

## **BLHS 102 The Ancient World: Greeks and Romans**

### **Professors McNelis (course director) and Sens**

**Thursdays | 6:00 P.M. – 9:35 P.M. | Healy 321**

This course is an introduction to the literature of the ancient Greek and Roman worlds. Its focus is on exploring the relationship and responsibilities of the individual to authorities, both civic and divine. It pursues these issues through the lens of some of the major genres of Classical literature, including epic, history, tragedy and comedy, and philosophy. The course emphasizes the common interests in all these forms but also takes note of their particular approaches. Students will pay particularly close attention to the ways in which the texts they are reading offer a particular vision of the relationship of human beings to one another and to the gods; in the process, they will be introduced to the ways in which these texts both reflect and respond to the broader cultures of which they are a part.

*Office hours:* Individual faculty will arrange their own office hours. For issues about the course on the whole, however, Professor McNelis (Healy 321; 687-7634) is the primary contact. His ordinary office hours will be MW 12-1, but he will also be available at other times; please call or email to confirm a meeting time.

*Requirements:* Grades are determined on the basis of the student's performance for all three professors, and will be based on a) written work and b) class participation. It is important that you participate actively and vigorously for all three professors.

#### 1. a) Written Work (60%)

Students will write a series of short (1-2 pp.) [papers](#), a total of eight for the semester. These are designed to help students think critically and independently about the issues discussed in class. These will be graded on a standard scale from A to F. Grades in the B and C range will be common and normal; only truly excellent work will receive the highest grades. Do not, however, worry if your initial grades are low, since we are looking for significant improvement from the beginning to the end of the class.

You are not to use outside sources for these papers; doing so will be considered a violation of the University's Honor Code and (if proven) will result in an F for the assignment. Moreover, papers should respect the page limitation spelled out above. We will not read longer papers.

Written work is due at the **start of each class in hard copy. In addition to your hard copy, you must email your paper by attachment to [blhs102papers@gmail.com](mailto:blhs102papers@gmail.com) by 6:00 on the night the paper is due; DO NOT SEND YOUR PAPERS TO MY OTHER PERSONAL OR PROFESSIONAL ADDRESS.** Your time-stamped email

will serve as your receipt for turning in your work on time. **NO LATE PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED FOR ANY REASON FROM ANY STUDENT.** If you cannot be in class, you may submit your paper online before the start of class. Your absence will be recorded as such, but your paper will count as long as it arrives before the start time.

The final writing assignment (6-8 pp.) will be due on the first day of exam period and will involve a brief essay in which students consider the similarities and differences among the various genres they have read.

1. b) Class Participation (40%)

Students are expected to attend every class. We recognize that emergencies may arise. Students must, however, be extremely cautious about missing class, since the second absence will result in failure of the course. The only exception to this rule is medical; for that, we will need documentation from a doctor, and we will consult with SCS administrators about what should be done.

Your presence in the classroom, by itself, amounts to C work (75%, i.e. a “fair” performance). A higher grade is easily obtainable by contributing meaningfully to our discussions. This can mean asking questions as well as answering those posed by faculty and other students. The foundation of your class participation should be a careful, thoughtful reading of the texts. Much of this material will be unfamiliar, even uncomfortably challenging. Each class session is designed to help you understand the assignment and to think about it in new ways. In other words, there will be learning during the class session, and your active participation will be an index of how much you are learning.

PLEASE NOTE THAT THE FIRST FOUR WEEKS OF CLASS REQUIRE A GREAT DEAL OF READING. SUBSEQUENT READING LOADS ARE LIGHTER, BUT IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU BEGIN TO READ THE ILIAD AS SOON AS POSSIBLE.

*Please note: this class, like all classes at Georgetown, expects adherence to the Georgetown Honor Code. For practical purposes, that means that all of your work must be your own. If you draw on someone else’s ideas, you must properly attribute them. Details of what this means will be discussed in class.*

*Learning Goals and Assessments:*

Students will be assessed according to the following benchmarks and goals.

- 1) Students will learn the basic formal features of the ancient genres of epic, history, tragedy, comedy and philosophy, and be able to articulate them in both oral and written form.
- 2) Students will learn to accurately summarize the content of a passage of ancient literature.
- 3) Students will learn to analyze the same passage, precisely distinguishing this analysis from summary.
- 4) Students will learn the basic form and style of academic writing. Students will be able to produce papers that engage closely with specific passages and that are free from lexical and grammatical errors.

