

Ohio State Department Course Review Concurrence Form

The purpose of this form is to provide a simple system of obtaining departmental reactions to proposed new courses, group studies, study tours, workshop requests, and course changes. A letter may be substituted for this form.

Academic units initiating a request which requires such a reaction should complete Section A of this form and send a copy of the form, course request, and syllabus to each of the academic units that might have related interests in the course. Initiating units should allow at least two weeks for responses.

Academic units receiving this form should response to Section B and return the form to the initiating unit. Overlap of course content and other problems should be resolved by the academic units before forwarding this form and all other accompanying documentation to the Office of Academic Affairs.

A. Information from academic unit *initiating* the request:

Initiating Academic Unit: Department of Classics Date: 3/28/2023

Registrar's Listing: CLAS

Course Number: 3210 Level: U P G Credit Hours: 3

Course Title: Classics and African American Political Thought

Type of Request: New Course Group Studies Workshop Study Tour Course Change

Academic Unit with related interests asked to review the request (use a separate form for each unit while requesting concurrences from multiple units):

Date responses are needed: 4/7/2023


B. Information from academic units *reviewing* the request:

- The academic unit **supports** the proposal
 The academic unit **does not support** the proposal.

Please explain:

The academic unit suggests:

DocuSigned by:



Signature of Department Chair

Signature of Graduate Studies Chair (if applicable)

Classics 3210: Classics and African American Political Thought (Spring 2024 T/TH 9:35-10:55)**GE Theme: Citizenship for a Diverse and Just World****Instructor:** Prof. Harriet Fertik**Email:** fertik.1@osu.edu**Office Hours:** University Hall 426, Wednesday 1-3pm and by appointment**Format of instruction:** In-Person Lecture 3 credit hours**Land Acknowledgement**

We would like to acknowledge the land that The Ohio State University occupies is the ancestral and contemporary territory of the Shawnee, Potawatomi, Delaware, Miami, Peoria, Seneca, Wyandotte, Ojibwe and Cherokee peoples. Specifically, the university resides on land ceded in the 1795 Treaty of Greeneville and the forced removal of tribes through the Indian Removal Act of 1830. As a land grant institution, we want to honor the resiliency of these tribal nations and recognize the historical contexts that has and continues to affect the Indigenous peoples of this land.

Description

In this course, we explore ideas of citizenship and political life in ancient Greek and Roman texts (focusing on the 5th century BCE-1st century CE) and in African American texts (with attention to the 18th to 20th centuries). We will follow recent developments in scholarship on Black Classicisms, which considers how peoples from Africa and across the African diaspora have understood and reimagined the literatures, arts, and cultures of antiquity. As we will see, these two traditions of political thought—Greco-Roman and African American—have long been in conversation with each other, and studying them side by side can shed light on the challenges that US-American democracy faces today.

We examine 1) how African American thinkers have interpreted, made use of, and revised the Classics in their own work and 2) how African American thinkers contribute to and develop traditions of political inquiry and debate that have historically been traced to ancient Greece and Rome.

We will engage with new scholarship in Classics and work with new resources for the study of African American thought. No knowledge of Greek or Latin is required for this course: we will read all ancient sources in English translation. After an introduction to key materials and approaches (unit 1), we will focus on three themes crucial for both ancient Greek and Roman and African American political thought: citizenship and enslavement (unit 2); education for citizenship and leadership (unit 3); and political conflict and change (unit 4). You will have opportunities, both in class and in writing, to reflect on how materials we study in this course can help us to understand political activity on our campus and in our local communities.

Goals & Expected Learning Outcomes for GE Theme: Citizenship for a Just and Diverse World

Goals:

1. Successful students will analyze an important topic or idea at a more advanced and in-depth level than in the Foundations component. [Note: In this context, "advanced" refers to courses that are e.g., synthetic, rely on research or cutting-edge findings, or deeply engage with the subject matter, among other possibilities.]
2. Successful students will integrate approaches to the theme by making connections to out-of-classroom experiences with academic knowledge or across disciplines and/or to work they have done in previous classes and that they anticipate doing in future.
3. Successful students will explore and analyze a range of perspectives on local, national, or global citizenship and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions that constitute citizenship.
4. Successful students will examine notions of justice amid difference and analyze and critique how these interact with historically and socially constructed ideas of citizenship and membership within society, both within the United States and around the world.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

Successful students are able to:

- 1.1. Engage in critical and logical thinking about the topic or idea of the theme.
- 1.2. Engage in advance, in-depth, scholarly exploration of the topic or idea of the theme.
- 2.1. Identify, describe, and synthesize approaches or experiences as they apply to the theme.
- 2.2. Demonstrate a developing sense of self as a learner through reflection, self-assessment, and creative work, building on prior experiences to respond to new and challenging contexts.
- 3.1. Describe and analyze a range of perspectives on what constitutes citizenship and how it differs across political, cultural, national, global, and/or historical communities.
- 3.2. Identify, reflect on, and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions required for intercultural competence as a global citizen.
- 4.1. Examine, critique, and evaluate various expressions and implications of diversity, equity, and inclusion, and explore a variety of lived experiences.
- 4.2. Analyze and critique the intersection of concepts of justice, difference, citizenship, and how these interact with cultural traditions, structures of power, and/or advocacy for social change.

