

Thank you for submitting an application for the MU-MUSE Program. Below is your submission.

Student Name

Major)

Overall GPA 3.63

GPA in Major 3.76

Faculty Mentor

Faculty Department

Faculty MU Email

Project Title The Flood: The Appearance and Implications of the Universal Flood Archetype in Literature throughout the Centuries

Starting Date 05/01/2019

Ending Date 07/31/2019

Other Funding for this project

MU-MUSE

Project Abstract:

The universal or cataclysmic flood archetype transcends both time and space. The earliest known and written literary work to reference the appearance of a sudden flood of divine nature is Mesopotamia's The Epic of Gilgamesh. However, the archetype of the universal flood can be found in literature from across the globe and spans from some of the world's earliest civilizations to the modern, western science fiction genre. There are two competing theories about the development and spread of the universal flood archetype. One suggests that there was one flood origin myth created and then traded across the globe over the span of hundreds to thousands of years, or if these stories were written around the same time. An investigation into these theories and a comparison of the literature will aid academic understanding of different cultures, global perspectives and the shared human experience. My project intends to review the literature and history to defend or refute these theories.

Attached:

Grant Uploaded

Project Narrative

Faculty Letter of Endorsement

cc: Faculty Mentor

MUSE Committee

The Flood: The Appearance and Implications of the Universal Flood Archetype in Literature throughout the Centuries

1. Student Statement

Upon graduation from Millersville University, my academic aspirations are to pursue a master's in Peace Education. I hope to finance this degree by earning either the United Kingdom's Marshall Scholarship or becoming a University of Oxford Rhodes Scholar. A degree in this field would qualify me to work with leaders from countries that have experienced humanitarian crises and help them rebuild social institutions that are functional in the modern world but also respectful of their cultural traditions. I intend to work for the United Nations after gaining the necessary educational and international experience. I aspire to work in Afghanistan, rebuilding their school system to make it more accessible and safer for female students. The interdisciplinary nature of Peace Education requires that I have strong communication and professional skills. It also demands an acute understanding of different cultures, global perspectives, and our shared human identity.

I have an interest in literary and cultural education in Middle Eastern countries because the independent focus of my English degree from Millersville University is ancient Middle Eastern and Eastern Literature. The development of written language and international trade flooded out, in all directions, to the earliest civilizations across the globe from Mesopotamia located in the modern Middle East. Beginning with The Epic of Gilgamesh, the ancient Mesopotamian archetype of the universal flood influenced literary works of cultural significance throughout time and space. The flood archetype has transcended the ages and serves as a unifying reminder of humanity's shared fragility.

Participating in the 2019 Millersville University Mentored Undergraduate Summer Experience will afford me the opportunity to experience scholarly research, first-hand investigation, and academic writing as it pertains to my University Honors College thesis through collaborating with my mentor and advisor, Dr. Timothy Miller, and two other professors from the English Department. When I first discovered that I could explore any topic for my Honors thesis requirement, I immediately sought to investigate the occurrence of the flood stories across cultures and time periods. An understanding of this archetype and how it spread will not only further my knowledge in a topic of personal interest, it will also aid my understanding of different cultures, global perspectives, and our shared human identity. These qualities are necessary for my future academic and professional aspirations.

The majority of my English courses do not include literature before the Greek and Roman civilizations, and the universal flood archetype is seldom examined in texts other than Genesis of the Bible. While I will need a thorough comprehension of the Bible and works influenced by its book of Genesis, I wish to delve deeper. The MUSE program will allow me the funds and structure to work closely with Dr. Timothy Miller, Dr. Katarzyna Jakuibak, and Dr. Carla Rineer to investigate both the common and uncommon texts referencing the flood archetype and the

cultures from which those texts derived in two independent study courses over the summer. The research completed during those courses will be used to write my University Honors College thesis which will prepare me for graduate school and a professional career. My intent is to present my findings at Made in Millersville and perhaps seek publication of my original conclusions. Working closely with these professors, especially my mentor Dr. Timothy Miller who has published numerous scholarly articles, will help me achieve my goals of publication and increase my chances of being accepted into international, prestigious graduate scholarship programs.

While I am far from ready to work at the United Nations or specialize professionally in such a concentrated field as ancient Middle Eastern and Eastern literature, writing my Honors College thesis will provide me with a solid academic foundation. I am grateful to Millersville University, especially the University Honors College, for fostering me in the areas of communication and professional skills. For example, providing me with the opportunity to engage with highly accomplished faculty and staff to write an undergraduate thesis. Having taken the Honors course History of Ideas, I learned the value of incorporating primary and secondary sources from multiple disciplines when crafting arguments and conclusions for our class debates. The English Department's core course, Research and Analysis, also advanced my abilities to do scholarly research and craft original academic papers. Presenting at the Made in Millersville conference under Dr. Katarzyna Jakubiak and the PASSHE Honors Conference with Dr. Elizabeth Thyrum helped me practice communicating with people who are more experienced than myself and make effective use of constructive criticism. While I understand these educational programs and experiences were abridged for students who are still learning, they helped prepare me for my future academic and career objectives. They also qualified me to partake in this collaborative project.

2. Project Proposal

The purpose for this project is to investigate the spread of the universal flood throughout history and literature, and to then compare cataclysmic flood pieces (literary, mythic, and legendary) to draw conclusions about how this quintessential archetype influences the human experience. The end result of this project is to have completed all necessary research and begin the initial drafts of my University Honors College thesis.

