

## Term Information

Effective Term Spring 2014

## General Information

Course Bulletin Listing/Subject Area Classics  
Fiscal Unit/Academic Org Classics - D0509  
College/Academic Group Arts and Sciences  
Level/Career Undergraduate  
Course Number/Catalog 3404  
Course Title Magic in the Ancient World  
Transcript Abbreviation Magic Ancient Wrld  
Course Description An introduction to the theory and practice of magic in the ancient Mediterranean, how people viewed it, and how it survived in later epochs  
Semester Credit Hours/Units Fixed: 3

## Offering Information

Length Of Course 14 Week  
Flexibly Scheduled Course Never  
Does any section of this course have a distance education component? No  
Grading Basis Letter Grade  
Repeatable No  
Course Components Lecture  
Grade Roster Component Lecture  
Credit Available by Exam No  
Admission Condition Course No  
Off Campus Never  
Campus of Offering Columbus

## Prerequisites and Exclusions

Prerequisites/Corequisites  
Exclusions Not open to students with credit for 324

## Cross-Listings

Cross-Listings

## Subject/CIP Code

Subject/CIP Code 30.2201  
Subsidy Level Baccalaureate Course  
Intended Rank Freshman, Sophomore, Junior, Senior

## Requirement/Elective Designation

Required for this unit's degrees, majors, and/or minors

General Education course:

Culture and Ideas; Global Studies (International Issues successors)

The course is an elective (for this or other units) or is a service course for other units

## **Course Details**

### **Course goals or learning objectives/outcomes**

- Students will research the practice of magic in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, on the way this practice is reflected in ritual artifacts and in history, historical and philosophical accounts of such practices.
- Students will study philosophical and theological reflections on magic written by pagan and Christian authors.
- Students will master the ways in which modern scholarship constructed magic as a contested area of the history of religions.

### **Content Topic List**

- Ancient religion
- Homer
- Magic and Roman law (codex Theodosianus)

## **Attachments**

- CL 3404 GE Rationale.pdf: GE Rationale  
*(Other Supporting Documentation. Owner: Lovely, Wayne Glenn)*
- CL3404 Assessment.pdf: Assessment  
*(GEC Course Assessment Plan. Owner: Lovely, Wayne Glenn)*
- CL 3404 SYLLABUS -Magic in the Ancient World.pdf: Syllabus  
*(Syllabus. Owner: Lovely, Wayne Glenn)*

## **Comments**

- Returned at Dept. request 9/5/13

Boilerplate language for misconduct is not up-to-date and an indication of where to purchase the textbook is required. *(by Heysel, Garrett Robert on 09/09/2013 10:35 PM)*

- Semester equivalent of a quarter course (e.g., a 5 credit hour course under quarters which becomes a 3 credit hour course under semesters)

Classics 324: Magic in the Ancient World *(by Lovely, Wayne Glenn on 08/21/2013 11:46 AM)*

**COURSE REQUEST**  
3404 - Status: PENDING

Last Updated: Vankeerbergen, Bernadette  
Chantal  
10/10/2013

**Workflow Information**

Status	User(s)	Date/Time	Step
Submitted	Lovely, Wayne Glenn	08/21/2013 11:47 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Acosta-Hughes, Benjamin	08/21/2013 11:51 AM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Heyssel, Garrett Robert	09/06/2013 07:45 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Lovely, Wayne Glenn	09/09/2013 12:37 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Acosta-Hughes, Benjamin	09/09/2013 01:04 PM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Heyssel, Garrett Robert	09/09/2013 10:35 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Lovely, Wayne Glenn	09/10/2013 10:35 AM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Kallis, Erica Joy	09/10/2013 10:50 AM	Unit Approval
Revision Requested	Heyssel, Garrett Robert	09/10/2013 04:11 PM	College Approval
Submitted	Kallis, Erica Joy	10/03/2013 01:15 PM	Submitted for Approval
Approved	Kallis, Erica Joy	10/03/2013 01:15 PM	Unit Approval
Approved	Heyssel, Garrett Robert	10/07/2013 09:05 PM	College Approval
Pending Approval	Vankeerbergen, Bernadette Chantal Nolen, Dawn Jenkins, Mary Ellen Bigler Hogle, Danielle Nicole Hanlin, Deborah Kay	10/07/2013 09:05 PM	ASCCAO Approval

## **Classics 3404: Magic in the Ancient World**

**3 credit hours**

**Professor Fritz Graf**

**Graf.65@osu.edu**

**Department of Greek and Latin 414 University Hall**

**230 North Oval Mall**

**Columbus, Ohio 43210**

**Phone: 614-292-2744**

### **Textbooks**

The main book is Bengt Ankarloo and Stuart Clark, *Witchcraft and Magic in Europe: Ancient Greece and Rome* (Philadelphia, 1999).

