

GK 9160B: GREEK ORATORY Athenian Funeral Orations

Course Location: Lawson Hall 3220
Course Times: W 2:30-5:30pm
Instructor: Dr. Bernd Steinbock
E-mail: bsteinbo@uwo.ca
Office: Lawson Hall 3210
Office Hours: W 12:00-1:00 p.m.
Course Website: owl.uwo.ca



IG I³ 1162 (EM 10618) Athenian casualty list (Courtesy of the Epigraphical Museum, Athens); ca. 447 BC.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

What was it like to be an Athenian? The genre of the *logos epitaphios*, the Athenian funeral oration, delivered over the bones of the war dead by the city's leading statesman, is arguably one of our best sources for the Athenians' view of themselves and their city's past. Our goal is to appreciate this particular literary genre within its wider cultural and historical context. For this reason, the course is organized thematically. Topics discussed will include epideictic rhetoric, the civic and religious aspects of the Athenian state funeral ceremony, the archaeological evidence for the public funeral monuments, the concepts of Athenian democratic ideology and collective memory. Rather than focusing on one specific funeral oration, we will be reading selections from the various funeral orations that have come down to us, i.e. Pericles' famous funeral oration in Thucydides' history of the Peloponnesian War, Lysias' *epitaphios* for those who fell during the Corinthian War (c. 391 BC), the spoof funeral oration in Plato's *Menexenus* (c. 386 BC), the fragments of Gorgias' *epitaphios*, Demosthenes' funeral oration for the fallen at Chaeronea (338 BC), Hyperides' funeral oration for the dead of the Lamian War (322 BC)

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

At the completion of this course successful students

- will be familiar with the genre of the Athenian public funeral orations and their material, cultural and historical context. They will understand the most important scholarly issues and debates surrounding this particular genre of epideictic rhetoric.
- will have practiced and improved their ability to read Greek, gaining familiarity with the stylistic features of the genre of the *logos epitaphios* in particular and Classical Greek oratory in general.
- will have practiced and developed their scholarly research and writing ability, which will be useful not only for future academics, but in a variety of careers.
- will have read, evaluated, and critiqued both primary and secondary sources, communicating their views orally and in writing. In the process students will have developed their critical reading and thinking skills as well as their oral and written communication skills.
- will have practiced public speaking in their presentations, which will be useful for future academics as practice for conference presentations as well as teaching. Public speaking skills are also useful in a variety of other professions.

REQUIRED BOOKS:

Given the thematic organization of the course and the general lack of suitable texts with commentaries, the primary and secondary readings for each week will be made available on the course website on OWL.

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EVALUATION:

Preparation and Participation:	10%
Leading of Discussion Session:	10%
Midterm Test	20% [October 22]
1-Page Abstract:	5% [due on Nov. 12]
Annotated Conference Paper (20 min.):	30% [10% for presentation; 20 % for final version]
Final Exam :	25% [Dec. 10]

NOTES ON GRADE COMPONENTS:

1. Students are expected to **prepare** 3-4 pages of Greek oratorical text per week, including translation and grammar explanation with the help of the posted commentaries and other aids available on Perseus and our course website on OWL. Students will translate in class and discuss questions of morphology and syntax. Even though we will not be able to translate all of the assigned text in class, the entire assignment is eligible for the translation tests.
2. We will concentrate our study of excerpts of various Athenian funeral orations on various **discussion topics** (see detailed syllabus). The **discussion sessions** are based upon a particular aspect of the funeral orations and are meant to deepen our understanding of various aspects of Greek epideictic oratory and of the socio-cultural and historical context of the Athenian funeral oration through selected articles and further ancient sources to be read by every student as part of the weekly reading assignment. **Each student** will pick **two** of these discussion topics, **present a critical summary** of the assigned articles (**15 min**), **generate questions** and **function as expert** in the ensuing class discussion.
3. The **Midterm Test** and the **Final Exam** will consist of passages selected from the assigned translations, for translation and commentary, and feature a sight-reading passage (worth 20% of the in-class test and final exam, respectively).
4. As final project students will prepare a **20 min.-long conference paper** on a topic of their own choosing. The paper should be thoroughly researched with proper references and detailed documentation in the footnotes (ca. 1800 words plus footnotes). A **1-page abstract**, outlining the project and detailing its main thesis, is due on November 12. For tips, see <https://classicalstudies.org/annual-meeting/suggestions-authors-abstracts-program-committee> . For the presentation on December 3, every student will prepare a short **handout**, which contains the one-page abstract, a short bibliography and the main passages to be discussed in the paper. All translations in the handout and the paper should be your own, but you are allowed to draw on standard published translations. The handout must be made available at least **24 hours before** the presentation (either electronically or by putting a copy into everybody's mailbox). This will stimulate class discussion and improve feedback. The final version of this paper is due on December 12, 2025.

