

**The Ohio State University  
First-Year Seminar Program  
Course Proposal**

**Course Information**

1. Attach a sample syllabus that includes the following. (Sample syllabi can be found at <http://freshmanseminars.osu.edu>).
  - the course goals
  - a brief description of the content
  - the distribution of meeting times
  - a weekly topical outline
  - a listing of assignments
  - grade assessment information (A-E or S/U)
  - required textbooks and/or reading list
  - the academic misconduct and disability services statements (sample statements can be found at <http://asccas.osu.edu/curriculum/asc-syllabus-elements>)
  
2. Attach a brief biographical paragraph that includes the current research interests, teaching awards and honors, and undergraduate courses taught by the participating instructor(s). The paragraph will be included in materials for first-year students.

**Richard Fletcher (Classics)**

Proposer's Name and Primary Academic Unit (please print)

**Selfie Culture**

Proposer's Title

**fletcher.161@osu.edu**

Proposer's e-mail Address

**614 674 8516**

Contact Phone Number

**03/07/17**

Submitted by:

*Anthony Kaldellis*

Anthony Kaldellis

Approved by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Chair of Academic Unit (please print)

Please indicate the semester you would like to offer the seminar: AU'  SP'

**This form and any attachments should be mailed to First-Year Seminar Program, 100 Denney Hall, 164 Annie & John Glenn Avenue, ATTN: Todd Bitters or e-mailed to [bitters.4@osu.edu](mailto:bitters.4@osu.edu).**

# Selfie Culture

Arts & Sciences 1138.\*\*, First-Year Seminar

One Semester-Hour Credit

Date TBC



Richard Fletcher  
Associate Professor  
Department of Classics  
Office Hours Tuesdays 10-12pm or by appointment  
328 University Hall

## Course Description

Exhibitionist, narcissistic, selfish, shameless - contemporary selfie culture has been attacked from all angles as the bane on 21<sup>st</sup> century life and as the debasement of culture itself. But is there another way of looking at it? Selfie culture did not suddenly spring up with the invention of the smart phone. For example, ancient Rome had a fully-fledged selfie culture, from the poet Ovid's retelling of the myth of Narcissus to ideas about mirrors, philosophies of the self and the public image of the emperor. In addition, the art of the selfie predates digital culture in the form of autobiographies, self-portraiture and the idea of the care of the self, each of which has been examined as part of a critical examination of the subject in the work of Michel Foucault. Finally, in forms of activism, protest and witnessing, selfies become a crucial part of a network of perspectives to create new models of collective action and foster, rather than inhibit, empathy between people. This course will take a closer look at historical, artistic and political frameworks for selfie culture, comparing ancient and modern ideas, exploring the art of the selfie across pre-digital and digital media and looking to the contemporary politics of the selfie as a medium of community and collective action.

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/pdfs/csc\\_12-31-07.pdf](http://studentlife.osu.edu/pdfs/csc_12-31-07.pdf)).

## Students with Disabilities

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 Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu/>

## Biographical Statement

Richard Fletcher is an Associate Professor in the Department of Classics and his recent teaching and research is focused on the dynamic between ancient philosophy, literature, mythology and contemporary art. In addition to collaborations with artists and writing for exhibition catalogues, he has curated three exhibitions in Columbus: *Donald Lokuta: Segal's Studio – Plato's Cave*, *Myths of the Academy* and *Come Along With Me*. He also writes the blog *Mimus Plato: Classics and Modern/Contemporary Art* (<http://minusplato.com/>).

## Class Schedule

(All readings will be made available electronically on Canvas)

### Selfish History: Ancient Rome & the Revenge of Narcissus

#### *Week 1: Ovid's Narcissus & the new narcissism*

- Ovid *Metamorphoses* Book 3 (Narcissus)
- Selection of media articles that use Ovid's Narcissus to discuss selfie culture e.g. Peter Jones 'Ancient and Modern: Ovid on selfies' <http://www.spectator.co.uk/2014/01/ovid-on-selfies/>
- Kristin Dombek, 'Artists' in *The Selfishness of Others: An Essay on the Fear of Narcissism*, 2016, 111-120.

#### *Week 2: Mirrors, exhibitionism & celebrity culture*

- Suetonius' *Life of Horace*; Seneca *Natural Questions* 1 (Hostius Quadra); Apuleius *Apology* (on the philosopher's mirror).
- Kim Kardashian *Selfish* (selection)
- Mehita Iqani and Jonathan E. Schroeder #selfie: digital self-portraits as commodity form and consumption practice *Consumption Markets & Culture* Vol. 19. 5, 2016

#### *Week 3: Networks: Selfies, social media and the state*