Textbooks are available at Barnes & Noble at The Ohio State University Official Bookstore

Selected ancient texts in translation and key scholarly texts will be available as PDFs on Carmen.

### **Description**

This course will examine the reality and the imagination of magic in Greece and Rome, from the times of Homer to the Christianization of the ancient world. Ancient magic manifested itself in ritual acts that generated a large number of written texts, from the so-called curse tablets to the magical recipe books of late antiquity; its hold on the imagination of Greeks and Romans is shown in an equally large number literary and philosophical texts that discuss it, mirror it and reflect upon it: these texts (in translation) will be the main tool through which the course tries to understand ancient magic. Since the very term magic originated in Greece, the development and transformation of the terminology and the light it sheds on the contested definitions of magic in modern thought will be the second important topic of the course; the varying definition reflect the varying ways in which magic and religion in ancient society interacted and defined each other.

### **Objectives**

The study of ancient magical and religious practices and the native and contemporary reflections on them will make students better informed observers and participants of their own cultural and religious practices and beliefs; the similarities and the contrasts will stimulate critical reflection. By the end of this course, students will have gained an understanding of how Greeks and Romans conceptualized and practiced magic and how this relates to the realities of Greek and Roman society. They will understand how and why the literary imagination of ancient poets and historians used elements of magic and how reliable or how fantastic these literary representations are. They will understand why pagan and Christian philosophers and theologians rejected it, and how this rejection influenced the conceptualization of magic in the modern world, from early modern Europe to the present day. The modern scholarly discussion on the definitions and functions of magic will give them critical understanding of scholarly practices and conceptualizations in the humanities.

### **Goals/Rationale for GE Requirement**

The practice, the literary representation and the philosophical and theological reflections on magic in the Greek and Roman world offer a stimulating and provocative field for a GE course (in the categories of Cultures & Ideas, and Diversity: Global Studies), not the least because our own ideas on magic have been shaped in acceptance or rejection of ancient magic through the polemics of Christian Church fathers and the theories of XIXth century classicists/ ethnologists. As in other cases of religious and social phenomena of the ancient world, the “close otherness” and “distant similarity” of the ancient world to our own world makes it a great tool for what a GE course in these categories wants to accomplish.

This is a **General Education (GE) Cultures & Ideas** and **GE Diversity: Global Studies** course

### **GE Cultures & Ideas Goals**

Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes - Cultures & Ideas**

Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.

Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

### **GE Diversity Goals:**

Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

### **Expected Learning Outcomes - Global Studies**

Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.

Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

(For full descriptions of the revised GE requirements: <http://ascadvising.osu.edu/gec/curriculum>)

The course fulfills the objectives of the **GE Cultures and Ideas** and **GE Diversity - Global Studies** categories by addressing the following:

The course introduces students to the practice of magic in ancient Greek and Roman cultures.

Students will explore how ancient magic is a major form of human cultural expression in terms of the way the practice of magic is reflected in ritual artifacts (e.g. magical dolls, lead tablets with spells, papyrus books of spells) and in literary, historical and philosophical accounts of such practices.

The course makes students perceive the difference between these different and diverse accounts, their reliability and the need for interpretation.

The students will read philosophical and theological reflections on magic written by pagan and Christian authors in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, many of them polemical, and will try to understand the theological, philosophical and sometimes economical reasons for these reflections, and the underlying ethical and theological issues.

Students will also read modern theoretical assessments of magic, starting with Giordano Bruno in Early Modern Europe, and they will understand the ways in which modern scholarship constructed magic as a contested area of the history of religions and of thought and how these scholarly constructions are conditioned by the religious, ethical, political and even cosmological assumptions of the respective scholars and their epochs.

