

Syracuse University

College of Arts & Sciences

Classical Civilization

Medieval and Renaissance Studies

Classical Languages

Courses in Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance and
Early Modern Studies & Classical Languages

Spring 2022

Program Information (web):

Information about the [Major](#) and [Minor](#) in Classical Civilization

Information about the [Minor](#) in Medieval-Renaissance Studies
and the [Medieval-Renaissance Program](#)

Information about the [Major](#) or [Minor](#) in Classics

Course Descriptions by Category:

- [The Ancient World](#)
- [Medieval-Renaissance Worlds](#)
- [Classical Languages](#)

THE ANCIENT WORLD

LIT 102 Introduction to Classical Literature

Jeff Carnes

This course surveys the history of the classical Latin literature and explores its Hellenistic context as well as its influence on later literatures. We will study the origin and development of various genres (drama, comedy, philosophy, theology, epic, lyric poetry). The course will emphasize reading and discussion of primary sources, in order to provide a window into the thought-~ worlds and value systems of past societies. This course will provide you with a broad overview on the history of Roman literature. You will read (sections of) key classical texts; you will learn how to analyze primary sources and how to express your thoughts and insights in an academic manner. You will learn how to trace and understand the classical roots of our own culture. This course will form the basis of any higher division course on Ancient history or classical culture.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.

JSP/REL 114 The Bible in History, Culture and Religion

Jim Watts

The Bible has been the most widely read literature in Western culture. It has influenced literature, law and politics as well as religious traditions. This survey of Jewish and Christian scriptures in English translation pays particular attention to the literary form of biblical books, their origins and original ancient Near Eastern and Hellenistic contexts, and their role in the development of Western religions and cultures.

ARC 133 Introduction to the History of Architecture I

Jean-François Bédard

Themes, concepts, and problems in architectural history from ancient Egypt to 1500. The first part of a two-course sequence that serves as an introduction to a global history of architecture, this class begins with the monumental architecture of Ancient Egypt and ends around 1500 CE, a period which saw the waning of the Middle Ages in Europe. ARC 133 focuses in particular on architecture defined as the “art of building,” distinct from functional shelters or vernacular structures. Special attention is placed on the theoretical notions that ground this distinction—issues such as ritualistic use, transcendental geometry and proportion, symbolic ornament—elements that link architecture to other sciences and arts in a common pre-modern “world-view.”

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization and the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

REL 186 Buddhism

John Abercrombie

Buddhism as a world religion: its origin in India, its spread to other parts of Asia, and consequent changes in doctrine and practice through the ages.

REL 205 Ancient Greek Religions

Virginia Burrus

Historical and systematic studies of Greek myth and cult (pre-Homeric Chthonic religion through Olympian polytheism to the decline of the polis). Interaction of religion with drama, art, architecture, philosophy, and politics.

HOA 302 Greek Art

Matilde Mateo-Sevilla

In this class, you will learn to appreciate Greek art in its own context and from a historical perspective. You will gain a good understanding of how artworks were used, what they meant, what was valued about them in Greek times, and also why we hold them in such high esteem today. Besides learning about styles and techniques, this course will also introduce you to many fascinating aspects of the interaction between art and politics, religion, gender representation, and philosophical ideals. Special attention will be given to consecrated masterpieces such as the Doryphoros, the Parthenon, or the Cnidia Aphrodite. It is expected that by the end of this course, you will be able to think, talk and write about Greek art with a critical and informed mind. Depending on your background, you may also find many of your assumptions about art and the classical world challenged. The course will cover painting, sculpture, and, to a lesser degree, architecture. The time span will be from the 8th BC to 1st BC.

REL 320 Ancient Magic

Daniel Kimmel

This course explores “magic” in the classical and late ancient Mediterranean world and will encourage students to think historically, comparatively, and critically about “magic,” “religion,” “science,” and their relationships. The course focuses roughly on the time period between 500 BCE and 500 CE, and includes materials that cut across a variety of religious “borders,” including Greek and Roman religions, Judaism, and Christianity. During the course of the semester, we will explore the historical development (ancient and modern) of the concept of “magic,” learn about a variety of ritual techniques, and their practitioners, traditionally labeled magic (including curses, amulets, astrology, and more), and think deeply about the complex relationships early Christians had with magic. The course is well suited for students interested in “magic,” Greco-Roman religions, the history of Christianity, early Judaism, or the study of religion in general, and students wanting to fill Humanities core requirements, as well as majors and minors in Religion, History, and Literature.

