CLASSICS (Div I)
Chair: Professor Edan Dekel


The course offerings in Classics enable students to explore the ancient Greek, Roman, and Greco-Roman worlds from various perspectives, including literature, history, archaeology, art, philosophy, and religion. Courses are of two types: language (Greek and Latin) and translation (Classical Civilization). The 100-level language courses are intensive introductions to Greek and Latin grammar; the 200-level language courses combine comprehensive grammar review with readings from Greek or Latin texts of pivotal historical periods; Latin 302 and the 400-level language courses are seminars that explore in depth selected authors or topics and the methods of analysis appropriate to each of them. Courses in which texts are read in translation provide both surveys and more specialized study of the classical world from earliest historical times through late antiquity.

MAJOR

Majors and prospective majors are encouraged to consult with the department’s faculty to ensure a well-balanced and comprehensive selection of Classics courses appropriate to their individual interests. A course or courses in ancient history are strongly recommended. Majors may also benefit from advice on courses offered in other departments that would complement their particular interests in Classics. A reading knowledge of French, German, and Italian is useful for any study in Classics and is required in at least two of these modern languages by graduate programs in classics, ancient history, classical art and archaeology, and medieval studies.

The department offers two routes to the major: Classics and Classical Civilization

Classics: (1) Six courses in Greek and/or Latin, with at least two 400-level courses in one language; (2) Three additional courses, elected from the offerings in Greek, Latin, or Classical Civilization or from approved courses in other departments; 3) Participation in the Senior Colloquium.

Classical Civilization: (1) Either Classics 101 or 102 and one of Classics 222, 223, or 224; (2) Three additional courses from the offerings in Classical Civilization or from approved courses in other departments (3) Three courses in Greek or Latin with at least one at the 400 level, or four courses in Latin at any level; (4) A senior independent study is normally required to complete the Classical Civilization major. Several of the courses elected, including the independent study, should relate to each other in such a way as to reflect a concentration on a particular genre, period, or problem of Greek and Roman civilization, including topics in ancient art and archaeology, religion in the Greco-Roman world, and ancient philosophy; 4) Participation in the Senior Colloquium.

A number of courses from other departments are cross-listed with Classics and may be elected for the major, for instance, Art History 213 Greek Art and Myth, Philosophy 201 Greek Philosophy, and Religion 210 Reading Jesus, Writing Gospels. Appropriate courses that are not cross-listed may also count toward the major with the approval of the chair of Classics. Examples of such courses, which vary from year to year, are Art History 105 Picturing God in the Middle Ages, Religion/Jewish Studies 201 The Hebrew Bible, Religion 212 The Development of Christianity, and Political Science 231 Ancient Political Thought.

Senior Colloquium: Senior majors are required to enroll in CLAS 499 in both semesters. The topics and activities of this colloquium, which normally meets every other week for an hour, vary according to the interests of the participants. Junior majors are also encouraged to participate.

THE DEGREE WITH HONORS IN CLASSICS

Students who wish to be considered for the degree with honors will normally prepare a thesis or pursue appropriate independent study in one semester and winter study of their senior year. The thesis or independent study offers students the opportunity to work in depth on a topic of their choosing and to apply and develop the techniques and critical methods with which they have become acquainted during their regular course work. It may also include relevant work with members of other departments. In order to write a thesis, students normally must have a minimum GPA of 3.3 in their major courses and must submit a thesis proposal that earns departmental approval before the end of the spring semester of their junior year. To be awarded the degree with honors in Classics, the student is required to have taken a minimum of ten semester courses in the department (not including the thesis or independent study) and to have demonstrated original or superior ability in studies in the field both through course work and through the thesis or equivalent independent study.

COURSE NUMBERING SYSTEM

Language Courses: The numbering of courses through the 300 level reflects the prerequisites involved. The only prerequisite for any 400-level course is Greek 201 or Latin 302, or equivalent language preparation. The rotation of 400-level courses is arranged to permit exposure, in a three- to four-year period, to most of the important periods and genres of classical studies. Students may enter the rotation at any point.

Classical Civilization Courses: The numbering of these courses often suggests a recommended but rarely necessary sequence of study within a given area of classical studies. Most of these courses do not assume prior experience in Classics or a cross-listed field.
STUDY ABROAD

We strongly encourage Classics majors to study abroad in their junior year, at programs in Italy (especially the semester-length program at the Intercollegiate Center for Classical Studies in Rome), at programs in Greece (especially the College Year in Athens, which students need only attend for one semester), and in the Williams at Oxford Program. Our majors have also had excellent Classics experiences in other study-abroad programs in Italy and Greece and at various universities in Europe and the United Kingdom. In addition, we encourage students to take advantage of opportunities available in the summer: study abroad programs in Italy and Greece, archaeological digs, or even carefully planned individual travel to sites in Greece, Italy or other areas of the ancient Greco-Roman world. When the college cannot do so, the department may be able to provide some financial support for summer study abroad. The department’s faculty are always available to advise students, the chair has materials to share, and students can visit the department’s website for information and links to helpful sites.

FAQ

Students MUST contact departments/programs BEFORE assuming study away credit will be granted toward the major or concentration.

Can your department or program typically pre-approve courses for major/concentration credit?

Yes, in some cases, if appropriate course information is available in advance (e.g. syllabi and/or course descriptions), though students should be sure to contact the department.

What criteria will typically be used/required to determine whether a student may receive major/concentration credit for a course taken while on study away?

Complete syllabus and course description, including readings/assignments.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the number of major/concentration credits that a student might earn through study away?