### **Grading and Assessment**

Quizzes: 10%

Essay I (in class): 30% Essay II (take home): 30% Final (in class): 30%

### **Quizzes**

Biweekly quizzes will be held on the second meeting of every second week and will be on the readings and topics of the past two weeks; a final quiz on the materials covered in the course will be part of the final exam, together with the final essays.

## Essays

*Essay I* will be written in class halfway through the semester class from an instructor-provided set of topics, *Essay II* will be a take-home paper written during the second half of the semester on a topic the student selects together with the instructor at the latest during week 10, and due together with the final exam. The final exam will consist of a set of 12 MC questions that cover the quarter and *two short final essays* written in class from an instructor-provided set of topics. *Essay I* (based on the teaching of the first half of the semester) will concern the practice of ancient magic in its historical background and the student's reactions to the views and values expressed through these practices. *Essay II* will concern any topic related to the history and development of ancient magic and its relationship to modern thought and practice of magic (essays that address this comparison will be specially encouraged); if necessary, the instructor should provide additional material not studied in class. The two short final essays will focus on interpretive and comparative themes drawn from the ancient and modern sources studied in class; they will demonstrate the student's skill in historical interpretation and in cross-cultural comparison.

## Grading scale for final grades

A = 93-100 points A- = 90-92 points B+ = 87-89 points  
B = 83-86 points B- = 80-82 points  
C+ = 77-79 points C = 73-76 points C- = 70-72 points  
D+ = 67-69 points D = 65-66 points  
E = below 65 points

## Academic Misconduct

"It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term "academic misconduct" includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed; illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the [Code of Student Conduct](http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/), <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>

## Disability Statement

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated, and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Ave., tel. 292-3307, [www.ods.ohio-state.edu](http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu)

Reading and Lecture Schedule:

## PART I: Definition and "invention" of magic

Week 1: Definitions of magic, from Giordano Bruno back to Pliny the Elder

**Assignments:** Giordano Bruno, *On Magic*, chapter 1; Pliny, *Natural History* bk. 30; Ankarloo and Clark 97-107; 178-191

Week 2: The ancient Magus and his Art

**Assignments:** Selected texts from Heraclitus, Plato, and Hippocrates on seers, healers and sorcerers in antiquity; Jan N. Bremmer, "The birth of the term „magic“" (10 pages); Claude Levi-Strauss, "The sorcerer and his magic" (20 pages)

QUIZ ONE

Week 3: Magic before magic: Circe, Herbs, and Homeric Witchcraft

**Assignments:** Homer, *Odyssey* 10.203-247; Ankarloo 110-111, 3-10, 82-85

## PART II: The Practice of Magic

Week 4: Binding Spells: Introduction, binding in the law court

**Assignments:** A selection of ancient texts in translation, mostly from J. Gager, *Curse Tablets and Binding Spells from the Ancient World* (1992); Chr. A. Faraone, "The agonistic context of early Greek binding spells" (31 pages)

QUIZ TWO

Week 5: Binding Spells: Erotic binding spells in practice and theory

**Assignments:** Selected erotic spells in translation; recipes from *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*; Ankarloo and Clark 281-309; Lucian, *The Lover of Lies* 14-18; Jerome, *Life of Hilarion* chapter 11

Week 6: Erotic binding spells and literary representation

**Assignments:** Sophocles, *Women from Trachis*; Theocritus, *Idyl 2*; selections from Latin love elegies in translation

QUIZ THREE

Week 7: Binding Spells in sports, entertainment and business

**Assignments:** Selected erotic spells in translation; recipes from *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*; Jerome, *Life of Hilarion* chapter 12; Ankarloo and Clark 31-51.

Week 8: Lifting Up My Soul: Theurgy

**Assignment:** "Mithras-Liturgy" (from *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*); Sarah I. Johnston, *Ancient Greek Divination* (2008), ch. 5 on theurgy

Midterm: Essay I

Week 9: Ancient Necromancy

**Assignment:** Homer, *Odyssey* bk. 11; Lucan, *Pharsalia* VI (Ericto); selected necromantic rituals from *Greek Magical Papyri in Translation*

Week 10: Witches – in antiquity and beyond

**Assignments:** Selections from Apuleius, *Metamorphoses*; Walter Scheidel, *Demon Lovers. Witchcraft, Sex, and the Crisis of Belief* (selected chapters)