REL 320 Magic, Witchcraft and the Occult

Diana Brown

HST 353: History of Ancient Rome

Craige Champion

A comprehensive survey of ancient Roman political, economic, social and cultural history based on the interpretation of primary sources, both literary and archaeological, from the foundation of the city through the dissolution of the Empire in the west. Special focus is given to important topics and themes in Roman history, including Roman foundation legends, the interrelationship of Roman statecraft and Roman religion, Roman aristocratic ethical values and imperialism, the Roman reaction to Greek culture and literature, the imperial cult of the Roman emperor, the position of women in Roman society, the Roman institution of slavery, the origins and early growth of Christianity, the third century CE military and economic crises, and modern ideas on Rome's transformation into medieval Europe. Short paper, mid-term and final examinations.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.

HST 358 Democracy Ancient and Modern

Craige Champion

Among the ancient world's most enduring legacies, democracy and democratic society continues to exert a powerful influence over the modern world's political imagination. This course will examine the shapes and forms of ancient democracy and democratic participation in government to help understand and problematize the ways the modern world claims an ancient pedigree for its own forms of participatory self-governance. Throughout the course, we will probe questions like why Democracy arose, why it failed, what factors limited participation, and who benefited most and least from its implementation. In doing so, we will examine if ancient and modern democratic governments experience similar challenges, and, if so, how ancient and modern societies faced them.

MEDIEVAL/RENAISSANCE/EARLY MODERN WORLDS

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REL/MES 165 Discovering Islam

Tazim Kassam

Islam as a faith and a civilization. Understanding its origins, beliefs, rituals, and the historical development of its intellectual traditions in the pre-modern and modern eras, and its geographic, cultural and theological diversity today.

REL 186 Buddhism

Gareth Fisher

Buddhism as a world religion: its origin in India, its spread to other parts of Asia, and consequent changes in doctrine and practice through the ages.

LIT 200 Medieval and Renaissance Italian Literature

Anne Leone

In this discussion-based course, we explore the most celebrated literary masterpieces of the Italian tradition, including works by Italy’s ‘three crowns’ - Dante, Boccaccio and Petrarch, as well as classic films and works of art inspired by them, asking: why are these works so influential centuries later across linguistic, geographical and cultural boundaries? Why have they captured imaginations, transformed ways of thinking, and influenced so many other works of art? We also explore films inspired by these literary works, asking: what happens when a work of literature is translated into a different medium or genre? How does a creative response to a literary work differ from an analytical or critical one? The course is discussion-based and involves some written work, creative projects and presentations. We engage with the texts through creative projects. Discussions in English; all texts available in the original Italian, as well as in English translation.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies by petition.

HST 300 Queen Elizabeth I: Image and Reality

Chris Kyle

Elizabeth I: Cultural icon? Virgin queen? 'Father/Mother' of the nation? This course will examine the images, personality, words and actions of one of the most important monarchs in English history. How did Elizabeth manage to negotiate her rule of a patriarchal society as a 'weak-willed woman'? Did she exploit her considerable political skills to benefit the country or simply to maintain her position on the throne? And what of those who sort to assassinate or replace her? How did she react to threats of foreign invasion, domestic rebellion and a barely concerned hostility among many in the governing classes? Using both early modern and modern iconography, we will explore the images and representations of Elizabeth to unravel her life and examine how she sought to portray herself and how others have seen her through the years.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies by petition.

LIT/ARB/MES 336 Arabic Cultures

Rania Habib

Arabic culture through geography, literature, religion (Islam and other religions), ethnic groups, social divisions, films, the media, music, art, food, gender issues, and everyday life.

HST 357 Early Modern England

Chris Kyle

This course examines the political, cultural and social history of Early Modern England. Topics covered will include the power and image of the monarchy (cases studies - Henry VIII, Elizabeth I and Charles I); the role of the printing press in both 'high' and 'low' culture; the impact of crime and the treatment of criminals; the importance of London as a center of commerce and culture; the myth and reality of Shakespeare and the role of the theater; witchcraft and the dominance of religion in everyday life; and the role of women in a patriarchal society. The course will emphasize reading, discussion, visual culture and the use of primary sources.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