No.

Does your department/program place restrictions on the types of courses that can be awarded credit towards your major?

No.

Are there specific major requirements that cannot be fulfilled while on study away?

Yes. Senior Colloquium.

Are there specific major requirements in your department/program that students should be particularly aware of when weighing study away options? (Some examples might include a required course that is always taught in one semester, laboratory requirements.)

No.

Give examples in which students thought or assumed that courses taken away would count toward the major or concentration and then learned they wouldn’t:

None to date.

CLAS 10 (W) From Metal to Money: Ancient Numismatics
Crosslistings: ARTH10 / CLAS10

Primary Crosslisting

How were coins made and circulated in the ancient world? Why did a city or individual choose to mint coins? What role did coins play in people’s lived experience, as well as in Greek and Roman visual culture? In this course, we will explore the Western coinage tradition from its origins through Late Antiquity, using the college’s own numismatic collection as a basis for methodological discussions and for individual research. In consultation with the professor, each student will select coins from the collection and relate it to each of the different methodological issues under investigation. These topics will include mint and die studies; analysis of coin hoards; approaches to coin finds in archaeological excavation; the use of coins as historical "documents"; and the iconography of Greco-Roman coinage as it relates to classical art history. For most class meetings, students will present a short report on how the methodological issue under discussion relates to specific coins they have selected from the college’s collection, before choosing a final research project. In addition to the hands-on experience of working with these coins, we will also survey the different historical coinages from antiquity (e.g., Classical Greek, Hellenistic Greek, Roman Republican) through a series of illustrated lectures.

Class Format: afternoons

Requirements/Evaluation: 10-page paper and a presentation

Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 15
Enrollment Preferences: preference will be given to students majoring in Classics, Art History, and History
Materials/Lab Fee: cost of books

Winter 2019
LEC Section: 01    TR 10:00 am - 12:50 pm     Nicole G. Brown

CLAS 15 (W)  Plato’s Symposium and Its Afterlife
Crosslistings: CLAS15 / PHIL15 / WGSS15 / COMP15
Primary Crosslisting
Plato’s Symposium commemorates a gathering held at the home of the poet Agathon of Athens, in 416 BCE, shortly after his first victory in the tragedy contest. The attendees of Agathon's drinking party agree to dedicate their evening to delivering speeches in praise of love (eros/Eros). This dialogue has long been one of Plato’s most widely appreciated works and its influence has ranged far beyond the purview of academic philosophy. We will read and analyze the dialogue itself, then turn to an eclectic array of works inspired by the Symposium to study its artistic and philosophical “afterlife.”

Class Format: mornings
Requirements/Evaluation: 5-page paper and an in-class presentation of independent research
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 8
Enrollment Preferences: preference given to majors or intending majors in Classics, Comparative Literature, WGSS, or Philosophy
Materials/Lab Fee: cost of books

Winter 2019
LEC Section: 01    MTWR 10:00 am - 11:50 am     Amanda R. Wilcox

CLAS 31 (W)  Senior Thesis: Classics
May be taken by students registered for Classics 493-494.
Class Format: independent study
Distributions: (D1)

Winter 2019
HON Section: 01    TBA     Edan  Dekel

CLAS 101 (S)  The Trojan War (WI)
Crosslistings: COMP107 / CLAS101
The Trojan War may or may not have taken place near the end of the Bronze Age (c. 1100), but it certainly provided poets, visual artists, historians, philosophers, and many others in archaic and classical Greece (750-320) with a rich discourse for engaging questions about gender, exchange, desire, loss, and remembrance, and about friendship, marriage, family, army, city-state and religious cult. This discourse of “The Trojan War” attained a remarkable coherence yet also thrived on substantial variations and changes over the 300-400 years of Greek literature we will explore, a dynamic of change and continuity that has persisted through the more than two millenia of subsequent Greek, Roman, Western, and non-Western participation in this discourse. More than half of the course will be devoted to the Homeric Iliad and Odyssey; we will also read brief selections from lyric poetry (e.g. Archilochus, Sappho of Lesbos), some selections from the historians Herodotus and Thucydides, and several tragedies (e.g. Aeschylus’ Oresteia, Sophocles’ Ajax, Euripides’ Trojan Women). We may briefly consider a few short selections from other ancient Greek and Roman authors and/or one or two modern poets. We will also watch several films, e.g. Troy, Oh Brother, Where Art Thou? Gods and Monsters, Fight Club, In the Bedroom, Grand Illusion.

Class Format: lecture and discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on a series of short papers involving close textual analysis, two 5-page papers, and contributions to class discussion

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: majors in Classics and Comparative Literature, with attention also given to assuring a balance of class years and majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D1) (WI)

Attributes: MAST Interdepartmental Electives;

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 102 (F) Roman Literature: Foundations and Empire

Crosslistings: CLAS102 / COMP108

Primary Crosslisting

In the first book of Vergil’s Aeneid, the god Jupiter prophesies the foundation and the greatness of Rome: “I place no limits on their fortunes and no time; I grant them empire without end.” Yet elsewhere in this epic account of Rome’s origins, this promise of unlimited power for the descendants of Romulus seems to be seriously abridged. Some readers have seen, not only in the Aeneid but throughout classical Roman literature, a persistent tendency to inscribe the decay and disintegration of Roman power into the very works that proclaim and celebrate Roman preeminence. This course explores the ancient Romans’ own interpretations of their past, their present, and their destiny: the humble beginnings of their city, its rise to supreme world power, and premonitions of its decline. Related topics for our consideration will include Roman constructions of gender, the location and expression of virtue in the public and private spheres, the connections and conflicts between moral probity and political success, the exercise of individual power versus action on behalf of the commonwealth, the absorption of foreign customs and peoples into Rome, the management of literal and imaginary frontiers, and other anxieties of empire. We will read selections and complete works by a wide variety of Roman authors, including Cicero, Catullus, Caesar, Vergil, Sallust, Horace, Ovid, Seneca, and Tacitus. All readings will be in translation.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on short written assignments, midterm and final exams with essays, and contributions to class discussion

