COURSE TITLE: “The Culture of Classical Greece”

COURSE DESCRIPTION: Examination of the Golden Age of Athens and the birth of Western humanism; studies in the classical ideals, tragedy, comedy, poetry, history, philosophy, art and architecture.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES: Students who successfully complete this course will: understand the ideals and values that inspired classical Greek culture and made it so extraordinary; be able to explain how these ideals and values developed over the course of a millennium of ancient Greek history; and be able to explain how these values and ideals were expressed in Greek drama, poetry, social and political organization, religion, philosophy, art, and architecture.

CONTACT INFORMATION
Office: 2024 Mendocino
Office Hours: MW 11-12 and W 5:00-5:20, 8:20-8:40 and by appointment
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TEXTS:
Kershaw, A Brief History of Classical Civilization (Running Press, 2010)
Homer, Odyssey (Farrar, Straus, Giroux, 1998)
Plato, Symposium (Penguin, 1999)
Sophocles, Three Theban Plays (Penguin, 1982)
Mikalson, Ancient Greek Religion, 2nd ed. (Blackwell, 2010)

You may use translations of Homer, Plato, and Sophocles other than those available at the Hornet Bookstore.

The assigned readings are important. Your Interpretive Essay will be based on the readings as well as lectures. You will need to demonstrate familiarity with the readings in order to do well on the essay portions of the midterm and final. The multiple-choice sections of the midterm and final exams will include numerous questions on the readings. All five of the Reading Response quizzes will be based on the readings.
GRADING POLICY:

Course grades will be based on the five Reading Response Quizzes (20 points each), an Interpretive Essay (100 points), and the Midterm and Final Examinations (100 points each).

Please do not tell me at any time during the semester what grade you might need in order to keep your financial aid, to get into graduate school, etc.

Course grades will be assigned as described below (percentage of possible points):

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage Range</th>
<th>Grade</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>93% and above</td>
<td>A</td>
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<tr>
<td>90-92%</td>
<td>A-</td>
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<tr>
<td>88-89%</td>
<td>B+</td>
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<tr>
<td>83-87%</td>
<td>B</td>
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<td>80-82%</td>
<td>B-</td>
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<tr>
<td>78-79%</td>
<td>C+</td>
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<tr>
<td>73-77%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>70-72%</td>
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<td>68-69%</td>
<td>D+</td>
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<tr>
<td>63-67</td>
<td>D</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-2%</td>
<td>D-</td>
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<tr>
<td>59% and below</td>
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READING RESPONSE QUIZZES:

The five Reading Response quizzes (20 points each) will consist of ten two-point multiple-choice questions. There are no make-ups for the Reading Response quizzes. I will drop the lowest of the five scores, so only your best four scores will count.

WEEKLY LECTURE TOPICS:

Week 1: Introduction; Mythological background of Homer’s *Odyssey*
Week 2: Minoan civilization; Mycenaean civilization; Homer; Rise of the polis system
Week 3: History of Greece through the fifth century BCE; Greek values and ideals
Week 4: Discussion of Homer’s *Odyssey*
Week 5: Discussion of Homer’s *Odyssey*; Religion
Week 6: Religion
Week 7: Art and Architecture
Week 8: Midterm, parts 1 and 2
Week 9: Social and Private life
Week 10: Lyric poetry and Athletics
Week 11: Drama
Week 12: Drama
Week 13: Philosophy
Week 14: Philosophy
Week 15: Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Age

SCHEDULE OF READINGS AND EXAMS:

- September 15: Reading Response Quiz (20 points; on Kershaw, chaps. 1-4, 7)
- September 22: Reading Response Quiz (20 points; on Homer, *Odyssey*)
October 1          Reading Response Quiz (20 points; on Mikalson, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 6 and Kershaw, chap. 8)
October 20        Midterm (50 points; 50 multiple-choice questions on Kershaw, chaps. 1-5, 7, 8, 10; Mikalson, chaps. 1, 2, 4, 6; Homer, *Odyssey*)
October 22        Midterm (50 points; on material described above)
November 10       Reading Response Quiz (20 points; on Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*)
December 1        Reading Response Quiz (20 points; on Plato, *Symposium*)
December 17       Final Exam (100 points; 50 points multiple-choice, 50 points essay; multiple-choice covers only post-midterm lectures and readings, essay comprehensive; post-midterm material is Kershaw, chaps. 6, 9, 11; Sophocles, *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*; Plato, *Symposium*)

**INTERPRETIVE ESSAY (100 points):**

Write a 5-6 page essay on several of what you consider to be the most remarkable features of classical Greek civilization, being careful to describe what, exactly, makes each truly remarkable.