POLICIES AND PROCEDURES:

1. If you miss an exam due to illness or provable personal crisis, **you must contact the instructor within 48 hours**. If you do not contact me, the grade of F will stand.
2. Those who miss classes or parts of classes remain responsible for material they have missed. Students are encouraged to form study groups in order to assist each other in preparing for tests and for discussion of assigned readings.
3. There is no extra credit in this course; there will be no re-weighting of the course components.

CLASS COMMUNICATION:

Class will be notified of any class cancellations, room changes and other special announcements via the course website on OWL.

NOTE FROM THE DEAN OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES: Unless you have either the requisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

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STUDENT ABSENCES

General information about missed coursework

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for **attempted or completed work**, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult: [Accessible Education](#).

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request **without supporting documentation** in this course. However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

- Examinations scheduled during official examination periods (Defined by policy).
- Midterm Test/Presentation/Group Project (**when** designated by the instructor as the one assessment that always requires documentation when requesting Academic Consideration)

Coursework with Assessment Flexibility

By policy, instructors may deny Academic Consideration requests for the following assessments with built-in flexibility

Absences from Final Examinations

When a student misses the **Final Exam** [if applicable] and their Academic Consideration has been granted, they will be allowed to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam). See the Academic Calendar ([Special Examinations](#)), especially for those who miss multiple final exams within one examination period.

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS: Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm. Religious Accommodation requests for final exams should be submitted via the Student Absence Portal.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION AND ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION: **Academic Accommodation** is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program.”

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students”

https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

SPECIAL EXAMINATIONS: A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

ACADEMIC POLICIES:

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STUDENT UWO EMAIL ACCOUNT: The website for the Office of the Registrar is <http://www.registrar.uwo.ca>. In accordance with policy (https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/policies_procedures/section1/mapp113.pdf), the centrally administered e-mail account provided to students will be considered the individual's official university e-mail address. It is the responsibility of the account holder to ensure that e-mail received from the University at their official university address is attended to in a timely manner.

ELECTRONIC DEVICES: No electronic devices will be permitted on tests and exams.

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF GENERATIVE ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI):

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools (such as Chat GPT) exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration, however students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the students' own thoughts and independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions.

SCHOLASTIC OFFENCES: Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

STATEMENT ON THE USE OF PLAGIARISM-CHECKING SOFTWARE:

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>). Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

COPYRIGHT: Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.

SUPPORT SERVICES:

BRIGHTSPACE: All course material will be posted to OWL Brightspace: <https://westernu.brightspace.com/>. If students need assistance with OWL Brightspace, they can seek support on the [OWL Brightspace Help](#) page. Alternatively, they can contact the [Western Technology Services Helpdesk](#) online or by phone at 519-661-3800 or ext. 83800 for technical support. Current versions of all popular browsers (e.g., Safari, Chrome, Edge, Firefox) are supported with OWL Brightspace; what is most important is that you update your browser frequently to ensure it is current. All JavaScript and cookies should be enabled."

ACADEMIC COUNSELLING: Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html

MENTAL HEALTH SUPPORT: Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western https://www.uwo.ca/health/mental_wellbeing/ for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

GENDER-BASED AND SEXUAL VIOLENCE: Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

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LEARNING DEVELOPMENT AND SUCCESS: Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

USC: Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

NOTE: The course requirements and/or grade weighting might change if the course has to be offered remotely.

HOW TO PREPARE FOR CLASS:

1. Use the grammatical and historical commentaries, provided for each week on OWL, especially:

Flower & Marincola 2002 = Flower, Michael A. & Marincola, John (eds.), *Herodotus, History. Book 9* (Cambridge 2002)

Herrman 2009 = Judson Herrman (ed.), *Hyperides Funeral Oration: Edited with Introduction, Translation, and Commentary* (Oxford 2009).