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores and majors in Classics and Comparative Literature

Expected Class Size: 15

Distributions: (D1)

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 203 (F) History of Ancient Greek Philosophy

Crosslistings: PHIL201 / CLAS203
Secondary Crosslisting

Very few people believe that everything is water, that we knew everything before birth, that philosophers ought to rule the state, or that some people are natural slaves. Why then should we spend our time studying people who in addition to having these surprising beliefs have been dead for 2500 years? First of all, Greek thinkers, especially Plato and Aristotle, radically shaped the trajectory of western thought in every area of philosophy. No one can have an adequate understanding of western intellectual history without some familiarity with the Greeks, and we might think that an understanding of our intellectual history can deepen our understanding of our own situation. More importantly, many of the thinkers that we will read in this class are simply excellent philosophers, and it is worthwhile for anyone interested in philosophical problems to read treatments of these problems by excellent philosophers. We will begin the course by looking briefly at some of the Presocratic philosophers active in the Mediterranean world of the seventh through fifth centuries BCE, and some of the sophists active in the fifth century. We will then turn to several of Plato's dialogues, examining Plato's portrayal of Socrates and his development of a new and profoundly powerful philosophical conception. We will then read some of Aristotle's works on metaphysics, epistemology and ethics, considering some of the ways Aristotle's thought responds to that of predecessors.

Class Format: lecture/discussion
Requirements/Evaluation: short papers, possibly supplemented by one or more exams
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Expected Class Size: 20-40
Department Notes: philosophy majors must take either Phil 201 or Phil 202 (and can take both)
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01    MWF 11:00 am - 12:15 pm     Keith E. McPartland

CLAS 205 (S) Ancient Wisdom Literature
Crosslistings: JWST205 / REL205 / COMP217 / CLAS205
Secondary Crosslisting

The Biblical books of Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Job are often grouped together under the Hebrew category of hokhmah, 'wisdom.' Although these books are very different in content, they can all be interpreted as meditations on ethical and practical philosophy. In this way, they represent the Hebrew Bible's canonical embrace of a widespread Near Eastern literary phenomenon. From the instructional literature of Egypt and Mesopotamia to Greek didactic poetry and fables, ancient Mediterranean cultures offer a wide range of texts that engage the issues of personal behavior, leadership, and justice. Starting with the central wisdom books of the Hebrew Bible and moving through relevant material from the Apocrypha, New Testament, and the Egyptian and Babylonian traditions, this course will examine the literature of wisdom throughout the ancient world with an eye toward understanding its various social, political, and philosophical contexts. We will then consider the Greek wisdom tradition in such texts as Hesiod's Works and Days, Aesop's fables, and fragments from the pre-Socratic philosophers. Finally, we will explore the influence of these ancient sources on later expressions of wisdom in medieval European literature, as well as more recent examples such as Benjamin Franklin's Poor Richard's Almanack.
All readings are in translation.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, short written assignments, and two longer papers
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP
Attributes: JWST Core Electives

Not offered current academic year
CLAS 207 (F)  From Adam to Noah: Literary Imagination and the Primeval History in Genesis
Crosslistings: COMP250 / REL207 / JWST207 / CLAS207

Secondary Crosslisting

How long did Adam and Eve live in the Garden of Eden? What was the mark of Cain? Why did Enoch not die? Who was Noah's wife? How did Giants survive the Flood? These are only a few of the fascinating questions that ancient readers and interpreters of the Book of Genesis asked and attempted to answer. The first ten chapters of Genesis present a tantalizingly brief narrative account of the earliest history of humankind. The text moves swiftly from the Creation to the Flood and its immediate aftermath, but this masterful economy of style leaves many details unexplained. This course will explore the rich and varied literary traditions associated with the primeval history in the Genesis. Through a close reading of ancient noncanonical sources such as the Book of Enoch, Jubilees, and the Life of Adam and Eve, as well as Jewish traditions represented in Josephus, Philo, and Rabbinic literature and other accounts presented in early Christian and Gnostic texts, we will investigate the ways in which the elliptical style of Genesis generated a massive body of ancient folklore, creative exegesis, and explicit literary re-imagining of the early history of humankind. We will then turn to several continuations of these variant traditions in medieval and early modern literature, with particular attention to the extensive material on the figures of Cain and Noah. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation and several writing assignments
Extra Info: core course for COMP
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 19
Enrollment Preferences: students who have already taken a course in Biblical literature
Expected Class Size: 19
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under COMP or CLAS
Attributes: JWST Core Electives
Not offered current academic year

CLAS 210 (F)  Art and Experience in Ancient Rome
Crosslistings: ARTH210 / CLAS210