My intended thesis topic investigates the development and appearance of the flood archetype in ancient world literature and into more modern literary works. I want to explore whether there was one flood origin myth created and then traded across the globe over the span of hundreds to thousands of years, or if these stories were written around the same time. The Epic of Gilgamesh may have spread to other civilizations trading with Mesopotamia as written language became more important globally, and the universal flood archetype was borrowed and recorded into literature/orally preserved by many different societies. However, the latter would suggest that the literature was written as a reaction to some kind of catastrophic weather phenomenon, or a 'great flood from the gods,' that was felt by different peoples in vastly different geographic

locations and may have contributed to the development of a later genre of literature centered on "cosmic catastrophe." It is considerably likely that a combination of these two hypothetical extremes contributed to the occurrence of the universal flood archetype. The first independent study with Dr. Katarzyna Jakubiak will be dedicated to studying The Epic of Gilgamesh and investigating how and when it spread to other geographic locations in order to draw a conclusion about the origin of the flood archetype. My ultimate goal is to acquire a strong understanding of ancient cultures through their development of written language and by their most important literary works. This independent study will run for approximately four weeks. Dr. Katarzyna Jakubiak, who teaches The Epic of Gilgamesh in Honors Explorations of World Literature and explores the cross-cultural sharing of literary ideas in New Dimensions to World Literature, will teach this independent study. This independent study will be a three-credit 499 course.

I will be meeting with my thesis advisor and mentor approximately once or twice a week during this time to review my conclusions and research progress in regards to my University Honors College thesis. During the first five weeks of the project, Dr. Timothy Miller and I will be examining the divine flood archetype found in Genesis and Biblically influenced works such as the Old English epic poem Beowulf. My advisor and mentor specializes in Biblical literary studies as he teaches both World Literature I and created the Milton course.

Dr. Carla Rineer will guide me through the methods of literary comparisons and help me decipher the broader literary and cultural implications of the reoccurrence of the flood archetype in my second independent study. Having already studied the most familiar and prominent literary works associated with the universal flood archetype, Dr. Carla Rineer and I will explore lesser known myths, oral traditions, and legends. This includes, but is not limited to, Indigenous American and ancient Chinese oral myths about cataclysmic floods. For instance, we will contextualize the Chinese legend "Yu and the Great Flood," referenced in a Washington Post's article interviewing David Cohen, an anthropologist and early Chinese history expert at National Taiwan University (Kaplan 2016). We will also search for contemporary scholarly articles addressing the universal flood archetype to either refute or defend based on my conclusions. I have found Dr. Carla Rineer to be an avid researcher with experience navigating primary resources and archives. In the eighth or ninth week of the project, I will be doing research at other universities and academic libraries. Although, I do not know which academic instructions will be most useful to conduct research in as of this point as Dr. Rineer and I have yet to begin our literary investigation and comparison. We may discover an unexpected yet critical literary work illuminating the flood archetype while conducting our research on campus. This independent study course will also be a three-credit 499 course.

During my second independent study course, I will be meeting with Dr. Miller once or twice a week as with the first independent study course. However, our focus will shift from older literary texts of biblical influence to the scientifically influenced, modern genre of "cosmic catastrophe." We will examine the implications of humanity's obsession with their fragility and destruction (manifested previously in ancient flood literature) appearing in modern science fiction and

fantasy literature. Dr. Timothy Miller’s experience and interest in the science fiction genre culminated in his creation of the English Department’s Science Fiction writing course.

Completion of this project would satisfy both my Honors College Thesis credit requirement as well as my mandatory English Capstone courses. I am in somewhat of a unique and advantageous situation as I will have the opportunity to not only work closely with my academically accomplished mentor, but also collaborate with two highly skilled English professors. Dr. Timothy Miller has generously agreed to work with me over the summer, however his writing schedule is extensive. He cannot personally instruct my independent courses. During my ten-week summer project I expect to spend approximately thirty hours working on my thesis each week on campus with the exception of one week in which I will participate in research at an off-campus institution of academic merit. It is also important to note that I will be attending Elizabethtown College’s Silk Road Conference on April 11th, 2019 with Dr. Elizabeth Thyrum and the Honors College because it may contribute valuable information to my thesis research prior to beginning my ten-week project this summer.

3. Dissemination Plan

Dr. Timothy Miller and I intend to present my project at Millersville University’s Made in Millersville Conference next academic year. With the help of all my participating professors and Dr. Jill Craven, I also hope to revise my work for potential publication. Most importantly, I will use all my research and writing for my University Honors College thesis which I will defend in Spring 2020.

4. Timeline

Week	Activity
1	Independent Study with Dr. Jakubiak Meeting with Dr. Miller
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	Meeting with Dr. Miller
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5. Expenditures Outline

Expense:	Description:	Amount:	Total:
6 credits	2019 Millersville tuition for Summer 1 & 2 Honors Thesis Credit Independent Study Courses	\$368.75/credit X 6	\$2,212.5
Materials	see material lists for both courses	\$300.00	\$300.00
Travel/Off-campus Research (hotel, transportation, fees, meals, etc.)	Hotel, transportation, entrance fees, meals, etc.	\$350.00	\$350.00
Research Technology	Toshiba Tecra A50-D1532	\$919.99 + \$25.28 shipping	\$945.27
Rent	Partial rent for May and full June/July rent	\$232 May rent & \$464.00/month X1	\$1160
			Total: \$4967.77

The Flood: The Appearance and Implications of the Universal Flood Archetype in Literature throughout the Centuries

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