*Students with Disabilities:* If you are a student with a documented disability who requires accommodations, or you think you may have a disability and want to inquire about accommodations, please contact the Academic Resource Center at 202-687-8354 or [arc@georgetown.edu](mailto:arc@georgetown.edu).

*Required Texts* (texts available in the bookstore or online)

Homer, *The Iliad*, tr. R. Lattimore (ISBN 0-226-46940-0)

Herodotus, *The Histories*, tr. Marincola (ISBN 9780140449082)

Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, tr. Meineck (ISBN 978-0872203907)

Livy, *Rise of Rome; Books 1-5*, tr. T. Luce (ISBN 019-282296-9)

Vergil, *The Aeneid*, tr. R. Fitzgerald (ISBN 067-972952-6)

Sophocles, *The Theban Plays*, tr. R. Blondell (ISBN 1-58510-037-4) (xerox also available)

Plautus, *Amphitryo* (provided as xerox)

Apuleius, *The Golden Ass*, tr. E.J. Kenney (014-043590-5)

*Outline of course meetings (subject to revision)*

Class 1 (Aug. 31): Introduction

This session will be particularly important for establishing a broad chronological and geographic overview of the course and for establishing its themes and focuses.

Class 2 (Sep. 7): [Hesiod, \*Works and Days\* and \*Theogony\*](#) (Sens)

Class 3 (Sep. 14): Homer, *Iliad* (1-12) (McNelis)

Issues to be discussed include Achilles' position relative to the Greeks; his relation to the gods; Hector and his family and the tension between "epic" expectations and his own familial obligations; "the heroic code;" relationship of East and West.

Class 4 (Sep. 21): Homer, *Iliad* (13-24) (McNelis)

This class will focus on how the issues raised in the preceding class play out in the second half of the poem, with particular attention to the culmination of the poem in Book 24.

Class 5 (Sep. 28): Vergil (1-6) (Sens)

Students will study the particularly Roman engagement with Homer; issues to be discussed include Aeneas' position relative to Troy, to Rome and the gods. Special attention will be paid to the way the poem locates itself in an ongoing epic tradition.

Class 6 (Oct. 5): Vergil (7-12) (Sens)

In this class, students will pay particular attention to the ways in which Vergil redeploys the Homeric value system in significant and provocative ways, especially as his poem comes to a close.

Class 7 (Oct. 12): Herodotus, *Histories* Book 1 and Livy Book 1 (McNelis)

Students focus on the genre of history by reading the first book of Herodotus, paying particular attention to the way that work represents humans' relationship to the divine world, as well as to questions of epistemology and teleology; the conflict between "East" and "West" (Greeks and non-Greeks) is also considered. Roman developments of the genre in Livy will then be considered.

Class 8 (Oct. 19): Aeschylus, *Agamemnon* (Sens)

After a brief overview of ancient drama, the class focuses on the ways in which Aeschylus represents the relationship between gods and men and the working of divine justice over time. In addition, the class raises the question of the relation between house and society (and the correlative relationship between female and male).

Class 9 (Oct. 26) Sophocles *Antigone*; and Plautus *Amphitryo* (McNelis)

Class 10 (Nov. 2): Presocratics and Aristophanes, *Clouds* (pdf) (Sens).

Class 11 (Nov. 9): Philosophy. Read Plato, *Apology* (last two pages [here](#)) and *Phaedo* (McNelis)

This class introduces students in a focused way to the philosophy of Plato, emphasizing the place of his philosophy in an ongoing tradition while acknowledging his unique contribution.

Class 12 (Nov. 16): Aristotle and Hellenistic Philosophy (Sens)

Read Aristotle, [selections](#); Epicurus, *Letter to Menoecus* (available here: <http://classics.mit.edu/Epicurus/menoec.html>); Lucretius, *On the Nature of Things*, book 1.

This class introduces the philosophy of Aristotle and looks at how his philosophy differs both from Plato's and from that of his Hellenistic peers and successors.

Class 13 (Nov. 30): Apuleius: Apuleius, *Metamorphoses (The Golden Ass)* (McNelis)

This class will introduce a new genre, the novel. Students will consider the way Apuleius represents the place of religion in Roman society, with special focus on his treatment of the problematic relationship between worship and morality.