Primary Crosslisting

To see and be seen--it could be argued that this was the very definition of Roman culture. Much like today, spectacle and the dissemination of images lay at the heart of political and social life. The visual arts were crucial both to how the Romans rehearsed their identity and goals as a community, and to how individual Romans communicated their achievements and values. In this course, lectures on the art and architecture of ancient Rome (ca. 300 B.C.-A.D. 400) will provide the backdrop for an investigation into the role visual culture played in the lives of all Romans, including slaves and former slaves, women and children. Special topics will include the funeral and funerary portraiture; the military triumph and monuments of victory; the house as a site of memory; the use of images on coins; participation in religious celebrations; displays of war booty and prisoners of war; experience and audience at the racetrack and in the amphitheater; the spectacle of food and dining; and the Roman street as both contested space and a place for art. Readings will include a combination of primary and secondary sources. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: lecture

Requirements/Evaluation: attendance and preparation, a mid-term, a final, and a medium-length paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

LEC Section: 01    TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Nicole G. Brown
CLAS 211 (F)  Performing Greece
Crosslistings: CLAS211 / THEA211 / COMP248

Primary Crosslisting

Modern readers often encounter Homer, Sappho, Sophocles, and the Greek orators as written texts, yet their first ancient audiences experienced the words of these authors not in silence and solitude, but in live performance contexts. This course, therefore, will take up performance as a critical lens for interpreting ancient Greek literature, situating these works within a rich culture of song, dance, speech, and debate. From the Homeric epics and the masterpieces of Greek tragedy and comedy to the speeches and dialogues of Demosthenes, Thucydides, and Plato, we will survey the evidence for the musical, visual, and embodied aspects of Greek literature. At the same time, we will reflect on the rewards and limits of enlivening the ancient world through the reconstruction and re-imagination of its performative dimensions. Our attention to performance will give us a distinct perspective on many important topics within the study of Greek civilization, including the construction of personal and collective identity, the workings of Athenian democracy, and the development of literary genres. In addition to a wide selection from Greek poetry, drama, and prose, our readings will include works by ancient and modern theorists of performance and culture. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, two essays (5 pages), midterm, final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 40
Enrollment Preferences: first-year students and sophomores and majors in Classics, Comparative Literature, and Theatre
Expected Class Size: 35
Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Sarah E. Olsen

CLAS 212 (F)  The Art of Friendship
Crosslistings: CLAS212 / COMP267 / REL267

Primary Crosslisting

The idea of friendship has captivated poets, philosophers, and their audiences for over three millennia. The subtle dynamics of this fundamental relationship between humans have been a source of inspiration, consolation, and consternation for countless writers and readers. What are the different types of friendship? How does one make a friend, and what makes a good friend? How does a friend differ from an acquaintance, an ally, an accomplice, an enemy? Can the beloved also be a friend? Ancient Greek and Latin writers took up these and other questions about friendship in philosophical dialogues and treatises, epic and lyric poems, tragic and comic plays, oratory, and correspondence. This course will explore ancient theories and representations of friendship through readings from many of the most important texts and authors of antiquity, including Gilgamesh, the Hebrew Bible, Homer, Sappho, Euripides, Plato, Aristotle, Cicero, Virgil, Seneca, and the Epistles of Paul. We will also consider the wide-ranging responses to these meditations and depictions in later traditions from the Middle Ages to modernity, in such writers as Heloise and Abelard, Aelred of Rievaulx, Aquinas, Montaigne, Ralph Waldo Emerson, Emily Dickinson, Elizabeth Bishop, Jack Kerouac, and Susan Sontag. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, short written assignments, and a final paper/project
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 25
Expected Class Size: 25
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL
Not offered current academic year

Crosslistings: CLAS215 / REL215

Secondary Crosslisting

In this course, students will be introduced to the New Testament through an exploration of how the New Testament became--and continues to be produced as--a book. We will start by examining the letters of Paul--its earliest texts--in terms of the habits and traditions of ancient letter-writing. We will similarly place the other texts of the New Testament in the context of Greek, Roman, and Jewish literary traditions and conventions. As the semester moves forward, we will examine how the New Testament itself became a material object--a book--and how its changing material status shaped its meaning and functioning. We will see the New Testament transform from a library of separate scrolls and/or codices (a library which was occasionally bound together into a single codex), to a luxury object in the Middle Ages, to a cheap printed object in the wake of the printing revolution of the 19th century, to its modern life as both a highly marketed object and a searchable digital "thing" in online spaces and mobile apps.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active preparation and participation, two short papers (3-5 pages), midterm, and final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 10-12
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 219 (S) Judaism Under Ancient Greek and Roman Imperialisms
Crosslistings: JWST219 / CLAS219 / REL219

Secondary Crosslisting

How did ancient Greek and Roman empires shape the beginnings of Judaism? In this course, we will examine how Greek and Roman imperial systems of identity, ethnicity, law, religion, and knowledge affected Judaism as a religious and cultural system. We will pay particular attention to the ways that Jews/Judaeeans responded to these imperial pressures, especially as those responses articulated "hybrid" versions of Judaism that were informed both by resistance to imperial centers as well as the sheer hegemony of those cultural systems. The course thus uses (and introduces students to) postcolonial theory to study the history of Judaism under Greek and Roman empires. Readings for this course will include a wide array of ancient Jewish works, such as the books of Maccabees, Flavius Josephus, Philo of Alexandria, the Dead Sea Scrolls, and the Mishnah. The course will also include select readings from early Christian texts and postcolonial theory.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: active preparation and participation, short reading response papers (1-page), midterm, and final exam
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: none
Enrollment Preferences: none
Expected Class Size: 10-12
Distributions: (D2)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL or JWST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 221 (F) Technologies of Religion in the Early Christian World
Crosslistings: CLAS221 / REL221