HST 367 Plague to Aids

Junko Takeda

This class will allow students to examine the social, institutional, political, and cultural dimensions of disease, healthcare and medicine in Europe in the early modern period to the present day (roughly 1450 to the present). Students will explore ideas and practices of science and medicine in Western Europe, beginning with an analysis of Hippocratic and Galenic medicine in both Christian and Islamic societies of the Mediterranean world. The class will examine how the Scientific Revolution witnessed changing attitudes towards disease and medicine, and also the continuation and mutation of older, inherited Hippocratic ideas that merged with “modern” epidemiology. Discussions of the early modern development of state-managed systems (quarantine and health bureaus) against pestilential contagion will explore the political dimensions of disease control and medicine. We will analyze how disease and disease control fostered imagined boundaries between the “healthy” and the “sick,” the “civilized” and the “barbaric,” the “European” and the “Other.” Topics to be covered include plague, leprosy, religion and medicine, sexuality and gender, the birth of the clinic, nursing, blindness and disability, disease and colonialism/imperialism, racial science and eugenics, Freud and psychology in Fin-de-Siècle Vienna, Nazi doctors, and current issues involving AIDS, SARS, and bird-flu. The class will pay particular attention to the representation of disease and examine how discussions of health and medicine exist in historical, political and cultural contexts. Concentration: Europe / Period: Pre-Modern, Modern

HOA 412 From Gothic to Goth

Matilde Mateo-Sevilla

Although the “Gothic” was invented in Europe in the Middle Ages, its life was prolonged well beyond its original context, embracing, through the centuries, such disparate phenomena as an architectural language, literary and film genres, and an underground pop culture. No doubt, the Gothic has been one of the most enduring and spellbinding artistic languages of all times. Why this has been the case is the subject of this course. The main lines of inquiry will be what do we mean by the term “Gothic”, how do we recognize it as such, and why people have been and still are drawn to it. This course will invite you to join in a journey of exploration of the source of its appeal, hoping it will help you to better understand the complexities of this enigmatic style. This will be done in two major stages. First, you will look at the Gothic through the eyes of successive past generations, who will unveil for you the different aspects of the Gothic that they “discovered” and enthused about, such as its sublime horrifying allure, its picturesque charm, its capacity to inspire religious spirituality, its ingenious engineering, or its fabulous potential to embody national, social or political ideals, as well as definitions of personal identity. Second, you will be challenged to look at the Gothic with your own eyes and those of your peers by means of an in-depth study of an specific Gothic object of your choice, which will be later presented and discussed in class. The course will be interdisciplinary, dealing with architecture, aesthetics, religion, art theory, history, literature, film, fashion, and historiography. The temporal frame is from the late Middle Ages to the present.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

ITA 409 Dante's Inferno

Anne Leone

In this discussion-based course, we engage in an intensive reading of *Inferno* - the first canticle of Dante's influential masterpiece, the *Commedia*, which depicts the author's journey towards his own (and his readers') salvation. The work has fascinated readers for over 700 years, in part because of tensions built into its architecture: written for an Everyman and at the same time intensely personal, it depicts a terrifying system of punishment in Hell, yet a universe in which God is love. While the poem is a synthesis of diverse literary, philosophical, scientific and theological traditions ranging from classical antiquity until the author's day, it was also a radical experiment that pushed the limits of Christian doctrine and aimed to shake the foundations of the literary traditions on which it claimed to stand. By investigating the way in which the poem constructs its world, readers may begin to discover both the powers and the limitations of their knowledge. Can we begin to understand medieval culture through the lens of this monumental work, or does the poem show us the limits of our understanding? Can we identify with Dante's Everyman, and appreciate the poet's genius, at the same time that we may criticize some of his positions? Discussion in Italian. Readings in Italian and English.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

ARC 431/HOA 479 Early Modern Architecture

Susan Henderson

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

HOA 446 Baroque Art in Northern Europe

Wayne Franits

This course will examine developments in painting (and to a lesser extent, printmaking) in relation to contemporary culture in The Netherlands, Flanders (modern-day Belgium) and France during the seventeenth century. Among those artists to be considered are: Hals, Rembrandt, Vermeer and van Ruisdael; Rubens, Van Dyck and Jordaens; and French artists who lived and worked in France--as opposed to Rome--during the seventeenth-century, among them, Georges de la Tour, and Philippe de Champaigne.

This course counts towards the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies by petition.

ANT 448 Imperial Remains: The Archaeology of Colonialism

Guido Pezzarossi

This course provides an introduction to the archaeology and anthropology of colonialism, with a particular focus on the variety of approaches to the study of colonization used by archaeologists.