Class 14 (Dec. 7): Wrap Up

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### **Turnitin.com**

Students acknowledge that by taking this course all required papers can be submitted for a Textual Similarity Review to Turnitin.com for the detection of plagiarism. Use of the Turnitin.com service is subject to the terms of use agreement posted on the Turnitin.com site.

### **Extreme weather, Emergencies, and Instructional Continuity**

During inclement weather or other emergencies on a day when we are scheduled to meet face-to-face, check the university's Web site or call (202) 687-7669 for information on whether the university is open. If the university is open, this class will meet. If the university is closed, this class will meet through distance means such as online videoconferencing; check your e-mail for a message from me on how we will proceed in that situation. Due dates for written assignments submitted through Blackboard will not be changed due to campus closings.

The university recently has acquired the capability to send text messages and recorded messages about emergencies to cell phones and other mobile devices. Sign up on MyAccess.

### **Georgetown Honor System**

All students are expected to follow Georgetown's honor code unconditionally. We assume you have read the honor code material located at <http://scs.georgetown.edu/academic-affairs/honor-code>, and in particular have read the following documents: Honor Council Pamphlet, What is Plagiarism, Sanctioning Guidelines, and Expedited Sanctioning Process. Papers in this course will all be submitted to turnitin.com for checking.

Submitting material in fulfillment of the requirements of this course means that you have abided by the Georgetown honor pledge:

*In the pursuit of the high ideals and rigorous standards of academic life, I commit myself to respect and uphold the Georgetown Honor System: To be honest in any academic endeavor, and to conduct myself honorably, as a responsible member of the Georgetown community, as we live and work together.*

## **Plagiarism**

In accord with university policy, all incidents of suspected plagiarism or other Honor Code violations will be reported to the Honor Council without fail.

If the Honor Council finds that a student has plagiarized or has violated the Honor Code in any other way, the student may receive a grade of F for the course.

## **Policy Accommodating Students' Religious Observances**

The following is university policy:

Georgetown University promotes respect for all religions. Any student who is unable to attend classes or to participate in any examination, presentation, or assignment on a given day because of the observance of a major religious holiday or related travel shall be excused and provided with the opportunity to make up, without unreasonable burden, any work that has been missed for this reason and shall not in any other way be penalized for the absence or rescheduled work. Students will remain responsible for all assigned work. Students should notify professors in writing at the beginning of the semester of religious observances that conflict with their classes.

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**Library Reserves:** access through GU email. Click the link below!

Want to place an item on reserve? Physical or electronic? Book or streaming media? Check to see if Georgetown University Library owns the item(s) [here](#) . Secondly, complete the [appropriate reserve request form](#).

## **TURNITIN Directions for Profs**

Georgetown has a full license to use [Turnitin.com](http://Turnitin.com) and other iParadigm products, such as Grademark, etc. Go to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com) and click on the "Create Account" button at the top of the Turnitin homepage.

If you haven't already signed up, the information you will need is as follows: account code: **81031**; "join" password: **classreg2**. With that information you can establish your own profile, register your classes(s), and instruct students to submit their papers to Turnitin. Signing up is really very easy, and Turnitin has good "help" features, including a step-by-step tutorial about the process.

2 - Former users:

Many faculty used Turnitin regularly before there was a hiatus year due to budget constraints. Consequently, these former users may experience difficulty accessing their old accounts. Please reply to this email if this happens to you.

We'd like to provide the best help to you. If you would like the Honor Council to submit a paper for you, we can do that, and send the Originality Report back right away.

On using Turnitin, this page is very helpful. [http://turnitin.com/en\\_us/support/help-center](http://turnitin.com/en_us/support/help-center)

**Turnitin available via Blackboard:**

There also is a portal in Blackboard (Bb) if you like to have your students submit papers to Turnitin via Bb. Although it is preferable to use Turnitin for all students in a class, it also is possible to do single submissions if you have cause to do so.

Even if you are an experienced student paper reader, here also are a few features the Honor Council has noticed in cases reported which may cause faculty to be uncertain about the authenticity of student work:

- a - the quality of a student's previous written work is just too inconsistent with the paper at issue
- b - the final paper submitted is very different from previous drafts
- c - the student uses references or sources not recommended or used in class
- d - the paper is off the topic assigned.

Please understand that no one of these observations is proof of any wrong-doing but have been cited by faculty as to why a paper required further analysis, and sometimes investigation and adjudication.

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