Secondary Crosslisting

What is the relationship between religion and technology? How do various technologies affect the production and distribution of religious knowledge? Facilitate communication and interaction with the divine? Transform the religious self? In this course, we will look specifically at the uses and effects of technology on religion in the early Christian world. While focused most directly on the influence of technology on the development of early Christianity, the course will also explore the place of technology in coterminous movements: in "pagan" sacrifice, Neoplatonic divination, and Stoic practices of the
By examining technologies of text production, sacrifice, memory, and the self, the course will shed light on early Christianity and its competing religious and philosophical movements, as well as on the nature of technology's relationship to religion.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: active preparation and participation, short reading response papers (1 page), and a final exam

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: none

Enrollment Preferences: none

Expected Class Size: 10-12

Distributions: (D2)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 222 (S) Greek History

Crosslistings: CLAS222 / HIST222

Primary Crosslisting

Ancient Greece has been thought to embody the origins of Western civilization in its institutions, values, and thought; it has been seen as the infancy of modern society, with the attributes of innocence, purity, and the infant's staggering capacity for exploration and learning; it has been interpreted as an essentially primitive, violent culture with a thin veneer of rationality; and it has been celebrated as the rational culture par excellence. The study of ancient Greece indeed requires an interpretive framework, yet Greek culture and history have defied most attempts to articulate one. We will make our attempt in this course by investigating ancient Greece as a set of cultures surprisingly foreign to us, as it so often was to its own intellectual elite. But we will also come to appreciate the rich and very real connections between ancient Greek and modern Western civilization. The course will begin with Bronze Age Greece and the earliest developments in Greek culture, and will conclude with the spread of Greek influence into Asia through the conquests of Alexander the Great. We will explore topics such as the aristocratic heritage of the city-state, the effects of pervasive war on Greek society, the competitive spirit in political and religious life, the confrontations with the East, the relationship of intellectual culture to Greek culture as a whole, Greek dependence on slavery, and the diversity of political and social forms in the Greek world.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on contributions to class discussions, a midterm, a final exam, and a medium-length paper

Prerequisites: none; open to all

Enrollment Limit: 25

Enrollment Preferences: preference will be given to majors in Classics, History, and Art History.

Expected Class Size: 25

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Attributes: HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia; HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Not offered current academic year

CLAS 223 (S) Roman History

Crosslistings: HIST223 / CLAS223

Primary Crosslisting

The study of Roman history involves questions central to the development of Western institutions, religion, and modes of thought. Scholars have looked to Rome both for actual antecedents of European cultural development and for paradigmatic scenes illustrating what they felt were cultural universals. Yet Roman history also encompasses the most far-reaching experience of diverse cultures, beliefs, and practices known in the Western tradition until perhaps contemporary times. A close analysis of Roman history on its own terms shows the complex and fascinating results of an ambitious, self-confident nation's encounter both with unexpected events and crises at home, and with other peoples. As this course addresses the history of Rome from its mythologized beginnings through the reign of the emperor Constantine, it will place special emphasis on the impressive Roman ability to turn the unexpected into a rich source of cultural development, as well as the complex tendency later to interpret such ad hoc responses as predestined and inevitable. The Romans also provide a vivid portrait of the relationship between power and self-confidence on the one
hand, and violence and ultimate disregard for dissent and difference on the other. Readings for this course will concentrate on a wide variety of original sources, and there will be a strong emphasis on the problems of historical interpretation.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on class participation, occasional response papers, one 6- to 8-page paper, a midterm, and a final exam

Prerequisites: none; open to all

Enrollment Limit: 25

Expected Class Size: 25

Distributions: (D1)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Attributes: HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia; HIST Group P Electives - Premodern

Spring 2019

LEC Section: 01   MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm     Kerry A. Christensen

CLAS 226 (S) The Ancient Novel
Crosslistings: CLAS226 / COMP226

Primary Crosslisting
Pirates, prostitutes, witches, and donkeys: the novels of ancient Greece and Rome often surprise their modern readers with a striking blend of humor, violence, and eroticism. From damsels in distress and daring rescues to impossible journeys and magical transformations, this course will consider these remarkable and varied texts within their own literary and cultural contexts. By reading the works of such authors as Longus, Lucian, Apuleius, and Heliodorus, we will survey the different forms of extended prose fiction that have traditionally been called the ancient "novel." We will confront the challenges of defining the genre itself, and consider both its ancient literary heritage and its later reception and afterlife. We will also explore the ways in which these texts engage with the complex and diverse world of the ancient Mediterranean, paying close attention to the representation of gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and cultural identity. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, in-class presentations, brief reading responses (1-page), and a final paper (8-10 pages)

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none, although some prior knowledge of the ancient Mediterranean will be useful

Enrollment Limit: 19

Enrollment Preferences: Classics and Comparative Literature majors

Expected Class Size: 19

Distributions: (D1)

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01   TF 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm     Sarah E. Olsen

CLAS 230 (F) From Alexander to Cleopatra: Remodeling the Mediterranean World
Crosslistings: ARTH230 / CLAS230

Primary Crosslisting
The period between Alexander the Great (323 B.C.) and Cleopatra (30 B.C.), like our own, was characterized by internationalism, migration, wide-ranging cultural values and religious practices, and ethnically diverse urban populations. Large numbers of non-Greeks came under the control of newly established Hellenistic kingdoms, while in the west Rome's emergence as a superpower offered both new opportunity and danger. The Hellenistic world was a place of vibrant change in the spheres of art, architecture, urban planning, and public spectacle. In this course, we will consider the art and archaeology of this period in their political, social, and religious contexts, focusing on the visual language of power and royalty; developments in painting, sculpture, mosaics, and monumental architecture; interactions between Greeks and non-Greeks; and the impact of Greek
culture in Rome.

