The purpose of Classics 9000 (The Core Course) is to introduce graduate students to a selection of the major scholarly methods and questions in the discipline of Classics. In the section on Greek literature we will survey the range of genres in Greek literature from Homeric Epic to the ancient Greek novel, and we will discuss some exemplary approaches to interpretation. Assigned readings each week will include selections from the primary Greek texts as well as some scholarly treatments of the questions they raise.

Students are not required to read the ancient texts in Greek, but discussion in class may often refer to issues of language. For the purposes of this class it is unimportant what translations are used, and students are encouraged to make use of on-line resources, such as the Perseus database. The scholarship will be made available electronically.
Evaluation: The grade for the Greek Literature section (worth 25% of the final mark for the whole Core Course) will be derived from:

A. Class Participation (25%)
Students should come to every class prepared to discuss both primary and secondary readings. This means that you will have read them carefully and made notes of any comments or questions you might have. Your contributions should demonstrate a careful and critical engagement with the material and with the discussion in class. The quality of your comments in each class will be weighted more heavily than the quantity. You should also aim to be closely attentive to what others have to say and to respond always with professional courtesy and respect.

B. Presentation of Assigned Scholarly Reading (15%)
Each student will briefly present one of the assigned scholarly readings to the class. Your task is not to summarize the contents of the article; you should assume that everyone will have read it. You might supply relevant contextual information or discussions, note questions that the argument raises for you, and/or comment on the methods used by the author. How does the work add to our understanding of Greek literature, how does it respond to other scholarship, or how might it be applied to other texts on our class reading list?

C. Test (60%) to be scheduled in the December exam period
The test will be composed of passages from the primary texts for commentary. This test will give you the opportunity to demonstrate your knowledge of the major genres of Greek literature, their many and various contexts, and some of the important scholarly approaches to interpreting them. Passages will be provided both in Greek and in English translation. You will identify the author and work from which the passage is drawn as specifically as possible, briefly describe the context of the passage in the work and/or the literary tradition, and write a short essay analyzing the significance of the passage, including, as much as possible, references to the scholarly discussions covered in class.

Schedule and Readings

Week 1: (October 31) Orality and the Composition of Homeric Epic

Discussion Questions: What is the relationship between the received Greek literary canon and performed oral culture? What special problems of interpretation does the oral tradition present?

Primary Source Readings:  Iliad 9, Odyssey 23.

Scholarship:

Week 2: (November 7) Archaic Cosmologies

Discussion Questions: what is the world order expressed in the divine cosmology of Hesiod’s Theogony and in the praise of the gods in the Homeric Hymns? What was the function of these texts and what is their relationship to social structures and religious rituals?

Primary Source Readings: Hesiod, Theogony; Homeric Hymn to Demeter

Scholarship:


Week 3: (November 14) Greek Lyric: Performance and Context

Discussion Questions: what were the various contexts of performance of early Greek lyric poetry? What identities are constructed for the poets in each of these works? How do they respond to the received poetic tradition and to their own contemporary contexts?

Primary Source Readings: Sappho 16; Pindar Olympian 1

Scholarship:


Week 4: (November 21) Greek Drama: Tragedy, Comedy and the Polis

Discussion Questions: Greek Drama and Athenian democracy seem to have emerged almost simultaneously. Is there an explanation for this? What is their relationship to one another?

Primary Source Readings: Aeschylus, Agamemnon; Aristophanes, Frogs

Scholarship:

Week 5: (November 28) Eros and Rhetoric

Discussion Questions: Can a distinction be drawn between rhetoric and philosophy in the time of the early Sophists? How does Plato contribute to this discussion? What is the contribution of myth to the evolving intellectual climate of classical Athens, and to emerging philosophical thought? How does Platonic philosophy reflect and respond to the historical and social context from which it arose? What has been its enduring influence?

Primary Source Readings: Plato, Symposium; Gorgias, Helen

Scholarship:

Week 6: (December 5) Post-Classical Greek Literature: Literacy, Love and Art

Discussion Questions: In the literary world of post-Classical Greek literature, what use is made of the inherited traditions? How does this literature reflect on its own status as artistic production? How does the representation of the landscape contribute to this reflection?

Primary Source Readings: Longus, Daphnis and Chloe Books 1 and 4.

Scholarship:
Plagiarism
Students must write their essays and assignments in their own words. Whenever students take an idea, or a passage of text from another author, they must acknowledge their debt both by using quotation marks where appropriate and by proper referencing such as footnotes or citations. Plagiarism is a major academic offence (see Scholastic Offence Policy in the Western Academic Calendar).

UWO Accessibility Policy
Western has many services and programs that support the personal, physical, social and academic needs of students with disabilities. For more information and links to these services: http://accessibility.uwo.ca/

Mental Health
Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western http://www.uwo.ca/uwocom/mentalhealth/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Accommodation Policy
Staying healthy – physically and mentally – is an essential part of achieving your academic goals. There are many resources on campus available to help you maintain your health and wellness (start here: http://wec.uwo.ca/ and https://www.uwo.ca/health/). Please contact the Graduate Chair if you have any concerns about health or wellness interfering with your studies.

If academic accommodation should become necessary at any point, students should contact their course instructor(s) and/or supervisor, as appropriate. Students should also contact the Graduate Chair in most cases, and especially if accommodation is needed for:

- more than one course
- more than one week
- any tests, exams, and/or assignments worth 10% or more of a final grade
- any program milestone (comprehensive exams, thesis, etc.)

In these cases, the Graduate Chair may request that a student work with Student Accessibility Services (http://www.sdc.uwo.ca/ssd/) to arrange a plan for accommodation (see SGPS Regulation 14: http://www.grad.uwo.ca/current_students/regulations/14.html).