QUIZ FOUR

**LATEST POSSIBILITY TO CHOOSE A TAKE-HOME PAPER TOPIC**

**EXCURSUS: Oriental precursors of Graeco-Roman practices**

Week 11: "Magic" in Bronze Age Mesopotamia and Pharaonic Egypt

**Assignments:** Selections from Assyrian magical treatises and Egyptian spell collections in translation; the respective chapters (Mesopotamia, Egypt, Hittites) in Sarah Iles Johnston, ed., *Religions in the Ancient World. A Guide* (2004) (32 pages)

**PART III: Magic, Society and the Law**

Week 12: Accusations without trials

**Assignments:** Selected grave epigrams (children and young women) from Greece and Rome; F. Graf, "Victimology" (15 pages); E. E. Evans-Pritchard, *Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande* (1937) (selected passages)

QUIZ FIVE

Week 13: Greek and Roman law, from the 5<sup>th</sup> cent BCE to the Theodosian Code

**Assignments:** Selected laws (law code of Teos, XII Tablets, Theodosian Code) in translation; Ankarloo and

Clark 243-266.

Week 14: Sorcery trials in antiquity

**Assignments:** Selections from Pliny the Elder, book 24; Tacitus, *Histories* book 2; Apuleius, *Apology (On Magic)*;

QUIZ FIVE

**FINAL EXAM and Deadline for Take-Home Paper.**



# **Classics 3404: Magic in the Graeco-Roman World**

## **Rationale for GE Status**

*Rationale:* The Department of Greek and Latin has taught this course since 2003 with good success, together with the courses on Greek religion CL3401, on ancient divinities CL3402, and on ancient mythology, CL2220/2220H. The course is a necessary complement to these courses, given that magic is a major phenomenon in the ancient world and in its literature and an important topic in the study of most religions. Together with the other courses, the course on magic helps the students develop the skills and tools necessary for a better understanding of their own culture and of religious cultures in general. As the other three courses are GE courses, it almost imposes itself that this course should be a GE course as well. The course also leads to the course on Magic and Witchcraft in the Middle Ages offered by CMRS, and the new course on Magic in Early Modern Europe developed by the Department of History.

The course addresses the learning outcomes of one category within the General Education: Arts and Humanities: **Cultures and Ideas**.

The course readings and assignments address the learning outcomes of Cultures and Ideas in the following ways:

The course introduces students to the practice of magic in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, on the way this practice is reflected in ritual artifacts (e.g. magical dolls, lead tablets with spells, papyrus books of spells) and in literary, historical and philosophical accounts of such practices; it makes students perceive the difference between these different and diverse accounts, their reliability and the need for interpretation. The students will read philosophical and theological reflections on magic written by pagan and Christian authors, many of them polemical, and will try to understand the theological, philosophical and sometimes economic reasons for these reflections, and the underlying ethical and theological issues. They will also read modern theoretical assessments of

magic, starting with Giordano Bruno in Early Modern Europe, and they will understand the ways in which modern scholarship constructed magic as a contested area of the history of religions and of thought and how these scholarly constructions are conditioned by the religious, ethical, political and even cosmological assumptions of the respective scholars and their epochs.

The course will be assessed in the following ways:

- Short-term:
  - Reflection: At the end of every week, the students write (a) an important insight and (b) an insightful question on the topics discussed during the week (email); two insights and two questions will then be discussed at the beginning of the following week.
  - Factual knowledge: At the end of every week, the students answer 10 MP questions.
- Middle-term:
  - After week 4 and week 8, the students write a short essay on a topic selected from 3 instructor-set questions.
  - After week 7, MP quiz #7 will consist of 20 questions covering the first half of the course
- Long-term: at the end of the course, there will be two ways of assessment:
  - Factual knowledge: MP quiz #14 will cover the entire course through 20 MP questions
  - Reflection: the students write a take-home essay on two topics selected from 4 instructor-set questions.
- Student assessment:
  - After week 7 and at the end of the course, the students answer a questionnaire to be developed by the instructor.

# Classics 3404: Magic in the Graeco-Roman World

## I. Assessment Goals and Objectives

This is a **General Education (GE) Cultures & Ideas** and **GE Diversity: Global Studies** course:

### **GE Cultures & Ideas:**

#### **Goals:**

Students evaluate significant cultural phenomena and ideas in order to develop capacities for aesthetic and historical response and judgment; and interpretation and evaluation.