Class Format: lecture
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, quizzes, midterm, final exam, and one medium-length paper
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 40
Enrollment Preferences: students with an interest in the ancient Mediterranean world and in the history of western art and architecture
Expected Class Size: 35
Distributions: (D1)
Not offered current academic year

CLAS 235 (S)  The Garden in the Ancient World
Crosslistings: ENVI232 / REL235 / CLAS235 / COMP235

Primary Crosslisting
Drawing on the literature, art, and archaeology of ancient gardens and on real gardens of the present day, this course examines the very nature and experience of the garden and the act of gardening. Using a multi-disciplinary approach, we will explore the garden as a paradise; as a locus for philosophical discussion and religious encounter; as a site of labor, conquest, and resistance; and as a place for solace, inspiration, and desire. This course will be grounded in crucial readings from antiquity, such as the Hebrew Bible, Homer, Sappho, Cicero, Lucretius, Vergil, Horace, Columella, and Augustine, and in the perspectives of more modern writers, from Jane Austen and Tom Stoppard to contemporary cultural historian George McKay. Ultimately, our goal is to analyze conceptions and expressions of beauty, power, and love-in the garden. All readings are in translation.

Class Format: seminar
Requirements/Evaluation: class participation, short written assignments, and a final project
Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis
Prerequisites: none
Enrollment Limit: 20
Enrollment Preferences: Classics majors
Expected Class Size: 15
Distributions: (D1)
Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS, COMP or ENVI; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

Spring 2019
SEM Section: 01    MR 1:10 pm - 2:25 pm    Nicole G. Brown

CLAS 236 (S)  Demigods: Nature, Social Theory, and Visual Imagination in Art and Literature, Ancient to Modern
Crosslistings: ARTH530 / CLAS236

Secondary Crosslisting
Embodied in satyrs, centaurs, nymphs, and other demigods is a vision of an alternative evolutionary and cultural history. In it, humans and animals live together. The distinction between nature and culture is not meaningful. Male and female are equal. The industrial revolution never happens. This course traces the history of demigods from its origins in ancient Greek art and poetry until today. We pay special attention to three points: the relationship between mythology of demigods and ancient political theory about primitive life; evolving conceptions of the environment, and the capacity of the visual arts to create mythology that has a limited literary counterpart. The first half of the course examines the origins and character of the demigods, in works of ancient art, e.g. the François vase and the Parthenon, as well as ancient texts, including Hesiod's Theogony and Ovid's Metamorphoses. We examine relevant cultural practices, intellectual history, and conceptions of nature, in texts such as Euripides and Lucretius. The second half of the course investigates the post-classical survival of demigods. We consider the "rediscovery" of demigods in the work of Renaissance artists such as Botticelli, Michelangelo, Dürer, and Titian. We consider in detail the important role played by demigods in the formation of Modernism in art and literature. Key texts include Schiller, "Naive and sentimental poetry," Nietzsche, Birth of Tragedy, Mallermé, "L'Apres midi d'une faun," Aby Warburg, and Stoppard's Arcadia. Problems include the relationship between nymphs and prostitutes in Manet, and the meaning of fauns and the
Minotaur in Picasso. We conclude with demigods in popular culture such as the Narnia chronicles or Hunger Games.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** attendance, participation in discussion, one short presentation on a demigod in ancient art, one longer presentation on demigods in early modern, modern, or contemporary art, and a 20-page research paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 16

**Enrollment Preferences:** first year graduate students, then second year graduate students, then advanced undergraduates

**Expected Class Size:** 12

**Department Notes:** pre-1600 undergraduate requirement

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

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**CLAS 241 (S) Sex and Gender in Ancient Greece and Rome (WI)**

Crosslistings: CLAS241 / COMP241 / WGSS241

**Primary Crosslisting**

From the household to the marketplace, from sacred spaces to the political arena, sexuality and gender shaped a broad range of attitudes and actions in the ancient Mediterranean world. This course investigates a variety of discourses and practices around sexuality and gender in ancient Greece and Rome with the aim of promoting students' capacity to evaluate claims and dismantle false assumptions about the continuity of the "classical" past with contemporary norms and values. We will carefully analyze, contextualize, and compare a variety of texts, including selections from tragic and comic drama, epic and lyric poetry, handbooks, epitaphs, novels and biography in order to better understand how gender and sexuality were expressed, experienced, and regulated in Greece and Rome. Our emphasis will be on ancient texts, but selections from contemporary criticism and theory will enrich the methodological frameworks through which we approach the primary sources.