This might seem to be an easy paper to write; after all, it’s easy to think of important features/achievements/etc. of the Greeks (democracy, drama, etc.). But don’t imagine that you can write a good paper by simply slapping together a few of these and offering simple descriptions of each. Note that the assignment does not ask you merely to describe the features/achievements you have chosen. It asks you to explain what makes each remarkable in some way. In order to earn a good grade on this assignment, you will need to demonstrate the kind of insight and appreciation of ancient Greek culture that a student in this course can be expected to demonstrate. I use the word “several” in the assignment because I don’t want to be overly prescriptive; I don’t want to tell you whether to write on three, four, or five remarkable features of ancient Greek civilization, although these numbers are reasonable given the length of the paper.

This is an analytical essay, not a research paper. The object is to write about your insights and understanding, not what others think. You are free to consult scholarly books and articles for the purpose of acquiring general information; however, you may quote only ancient Greek texts assigned for this course. If you do consult scholarly books and articles, be careful not to represent as your own any ideas belonging to their authors or to paraphrase text; this is plagiarism and grounds for assigning a grade of zero to your essay. Give other authors credit for their ideas and observations.

Everything I say in class is yours to use as you please. There is no need to credit or cite me in any way.
Format citations (which should appear within your narrative, rather than as foot- or endnotes) as in these examples:

(Plato, Symposium, p.126)
(Homer, Odyssey, p. 144)

If you use an edition of an ancient Greek text other than the one I assigned, you may use the format above within the body of your essay but you must also include a full citation on a separate bibliography page at the end of your essay.

Do not cite sources from the web, which can be unreliable.

Essays must be double-spaced, written in Times New Roman 12-point font, have one-inch margins on all sides, and be between 5 and 6 full pages in length. Essays under the 5-page minimum will be penalized. In fairness to other students, I cannot read material beyond the 6-page limit. Your essay’s title and your name should appear only on a separate title page, which does not count as part of the 5-6 page requirement. Do not include photographs or artistic/ decorative material in the body of your essay. Such material should be added as an appendix.

Some General Grading Criteria for the Interpretive Essay:

“A” essays clearly state their topic and how it will be addressed. They make good points that demonstrate familiarity with the material and support them with effective examples. They are logical and correct in their grammar and word usage. Although “B” essays possess these strengths to a lesser degree, their arguments are generally clear and reasonably well supported. “B” essays make few mistakes in grammar and word usage. “C” essays are weak in stating and supporting their theses and in their grammar and word usage. These deficiencies can make passages in a “C” essays difficult to understand and the argument as a whole ineffective. “D” essays possess the same weaknesses as “C” essays but to a greater degree. As a result, “D” essays can be difficult to understand and usually give the impression that the author has little understanding of his/her subject.

PREPARING FOR THE MIDTERM AND FINAL: THE “BIG ISSUES”

You will be prepared for the essay portions of the midterm and final exams if you can demonstrate a knowledge of what is presented about each of the following questions in lectures and assigned readings and can write about the issues carefully and thoughtfully.

For the Midterm:

What lessons does Homer teach in his Odyssey? How does he teach them?
How do we see humanism (understood as a deep and applied faith in human beings and their potential) and the ideal of moderation in Homer’s *Odyssey* and in Greek democracy, religion, and art?

What were the aims/purposes of ancient Greek religion? What were its most important practices?

What role did religion play in the ancient Greek polis?

For the Final:

What lessons does Sophocles teach in his *Oedipus Rex* and *Antigone*? How does he teach them?

What qualities did the ancient Greeks associate with the ideal (or heroic) human being? Where are they illustrated in the aspects of Greek culture we have investigated throughout the semester?

How do we see humanism (understood as a deep and applied faith in human beings and their potential) and the ideal of moderation in Greek drama and philosophy?

What were the essential features of Hellenistic culture? How did it compare to the culture of Greece in the fifth century BCE?

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION AND POLICIES:**

HRS 113 is a lecture/discussion course with no prerequisites. For Humanities and Religious Studies majors, it may be used to satisfy the requirements for the major. It can also be used to satisfy the General Education Category C4 requirement.

Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. See the campus policy on academic dishonesty at www.csus.edu/admbus/umanual/UMA00150.htm.

I make frequent use of internet search engines and other services to check for plagiarism. Any assignment in which even the slightest instance of plagiarism is detected will receive a grade of zero points. There will be no option to re-write the assignment.

No electronic devices are to be used in class.

Students who leave the room during exams will not be allowed to return. If this policy creates a documentable difficulty for you, please make necessary arrangements with the Testing Center.

Make-up exams may be scheduled only for compelling and documented reasons.
A grade of “Incomplete” may be assigned at a student’s request if, in the words of the University catalog, “required coursework has not been completed and evaluated during the course due to unforeseen but fully justified reasons.”

Students with disabilities who require special arrangements for examinations should contact me during the first week of the semester.