed for reviewing all grades awarded, and the date on which such a review will take place.

If the tests cannot be taken in person, their format will be adapted (maintaining their weighting) to the possibilities offered by the UAB's virtual tools. Homework, activities and class participation will be done through forums, wikis and/or exercise discussions through Teams, etc. The teacher will ensure that the student can access it or will offer him or her alternative means, which are within their reach.

In the event that the student commits any irregularity that could lead to a significant variation in the grade of an assessment act, this assessment act will be graded with 0, regardless of the disciplinary process that may be instituted. In the event that several irregularities occur in the evaluation acts of the same subject, the final grade for this subject will be 0.

Bibliography

[En negreta els manuals i obres de consulta especialment recomanats]

Himnes homèrics (lectura obligatòria, es citen tres edicions diferents):

Himnos homéricos, La batracomiomaquia. Biblioteca Clásica Gredos 8 ISBN: 9788424930448

Himnos homéricos: ed. José B. Torres. Madrid, Cátedra 2005.

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Aghion, Irène, et al. *Guía iconográfica de los héroes y dioses de la antigüedad*. Alianza, 1997.

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ThesCRA = Thesaurus cultus et rituum antiquorum Los Angeles-Basel 2004.

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Bibliografia general

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Software

Moodle

Groups and Languages

Please note that this information is provisional until 30 November 2025. You can check it through this [link](#). To consult the language you will need to enter the CODE of the subject.

Name	Group	Language	Semester	Turn
(PAUL) Classroom practices	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed
(TE) Theory	1	Catalan	first semester	morning-mixed