**Class Format:** tutorial

**Requirements/Evaluation:** five to six weekly tutorial papers, five to six responses, a midterm self-evaluation and conference with instructor, a mid-length final paper (approximately eight pages) consisting of a revision and expansion of a previously written paper

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 10

**Enrollment Preferences:** majors or intended majors in Classics, WGSS, and Comparative Literature

**Expected Class Size:** 10

**Distributions:** (D1) (WI)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or COMP; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under WGSS

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**CLAS 242 (S) The Country and the City in the Classical World**

Crosslistings: ANTH242 / CLAS242 / ENVI242

**Primary Crosslisting**

A growing urban-rural divide is defining political discourse around the world. The interrelation and tension between "city" and "countryside" are not new, however, but date back to the time when cities first began. How do cities occupy and transform, interact with and displace rural landscapes? What are the values, stereotypes, and ideals--as well as artistic, literary, and architectural forms--associated with the city and the countryside? What
role does one play in the political, social, and economic life of the other? With a focus on ancient Greece and, especially, Rome, this course will combine archaeological evidence and contemporary scholarship with primary sources ranging from Hesiod, Theocritus, Vergil, and Propertius to Cato the Elder, Varro, Vitruvius, and Pliny the Elder, to examine an array of topics including land surveying and colonization; agrarian legislation; the urban food supply; rustic religion in the city; urban parks and gardens; and the concept of the pastoral. Together, we will explore the city and the countryside - not just as places, but also as states of mind. All readings are in translation.

**Class Format:** seminar

**Requirements/Evaluation:** informed participation, two short papers (2-5 pages), final paper (8-10 pages)

**Extra Info:** may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

**Prerequisites:** none, although prior knowledge of the ancient world will be useful

**Enrollment Limit:** 25

**Enrollment Preferences:** declared and intending majors in Classics and Environmental Studies

**Expected Class Size:** 20

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS or ENVI; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under ANTH

**Not offered current academic year**

CLAS 248 (S) Greek Art and the Gods

**Crosslistings:** CLAS248 / REL216 / ARTH238

**Secondary Crosslisting**

In the Iliad, when the god Apollo is visualized, it is as a man, angry in his heart, coming down from the peaks of Olympos, bow and quiver on his shoulders, the arrows clanging as the god moves, “like the coming of night,” to bring dogs, horses, and men to their deaths. By the end of the Classical period, one statue of the archer god depicted him as a boy teasing a lizard. In this course, we will examine the development of the images the Greek gods and goddesses, from their superhuman engagement in the heroic world of epic, to their sometimes sublime artistic presence, complex religious function, and transformation into metaphors in aesthetic and philosophical thought. The course will cover the basic stylistic, iconographical, narrative, and ritual aspects of the gods and goddesses in ancient Greek culture. The course will address in detail influential artistic monuments, literary forms, and social phenomena, including the sculptures of Olympia and the Parthenon; divine corporeality in poetry; the theology of mortal-immortal relations; the cultural functions of visual representations of gods, and the continued interest in the gods long after the end of antiquity. Readings assignments will include selections from Homer, Hesiod, Sappho, Aischylos, Euripides, Plato, Walter Burkert, Jean-Pierre Vernant, Nikolaus Himmelmann, Erika Simon, and Friedrich Nietzsche.

**Class Format:** lecture and discussion

**Requirements/Evaluation:** short writing assignments, midterm exam, final exam, final paper

**Prerequisites:** none

**Enrollment Limit:** 40

**Enrollment Preferences:** preference will be given to pre-registered Art-History majors needing to fulfill the pre-1400 requirement; otherwise, the course is open to any interested student

**Expected Class Size:** 30

**Department Notes:** satisfies the pre-1400 requirement; satisfies the pre-1600 elective requirement in the art-history major.

**Distributions:** (D1)

**Distribution Notes:** meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under ARTH and CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under REL

**Attributes:** ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

**Not offered current academic year**

CLAS 306 (S) The Good Life in Greek and Roman Ethics (WI)

**Crosslistings:** CLAS306 / PHIL306

**Secondary Crosslisting**

Most thoughtful human beings spend a good deal of time musing about how we ought to live and about what counts as a good life for a human being. The philosophers of ancient Greece and Rome were among the first thinkers to develop rigorous arguments in response to such musings. Much of the
moral philosophy produced in Greece and Rome remains as relevant today as when it was written. In this course, we will examine some central texts in ancient Greek and Roman moral philosophy. We will begin by reading some of Plato's early dialogues and his Republic. We will then turn to Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics. We will then examine writings in the Stoic and Epicurean traditions, as well as Cicero's On the Ends of Good and Evil. As we proceed through the course, we will look at the way in which each thinker characterizes happiness, virtue and the relation between the two. We will also pay close attention to the way in which each of these thinkers takes the practice of philosophy to play a key role in our realization of the good human life. This course is part of the Williams College program at the Berkshire County Jail and House of Corrections and will be held at the jail. Transportation will be provided by the college. The class will be composed equally of Williams students and inmates, and one goal of the course will be to encourage students from different backgrounds to think together about issues of common human concern.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: several short response pieces. A final paper of 10-15 pages

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis; not available for the fifth course option

Enrollment Limit: 9

Enrollment Preferences: juniors & seniors & students who can demonstrate an interest in the subject matter of the class; there will not be any preference purely on the basis of major; final selection for the course will be made on the basis of an interview with the instructor

Expected Class Size: 9

Distributions: (D1) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS; meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under PHIL

Attributes: PHIL History Courses;

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    W 4:45 pm - 8:30 pm    Keith E. McPartland

CLAS 323 (F) From Achilles to Alexander: Leadership and Community in Ancient Greece (WI)

Crosslistings: CLAS323 / HIST323 / LEAD323

Primary Crosslisting

Visionary, opportunist, reformer, tyrant, demagogue, popular champion: concise characterization of influential leaders is often irresistible. But placing leaders in their much less easily encapsulated political, social, and religious contexts reveals them to be far more complicated and challenging subjects. Among the questions that will guide our study of Greek leadership: Was the transformative leader in a Greek city always an unexpected one, arising outside of the prevailing political and/or social systems? To what extent did the prevailing systems determine the nature of transformative as well as of normative leadership? How did various political and social norms contribute to legitimating particular kinds of leader? After studying such leaders as the "tyrants" who prevailed in many Greek cities of both the archaic and classical eras, then Athenian leaders like Solon, Cleisthenes, Cimon, Pericles, Cleon, and Demosthenes, and Spartans like Cleomenes, Leonidas, Brasidas, and Lysander, we will focus on Alexander the Great, whose unique accomplishments transformed every aspect of Greek belief about leadership, national boundaries, effective government, the role of the governed, and the legitimacy of power. Readings will include accounts of leadership and government by ancient Greek authors (e.g. Homer, Solon, Herodotus, Thucydides, Plato, Aristotle, Demosthenes, all in translation) and contemporary historians and political theorists.