HOA 500 Break that Statue: Iconoclasm

Glenn Peers

HOA 500 Vermeer and Dutch Genre Painting

Wayne Franits

ENG 730 Ovid & Shakespeare: Sex, Race, Identity, and Freedom of Speech

Dympna Callaghan

Publius Naso Ovid was the bad-boy poet of Ancient Rome. Just as the Emperor was embarking on a campaign to restore family values, Ovid wrote about how to find sex in the city of Rome, his agony over his lover's abortion, and a comparative account of sex with women and boys. More dangerously, he wrote a parody of the Emperor Augustus in the *Metamorphoses*. His transgressive poetry drew such ire that Augustus exiled him to a bleak outpost on the Black Sea where he lived out his days in fear of assassination until his death in 18 BCE. However, if Ovid was "bad," according to Frances Meres writing in 1598, Shakespeare was just like him. Meres' implication is not only that Shakespeare was as "honey-tongued" as his Roman predecessor, but that like Ovid, whose influence is to be found everywhere in Shakespeare's work, he was, as he tells us in the *Sonnets*, "tung-tied by authoritie." Mainly Ovid's influence was exercised in translation, especially via Arthur Golding's *Metamorphoses* (1567). Hugely influential too was another poet who fell fatally afoul of the Elizabethan regime, namely Christopher Marlowe, whose translation of Ovid's *Elegies* was burned in one of the period's most dramatic instances of censorship. In this course, we will examine Shakespeare's appropriation of the issues and themes that were most transgressive in Ovid and which are still hot-button issues today: sex/gender/identity, "race before race," and crucially, freedom of speech. We will read early modern translations of Ovid in concert with contemporary verse translations, such as (former poet of our CW program) Charles Martin's blank verse translation of the *Metamorphoses* and Peter Green's translation of the erotic poems. We will also address the arguments of cutting-edge research in the field.

FINAL PROJECTS: Since freedom of expression is one of the key Ovidian themes, there is considerable scope for creativity in this course. No prior experience is required, and students are invited to pursue creative, critical, or scholarly projects in relation to their particular interests.

CLASSICAL LANGUAGES

ARB 102 Arabic II

[Eva Phillips & TBD](#)

Continuing proficiency-based course, which develops communicative abilities in speaking, listening, reading, and writing in culturally authentic contexts. Activities are conducted in Arabic.

ARB 202 Arabic IV

Eva Phillips

Continuing proficiency-based course, which further refines and expands linguistic skills in culturally authentic contexts. Incorporates reading, discussing, and analyzing texts as a basis for the expression and interpretation of meaning.

Conducted in Arabic.

ARB 302 Arabic VI

TBD

Continuing proficiency-based Arabic language course which focuses on more advanced levels of proficiency in reading, speaking, writing, and listening.

GRE 102 Ancient Greek II

Jeff Carnes

Continuing course with emphasis on morphology and syntax. Introduction to examples of unsimplified Ancient Greek prose of the classical period, read and interpreted within the cultural context of ancient Greek society.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.

GRE 320 Greek Poets

Jeff Carnes

Introductory course in Greek poetry, concentrating on Homer. Review of grammar and syntax; introduction to Greek meter.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.

HEB 102 Hebrew II

Michal Downie

HEB 202 Hebrew IV

Erella Brown Sofer

LAT 102 Latin II

Dennis Alley

Latin 102 is the continuation of Latin 101. If you have not done LAT 101 but have acquired sufficient knowledge of Latin through other trajectories (e.g. Latin in high school), please contact the instructor. Why should you consider taking Latin? The Latin language will open your eyes to elements of world culture and history, social, philosophical, and artistic understanding, and the roots of language itself, including your own native language, whatever that may be. English owes some 40- 50% of its vocabulary directly to Latin roots and French, a Romance language, and if you add the Greek learning that many Romans adopted, another 10% of English vocabulary can be better understood. Through study of grammar, and readings that teach Roman culture, we will learn a great deal about an influential foreign culture, and ultimately about world culture and American heritage. With the completion of this course, you can expect to know the most important elements of the Latin Language, have some ease at translating the classical author Caesar and have deepened your knowledge of Roman life and culture at the beginning of our era.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization and the Minor in Medieval and Renaissance Studies.

LAT 320 Latin Poets

Jeff Carnes

Ovid, Metamorphoses. This class will focus on Ovid's Metamorphoses Book 3, which contains stories related to the city of Thebes, including: Cadmus and the dragon; Actaeon; Tiresias; Echo; Narcissus; Pentheus and Dionysus. We will look at the Latin text itself, along with secondary sources relating to prophecy, gender, sexuality, and the cult of Dionysus.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.

LAT 420 Advanced Latin Poetry

Jeff Carnes

Ovid, Metamorphoses. This class will focus on Ovid's Metamorphoses Book 3, which contains stories related to the city of Thebes, including: Cadmus and the dragon; Actaeon; Tiresias; Echo; Narcissus; Pentheus and Dionysus. We will look at the Latin text itself, along with secondary sources relating to prophecy, gender, sexuality, and the cult of Dionysus. Meets concurrently with LAT 320.

This course counts towards the Majors and Minors in Classics and Classical Civilization.