

Graduate Course Descriptions – Spring 2019

CLASSICS

CL 527 – History of Greek Literature

Dana Fields

TTh/11:00 am – 12:20 pm/343 Fillmore

#23618 (3 credits)

A survey of Greek poetry across the archaic, classical, and hellenistic periods, which aims to develop breadth of knowledge, reading skills, and familiarity with research tools for the study of Greek literature. This year's readings will be organized around the theme of the ambivalent hero.

CL 708 – Latin Literature - Seneca on Confronting the World

Neil Coffee

T/1:00 pm – 3:40 pm/343 Fillmore

#23662 (3 credits)

The younger Seneca was a towering figure in early Roman imperial politics and culture. In certain aspects of his career, he followed the example of his late Republican counterpart, Cicero. Seneca rose to prominence as a consummately skillful pleader in the courts, gained political power (in his case as advisor to Nero), wrote notable works on philosophy, and developed a style of speaking and writing that became canonical.

In other respects Seneca went farther than Cicero or diverged from him. Unlike the notoriously unquotable Cicero, Seneca's pithy style, which rankled Caligula and Quintilian, gives us sharply perceived observations on human nature, such as *veritatem dies aperit* ("time discovers truth," *De ira* 2.22) and *quos laeserunt et oderunt* ("whom they have injured they also hate," *De ira* 2.33). Seneca shrewdly amassed phenomenal wealth. He advanced and propagated one particular school of philosophy, Stoicism. He was a brilliant playwright who gives us our only fully extant Roman tragedies. Seneca was also a kind of ancient scientist, who investigated and recorded natural phenomena.

In this graduate seminar, we will take the first few weeks to get acquainted with Seneca by surveying his life and works. We will then direct our focus to a topic that cuts across his life, philosophy, and tragedy: how to engage with others when the social or political environment is (potentially) adverse or hostile while remaining happy and well-balanced.

In his life, Seneca narrowly avoided death at the hands of Caligula, endured exile under Claudius, returned, then eventually lost favor with the emperor Nero, and was then ordered to commit suicide. It is no surprise that the question of how to deal with a challenging social environment became a recurring subject in his philosophical works. In *On Anger* (*De ira*), he addresses how to deal with anger (Nero's we understand). And he devotes two treatises to the question of whether and how to retreat from public life, *On*

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Mental Tranquillity (De Tranquillitate Animi) and *On Leisure (De Otio)*. Not coincidentally, Stoicism as a philosophy was one that instructed its adherents in various techniques of mental fortification in order to protect their psyches from the shocks of finding one's way in the world. Seneca himself, with his practical Roman bent, is one of our main sources for these techniques. His tragedies touch more darkly on the same subject.

With both primary and secondary readings, the bulk of the course will focus on the question of engagement in Seneca's works. Although this is not primarily a Latin reading course, we will read selections from Seneca in Latin to gain direct access to his thought and expression.

CL 711 – Greek History – Archaic Athens

David Teegarden

Th/12:30 pm – 3:10 pm/343 Fillmore

#21777 (3 credits)

In this seminar we will conduct a diachronic analysis of Athenian political history during the archaic period. Topics discussed include: Solon's reforms, the tyranny of Peisistratos, the democratic revolution, and the Persian War. One of the overarching goals of the seminar is to better understand how the non-elite masses became the dominant political force in Athens.

CL 787 – Classical Archaeology – The Roman Countryside

Alessandro Sebastiani

W/11:10 am – 1:50 pm/343 Fillmore

#23691 (3 credits)

The graduate seminar will investigate the intricate network of settlements that came into being in the Roman countryside, from the Early Republican period until Late Antiquity. Emphasis will be on a number of different kinds of settlements, such as sanctuaries, villas, cemeteries, *vici* (villages), manufacturing districts and their related productions, their relationships with nearby urban centers and the analysis of their economies.