Class Format: lecture/discussion

Requirements/Evaluation: evaluation will be based on contributions to class discussions, three short papers (4-6 pages each), a midterm exam, and an oral presentation leading to a significant final paper (10-12 pages)

Prerequisites: none, but a background and/or interest in the ancient world, political systems, and/or Leadership Studies is preferred

Enrollment Limit: 19

Expected Class Size: 12

Distributions: (D1) (WI)

Distribution Notes: meets Division 2 requirement if registration is under HIST or LEAD; meets Division 1 requirement if registration is under CLAS

Attributes: HIST Group C Electives - Europe and Russia; HIST Group P Electives - Premodern; LEAD Facets or Domains of Leadership;

Fall 2018

LEC Section: 01    MR 2:35 pm - 3:50 pm    Kerry A. Christensen
CLAS 466 (S) Hellenistic Art and the Beginning of Art History
Crosslistings: ARTH466 / CLAS466
Secondary Crosslisting

In the wake of Alexander the Great's extension of the borders of the classical world all the way to the banks of the Indus River in the fourth century BCE, the small city-states of the Greek peninsula were replaced by far flung kingdoms as important centers of power and culture. Vastly increased trade and the movement of individuals between Greece, Egypt, and the Near and Middle East encouraged a new internationalism marked by a cross-cultural hybridization of religion, and innovations in philosophy, medicine, literature and art. This cosmopolitan attitude brought about a revolution in artistic ideas and forms centered on the social and ethnic diversity of human experience. Royal patrons, and wealthy private citizens including an increasing number of women, commissioned artworks for cities, sanctuaries, tombs, palaces, and estates on a scale rarely seen before. With the rise of Rome in the west, plundered artworks of earlier periods soon became the desired objects of wealthy collectors, and commissions in the Hellenistic style continued well into the Roman period. In this course we'll look closely at influential works of art in bronze, marble, fresco, and mosaic, and consider their archaeological, social and political contexts. We'll discuss the changing status of artists as patronage shifts to include the private as well as the public realm, and research the broader philosophical, religious, literary and cultural forces that encouraged artistic innovations of the fourth century BCE through first century CE. Reading material includes ancient literature in translation, recent surveys of Hellenistic art, and recent critical essays.

Class Format: seminar

Requirements/Evaluation: students will lead discussions based on selected readings; a 5- to 7-page midterm paper and 20 minute oral report will form the basis for an 18- to 20-page research paper

Extra Info: may not be taken on a pass/fail basis

Prerequisites: none

Enrollment Limit: 15

Enrollment Preferences: Art majors, and then to students of any major interested in art and thought in the ancient Mediterranean world, with permission of instructor

Expected Class Size: 14

Department Notes: ARTH Seminar Requirement

Distributions: (D1)

Attributes: ARTH pre-1600 Courses;

Spring 2019

SEM Section: 01    T 1:10 pm - 3:50 pm    Elizabeth P. McGowan

CLAS 493 (F) Senior Thesis: Classics
Recommended for all candidates for the degree with honors. This project will normally be of one semester's duration, in addition to a Winter Study.

Class Format: independent study

Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

Distributions: (D1)

Fall 2018

HON Section: 01    TBA    Edan Dekel

CLAS 494 (S) Senior Thesis: Classics
Recommended for all candidates for the degree with honors. This project will normally be of one semester's duration, in addition to a Winter Study.

Class Format: independent study

Extra Info: this is part of a full-year thesis (493-494)

Distributions: (D1)
Spring 2019
HON Section: 01  TBA     Edan Dekel

**CLAS 497 (F) Independent Study: Classics**
Classics independent study. Students with permission of the department may enroll for independent study on select topics not covered by current course offerings.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Distributions:** (D1)

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Fall 2018
IND Section: 01  TBA     Edan Dekel

**CLAS 498 (S) Independent Study: Classics**
Classics independent study. Students with permission of the department may enroll for independent study on select topics not covered by current course offerings.

**Class Format:** independent study

**Distributions:** (D1)

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Spring 2019
IND Section: 01  TBA     Edan Dekel

**CLAS 499 (F) Senior Colloquium**
This two-semester course is required for all senior Classics majors and usually meets four times each semester. Our activities vary from year to year but normally include presentations by seniors who are taking independent studies or writing Honors theses in Classics, as well as meetings with guest speakers and distinguished visiting professors. Although required for the Classics major, this is a non-credit course and does not count toward the number of semester courses required for the Classics major or for graduation. Senior majors are expected to attend every colloquium unless excused in advance.

**Class Format:** colloquium

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Fall 2018
LEC Section: 01  TBA     Edan Dekel

Spring 2019
LEC Section: 01  TBA     Edan Dekel