

Course Syllabus- A Brief Archaeology of (some) Western Myths

Language of Instruction: English or Spanish

Professor: Alberto Nodar

Professor's Contact and Office Hours: alberto.nodar@upf.edu Tuesdays and Thursdays 14.30h.

Course Contact Hours: 15 hours

Recommended Credit: 2 ECTS credits

Weeks: 1

Course Prerequisites: There are no pre-requisites for the course

Language Requirements: There are no language requirements for the course (apart from good command of the language in which it will be taught).

Course Description:

The course critically examines and discusses key concepts and values that have conformed the so-called Western world and are still operating in full force in our everyday life as individuals and members of a community, political, social and otherwise. Focusing on the study of long-lived terms invested with honour and prestige through the centuries, such as republic (*res publica*), citizen (*ciuis, polites*), freedom (*libertas*), passion (*pathos*), love (*eros*), reason (*logos*), violence (*hybris*), order (*cosmos*), empire (*imperium*), beauty (*forma*), excellence (*aristeia*) etc., the course explores the circumstances of their birth in the Greco-Roman world, their original meaning and function, and what they have become as we perceive them today, when they are essential to our lives and to our ideals; that is, the way we think things should be.

The topics are arranged around five traits that would easily be agreed upon to define what we call the Western values by a vast majority of people, but in itself this very arrangement will set the ground for reflection and discussion, from a synchronic and a diachronic perspective, encouraging critical analysis of both old and new.

Learning Objectives:

At the end of the course, the student:

- will be able to identify the classical background in the formation of Western cultural and political imagery.
- will have acquired a basic knowledge of the ancient world in its historical, sociopolitical and cultural aspects.
- will have gained awareness of the use of words and concepts, and of the changes – and of the reasons for them - that they experience through history.

Course Workload

The course is divided into lectures, discussions, and field studies. Students should be prepared to read between 50 to 150 pages per week.

Methods of Instruction:

The course includes lectures, group work and discussion and field studies. Three-hour class sessions will typically start with one-hour lecture, while the rest of the class will be devoted to group activities (seminars, group discussion, text or video commentary, etc). During field studies, students are expected to take notes and treat field studies as a normal lecture or group class.

Method of Assessment

Assessment will be carried out according to the following scheme:

Participation in class	30%
Final Examination	35%
Paper on a text or audiovisual material	35%

PARTICIPATION IN CLASS DISCUSSIONS

Participation in class discussions will be assessed in terms not only of frequency, but especially in terms of pertinence and the ability to join in the issues being dealt with and interact with the other participants.

FINAL EXAM

The final examination will take place during the final class day. It will be cumulative, will cover all of the material covered in the course (lectures, classroom discussions, readings), and will consist of an essay question. Students will be expected to demonstrate an understanding of the concepts object of the course, both in our society and in the ancient world, and of the relative chronology of the authors, events and phenomena covered.

PAPER

A selection of written or audiovisual material will be offered to students to choose among in order to produce a commentary that should be delivered within ten days from the end of the course.

Absence Policy

Attending class is mandatory and will be monitored daily by professors. The impact of absences on the final grade is as follows:

Absences	Penalization
Up to one (1) absence	2 points subtracted from final grade (on a 10 point scale).
Two (2) absences	The student receives an INCOMPLETE for the course

The BISS attendance policy does not distinguish between justified or unjustified absences. The student is deemed responsible to manage his/her absences.

Emergency situations (hospitalization, family emergency, etc.) will be analyzed on a case by case basis by the Academic Director of the UPF Barcelona International Summer School.

Classroom Norms:

- No food or drink is permitted.
- There will be a ten-minute break during the class.
- Students must come to class fully prepared.

Course Contents:

Session 1: Freedom (*libertas*) and Justice (*iustitia*) (Mo, July 11th)

- Birth and meaning of democracy, written law, the responsibility of the citizen (politics)

-All equal? gender issues: homo, vir (and virtue), mulier / anthropos, aner, gyne

Session 2: Forever young: the Olympic beauty (Tu, July 12th)

- Heroes die young: beautiful and immortal through memory

Session 3: Fear of the irrational (We, July 13th)

- Eros, hybris and other passions: tragedy and panic
- The tyranny of logos and the abandonment of myths

Session 4: The (Pyrrhic?) victory of the individual over the group (Thu, July 14th)

- Money: otium et negotium
- Power: potentia vs. potestas et imperium

Session 5: The world is (or must be) order: cosmos (Fr, July 15th)

- Law and order
- Global leadership (hegemony).

Required Readings: The professor will assemble a coursepack/or indicate mandatory textbooks.

Recommended bibliography:

Students are encouraged to consult the following sources on their own.

Beard, M., *SPQR : a history of ancient Rome*, London 2015.

Chou, M., *Greek tragedy and contemporary democracy*, London 2012.

Dodds, E. R., *The Greeks and the irrational*, Berkeley - London 1951.

- Pagan and Christian in an age of anxiety: some aspects of religious experience from Marcus Aurelius to Constantine, Cambridge, New York, 1990.

Eck, W., *The age of Augustus*, Oxford 2007.

Konstan, D., *Sexual symmetry : love in the ancient novel and related genres*, Princeton 2014.

Pomeroy, S. B., *A brief history of Ancient Greece : politics, society, and culture*, Oxford 2009.

Samons, L. J., *What's wrong with democracy?: from Athenian practice to American worship*, Berkeley 2004.

Strong, A. K., *Prostitutes and matrons in the Roman world*, New York 2016.

Syme, R., *The Roman revolution*, Oxford 1960.

Walbank, F. W., *The Hellenistic world*, London 1992.

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