**Dr. Margaret M. Toscano:**

I am an Associate Professor of Classics and Comparative Literary and Cultural Studies in the Department of World Languages and Cultures at the University of Utah.

The interplay of gender, myth, and religion is the focal point of my research and publishing. In particular, I am interested in the ways abstract concepts of religion and gender are embodied through myth and ritual and how they are performed in a wide variety of cultural practices, texts, and venues. Embodiment as a theoretical and theological concept fascinates me, in part because the long-standing split philosophically between body and mind has contributed to the subordination of women, who have often been linked with everything associated with the “lower” realm of the body. I am interested in the ways female and male bodies are invested with meanings that extend far beyond the biological, while never being divorced completely from physical bodies themselves. Myth, in my opinion, is embodied theology. As foundational stories that shape societal and personal identities, myths combine the sacred with the mundane, religion with art, and the esoteric with the common.

Much of my work focuses on tracing the ways myths (usually originating in the classical world) get transformed when they are translated into new contexts, new times, new genres and media. For all of these reasons, many of my essays explore the relationship between word and image, either through film or visual art, which also relates to my focus on gender and myth since film is one of the most crucial sites for modern mythmaking because of its ability to reach large audiences and reflect group identities. I have published an article on the film *O Brother, Where Art Thou?* and three book chapters on the HBO-BBC TV series *Rome*, as well as a chapter on Stephenie Meyer’s Twilight books. I am both the co-editor and a chapter contributor for the book *Hell and Its Afterlife: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*, published by Ashgate in 2010. My article, “The Eyes Have It: Female Desire on Attic Greek Vases,” published in the *Arethusa* journal in 2013, has been the impetus for my current book project, *The Other Greek Love: Heterosexual Desire in Ancient Greece*.

I have published extensively on Mormon feminism for the last 30 years, including the book *Strangers in Paradox: Explorations in Mormon Theology* (co-authored with my husband Paul), as well as many articlesthat have appeared in the *Sunstone Magazine* and *Dialogue: A Journal of Mormon Thought*. My essay, “The Mormon ‘Ordain Women’ Movement: The Virtue of Virtual Activism,” appeared in *Feminism in the 21st Century*: *Technology, Dialogue, and Expanding Borders*, which was published by Routledge in 2015.

I teach all levels of Latin and ancient Greek. I also teach the introductory level of Classical

Mythology, which typically draws 200 students, as well as upper-division courses on Myth and Religion in Ancient Greece and Women in Greece and Rome. My research interest in Hell as both a religious belief and a cultural metaphor led me to develop a CLCS course called Crossing into Hell. My soon-to-be published essay, “The Immortality of Theseus and his Myth,” was the impetus behind a new graduate course I taught in spring 2016 on the Quest for Immortality.

Because I served as the Director of Graduate Studies for my department for four years from 2013-2016, I also have been mentoring our graduate students by teaching our Graduate Research and Writing course. And I continue to serve on many doctoral and master’s graduate committees.