#### **Expected Learning Outcomes - Cultures & Ideas:**

1. Students analyze and interpret major forms of human thought, culture, and expression.
2. Students evaluate how ideas influence the character of human beliefs, the perception of reality, and the norms which guide human behavior.

### **GE Diversity:**

#### **Goals:**

Students understand the pluralistic nature of institutions, society, and culture in the United States and across the world in order to become educated, productive, and principled citizens.

#### **Expected Learning Outcomes - Global Studies:**

1. Students understand some of the political, economic, cultural, physical, social, and philosophical aspects of one or more of the world's nations, peoples and cultures outside the U.S.
2. Students recognize the role of national and international diversity in shaping their own attitudes and values as global citizens.

(For full descriptions of the revised GE requirements:

<http://ascadvising.osu.edu/gec/curriculum>)

## **Goals:**

The Rationale for this course fulfilling the goals of the **GE Cultures and Ideas** and **GE Diversity - Global Studies** categories:

- The course introduces students to the practice of magic in ancient Greek and Roman cultures.
- Students will explore how ancient magic is a major form of human cultural expression in terms of the way the practice of magic is reflected in ritual artifacts (e.g. magical dolls, lead tablets with spells, papyrus books of spells) and in literary, historical and philosophical accounts of such practices.
- The course makes students perceive the difference between these different and diverse accounts, their reliability and the need for interpretation.
- The students will read philosophical and theological reflections on magic written by pagan and Christian authors in ancient Greek and Roman cultures, many of them polemical, and will try to understand the theological, philosophical and sometimes economical reasons for these reflections, and the underlying ethical and theological issues.
- Students will also read modern theoretical assessments of magic, starting with Giordano Bruno in Early Modern Europe, and they will understand the ways in which modern scholarship constructed magic as a contested area of the history of religions and of thought and how these scholarly constructions are conditioned by the religious, ethical, political and even cosmological assumptions of the respective scholars and their epochs.

## **Objectives:**

The Rationale for this course fulfilling the objectives of the **GE Cultures and Ideas** and **GE Diversity - Global Studies** categories:

1. Students will learn to discuss a survey of primary texts (both literary and epigraphical) as cultural monuments in themselves, in a non-judgmental and nonevaluative setting (given the status of magic in contemporary society, this latter is vital).
2. Students will learn general principles and strategies of literary and historical analysis through which they can come to appreciate these sources as the cultural products of a particular place, time, and genre.
3. Students will develop an enhanced ability to engage in cross-cultural cross temporal comparison, especially but not exclusively between the Graeco-Roman past and our present culture.
4. Students will acquire a basic understanding of another historical period, of its values and limitations.

5. Students will develop their critical and analytic abilities, as well as work on the clarity and precision of their writing.

## **II. Methods**

An assessment of whether these objectives are met is effectively carried out by an examination of the work students are actually required to do for the course through both direct (i.e. how class assignments are set to fulfill GE objectives) and indirect (i.e. how class content and its discussion generally meets the GE objectives of the course). The class discussions of the topic of ancient Greek and Roman magic will be a means to indirectly assess the GE objectives in Culture & Ideas and Diversity: Global Studies in terms of how students articulate key cultural and historical practices and ideas as well as gaining a sensitivity to cultural and historical differences from their contemporary perspectives. The direct assessment of GE objectives class assignments will be made via the essays, quizzes and final exam. These assignments will test how students understand the study of magic as a key practice in ancient Greek and Roman cultures. This can be gauged by their responses to specific quiz, essay and final exam questions—asking students to provide a perspective on ancient magic and relate that perspective to an understanding of broader factors that shape human cultural activity. All quizzes and the final exam will consist in part of questions that require extended interpretation of course material, which will allow assessment of students' progress toward objectives 1 and 3. Both essays will test students' critical and analytic abilities, the second in particular allowing for an assessment of the progress each individual student has made in critical and analytic processes in the course of the semester.

With both the exams and the essays a random sampling of 10% of both the exams and the papers should provide an adequate assessment of whether the course is in fact living up to its goals. The random sampling will be photocopied and provided to the Teaching, Technology and Assessment Committee for examination, and the instructor(s) will act on the advice of the committee in evolving the course components.