Hornblower 1991 = S. Hornblower, *A Commentary on Thucydides. Volume I. Books I-III* (Oxford 1991)

Rusten 1989 = J. S. Rusten, *Thucydides The Peloponnesian War Book II* (Cambridge 1989)

Sansone 2020 = D. Sansone, *Plato: Menexenus* (Cambridge 2020)

Todd 2007 = S. C. Todd, *A Commentary on Lysias, Speeches I-11* (Oxford 2007)

2. Read the secondary readings for each week's discussion topic

SYLLABUS:

1. Sept. 10: The *epitaphios logos* and the Athenian public funeral ceremony: Introduction

a. Lysias 2.1-2 (1 page)

b. Demosthenes 60.1-2 (1 page)

c. Thucydides 2.34 (1 page)

d. Todd 2007: 210-12

e. Rusten 1989: 135-141

f. Hornblower 1991: 292-97

g. Discussion: Judson Herrman, *The Athenian Funeral Orations: Translation, Introduction and Notes* (Newburyport, MA 2004), 1-9

h. Discussion: Kennedy, G.A. *The Art of Persuasion in Greece* (Princeton 1963), 152-166

2. Sept. 17: The *epitaphios logos* as a rhetorical genre: Gorgias

a. Plato *Menexenus* 236d4-237b2 (1 page)

b. Lysias 2.67-71 (1 page)

c. Gorgias F6 DK (1.5 pages) → use the list of rhetorical figures in Smyth, pp. 671-683, the following Sentence Schema and Pritchett 1975: 98-100 (included) to identify the Gorgianic Rhetorical Figures

d. Gorgias F6 DK Sentence Schema

e. Sansone 2020 91-97

f. Todd 2007: 266-272

g. Arist. *Rh.* 1358b trans. Kennedy

h. Discussion: Denniston, J. D. *Greek Prose Style* (Oxford 1952), 9-13; MacDowell, D. M. (ed.) *Gorgias Encomium of Helen. Edited with Introduction, Notes and Translation* (Bristol 1982), 18-19

i. Discussion: Ziolkowski, John E. *Thucydides and the Tradition of Funeral Speeches at Athens* (New York 1981), 1-12, 57, 174-207

3. **Sept. 24: The *epitaphios logos* and democratic ideology: nobility of the demos**
- a. Lysias 2.17-20 (1 page)
 - b. Demosthenes 60.3-6 (1 page)
 - c. Thucydides 2.36-37 (1 page)
 - d. Todd 2007: 226-230
 - e. Rusten 1989: 142-148
 - f. Hornblower 1991: 297-303
 - g. Discussion: Nicole Loraux, *The Invention of Athens: The Funeral Oration in the Classical City*, trans. A. Sheridan (Cambridge 1986), 1-20, 341-349, 192-202, 419-423
 - h. Discussion: Rosalind Thomas, *Oral Tradition and Written Record in Classical Athens* (Cambridge, New York 1989), 196-221
4. **Oct. 1: The *epitaphios logos* and Athenian social memory I: Marathon as charter myth**
- a. Lysias 2.20-26, 46-53 (3 pages)
 - b. Demosthenes 60.10-12 (1 page)
 - c. Thucydides 1.105-106 (in translation)
 - d. Todd 2007: 230-234, 247-253
 - e. Discussion: Gehrke, Hans-Joachim, "Mythos, History, and Collective Identity: Uses of the Past in Ancient Greece and Beyond," in Nino Luraghi (ed.), *The Historian's Craft in the Age of Herodotus* (Oxford 2001), 286-313.
 - f. Discussion: Alcock, S.E. *Archaeologies of the Greek Past. Landscape, Monuments, and Memories* (Cambridge 2002), 1-35
5. **Oct. 8: The *epitaphios logos* and Athenian social memory II: the mythical past**
- a. Lysias 2.3-10 (2 pages)
 - b. Demosthenes 60.6-9 (1 page)
 - c. Herodotus 9.27 (1 page)
 - d. Plutarch *Life of Theseus* 26-29 (in translation)
 - e. Todd 2007: 212-220
 - f. Flower & Marincola 2002: 152-158
 - g. Discussion: Proietti, Giorgia, "Beyond the 'Invention of Athens.' The 5th-century Athenian 'Tatenkatalog' as example of 'Intentional History,'" *Klio* 97 (2015) 516-538
 - h. Discussion: Mills, Sophie, "Making Athens Great Again: Tragedy and the Funeral Oration," in D. M. Pritchard, ed., *The Athenian Funeral Oration. After Nicole Loraux* (Cambridge 2024), 298-318
6. **Oct. 15: The ritual and material context of the *epitaphios logos*: public funeral monuments**
- a. *IG I³* 1147
 - b. O&R 129
 - c. *IG I³* 1162
 - d. *IG I³* 1163
 - e. *CEG* 5, 6,
 - f. Lysias 2.58-66 (2 pages)
 - g. Todd 2007: 257-266
 - h. Bowie, E. "Epigram as Narration," in M. Baumbach, A. Petrovic, I. Petrovic (eds.), *Archaic and Classical Greek Epigram* (Cambridge 2010), 369-372
 - i. Discussion: Low, Polly "The Monuments to the War Dead in Classical Athens: Form, Context, Meanings." In P. Low & G. Oliver, eds., *Cultures of Commemoration: War Memorials, Ancient and Modern* (Oxford 2012), 13-40.
 - j. Discussion: Arrington, Nathan T., "Inscribing Defeat: The Commemorative Dynamics of the Athenian Casualty Lists," *CLAnt* 30 (2011) 179-212.

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k. Discussion: Petrovic, Andrej, "Casualty Lists in Performance: Name Catalogues and Greek Verse-Inscriptions," in E. Sistakou and A. Rengakos, eds, *Dialect, Diction, and Style in Greek Literary and Inscribed Epigram* (Berlin 2016), 361-390.

7. Oct. 22: Midterm Test

8. Oct. 29: Contemporary critique of the Athenian funeral oration (I): The *epitaphios logos* in Thuc. 2.35-46: Whose speech is it, Pericles' or Thucydides'? What is its function in Thuc.'s work?

- a. Dionysius of Halicarnassus *De Thuc.* 18 (in translation)
- b. Thucydides 2.39, 40.4-41.4; 46 (2.5 pages)
- c. Rusten 1989: 148-179
- d. Hornblower 1991: 294-316
- e. Discussion: Grethlein, J. *The Greeks and Their Past. Poetry, Oratory and History in the Fifth Century BCE* (Cambridge 2010), 220-228
- f. Discussion: Bosworth, A. B. "The Historical Context of Thucydides' Funeral Oration," *JHS* 120 (2000) 1-16

9. Nov. 5: Reading Week

10. Nov. 12: Contemporary critique of the Athenian funeral oration (II): The *epitaphios logos* in Plato's *Menexenus*

- a. Plato *Menexenus* 234a-236d, 249d-e (dialogic frame: in translation)
- b. Plato *Menexenus* 239d-240e (Marathon: 2 pages)
- c. Plato *Menexenus*. 242e4-243a7 (Sicilian Expedition: 1 page)
- d. Sansone (2020) 116-127, 139-141
- e. Discussion: D. Sansone, *Plato: Menexenus* (Cambridge 2020), 11-39
- f. Discussion: Trivigno, F.V. "The Rhetoric of Parody in Plato's *Menexenus*." *Ph&Rh* (2009) 42 29-50.

11. Nov. 19: The Athenian funeral oration: cynical propaganda or vital coping mechanism?

- a. Demosthenes 60.17-20, 31-32, 37 (3 pages)
- b. Discussion: Crick, N. "The Rhetoric of Deflection: Demosthenes's *Funeral Oration* as Propaganda," in A. Kapellos, ed. *The Orators and their Treatment of the Recent Past* (Berlin 2023), 291-306
- c. Discussion: Gish, D.A. "Review of Ian Worthington, trans. 2006. *Demosthenes. Speeches 60 and 61, Prologues, Letters*. The Oratory of Classical Greece. Vol. 10. Austin" *BMCRev* 2008.07.49

12. Nov. 26: The *epitaphios logos* and the politics of remembrance: creation of a communal memory

- a. Hyperides 9-19 (2 pages)
- b. Herrman 2009: 75-85
- c. Herrman 2009: 1-26
- d. Discussion: Shear, Julia L., "'Their Memories Will Never Grow Old': The Politics of Remembrance in the Athenian Funeral Orations," *CQ* 63 (2013) 511-36.

13. Dec. 3: Conference Paper Presentation:

- a. Four conference presentations (20-min each + Q&A) → Papers due on Dec. 12, 2025

14. Dec. 10: Final Exam