Additional Expected Learning Outcomes for this Course

- Explore and analyze primary sources for ancient Greek and Roman and African American political thought, with attention to genre and historical context
- Explore and analyze new scholarship on ancient Greek and Roman and African American political thought
- Examine and analyze (through primary sources and scholarship) relationships between ancient Greek and Roman and African American ideas of citizenship and political life
- Describe and critique diverse approaches to and perspectives on political participation, political education, and political change from antiquity up to today
- Reflect on political conversations and political activity in our local communities and analyze them within a broader historical context

Course Materials

You are required to obtain copies of:

- Course Pack from UniPrint (includes most primary sources)
- W. E. B. Du Bois, *The Quest of the Silver Fleece* (available from the OSU bookstore)
- Sophocles, *Theban Plays*, translated by Paul Woodruff and Peter Meineck. Hackett. (available from the OSU bookstore)

All other assigned materials will be available through Carmen, with links to the OSU Library. We will make frequent use of digital resources from the OSU Library, including *African American Political Thought: A Collected History* (edited by Melvin L. Rogers and Jack Turner, 2022). If you have concerns about obtaining or accessing the course materials, please contact me as soon as possible.

Expectations, Assignments, and Assessments

Attendance and Participation: Attending class is essential to success in this course. Class time is an opportunity to learn from each other, and I look forward to learning from and with you. Please take a moment to consider whether you are usually more of a listener or more of a talker in class discussion. If you are more of a listener, make sure you are challenging yourself to share your ideas. If you are more of a talker, make sure you are allowing space to hear what others have to say.

Daily Reading: This course requires a substantial amount of reading: you are expected to read the texts assigned for each day before class (unless the reading is marked “in class”) and to have the texts available to consult during class time. It takes practice to develop strengths and skills as a reader, and this course is an opportunity to do that. Allow yourself time to read carefully and take notes as you go. What do you find most striking, strange, compelling, or funny? What did you find confusing or unclear? What connections do you notice with previous reading assignments for the course or other courses you have taken? What more would you like to know? You will have opportunities to ask questions and share your impressions during class.

Small-Group Writing Exercises and Forum Posts: You will complete number of low-stakes writing assignments throughout the semester: some of these will be completed in small-groups during class and others will be forum posts which you must complete by a certain date. Dates for these assignments are listed in the schedule: more details will be shared in class and via Carmen.

Reflection Essay: You will write one 1000-word essay focused on texts assigned in Unit 3 (Education for Citizenship and Leadership). You will be given a choice of passages from the text and will use these to discuss **your** views of the aims of education. Specific guidelines will be distributed 2 weeks in advance of the due date. This essay will be graded on a 10-point scale:

- Basics (up to 1 point): Does the author focus on the texts selected for the assignment? Does the paper meet the word count requirements?

- Evidence (up to 3 points): Does the author cite evidence from the selected passages to support their views? Does the author choose evidence that is relevant to the discussion and avoid evidence that is not relevant? Does the author account for the wider context of the evidence cited?
- Analysis (up to 4 points): Does the author provide a clear statement of the main point of the essay (i.e., a thesis)? Does the author provide an interpretation of the text(s), instead of simply summarizing them? Does the author focus on issues in the text(s) that are debatable or open to different interpretations? Does the author go beyond the most general or obvious observations and express their own point of view?
- Polish (up to 1 point): Is the writing clear and easy to understand? Does the author choose words thoughtfully and carefully (i.e., do the words chosen make sense in context)?

You do not need, and should not consult, any sources to complete this essay other than the assigned readings and your class notes, and the reflection you submit must be your own work.

Midterm Exam: Short answer and short essay exam to be completed in class, focused on identification and analysis of selected passages from assigned readings.

Report on Campus or Community Event: You will choose one campus or community event relevant to the GE Theme (Citizenship for a Just and Diverse World) to attend during the semester and submit a 300-500 word report on a) what you learned and b) what connections you make between the event and the GE Theme. Possibilities include (but are not limited to) events sponsored by the Center for Ethics and Human Values, the Center for Historical Research, the Center for the Study of Religion, the Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies, the Kirwan Institute for the Study of Race and Ethnicity, and the Mershon Center for International Security Studies. I will share information about upcoming events with you and encourage you to share information for any events you learn about. If you are uncertain whether an event will count, please ask.

Final Essay/Project: For your final assignment you may choose between an essay (ca. 2000 words) or a project (e.g., a podcast or a creative work) on a topic of your choice: your work must be related to the themes of this course **and** include at least 1 source beyond what has been specifically assigned during the semester (accessed through the OSU Library or with instructor approval). To help you prepare for this assignment, we will spend the class session prior to spring break discussing the guidelines and brainstorming. After spring break, you will sign up for a meeting with me in office hours and bring a 1-paragraph proposal for your project to discuss. In the final class sessions, you will present an “elevator speech”—a three-minute explanation of your essay/project and why it is important to you—to the class.

Grading

Attendance and Participation (includes Small-Group Writing Exercises and Forum Posts): 15%

Reflection Essay: 20%

Midterm Exam: 25%

Report on Campus or Community Event: 10%

Final Essay/Project: 30%

Course Policies

Attendance: Attending class is essential for success in this course, but illnesses and emergencies happen. You should not attend class if you are sick. If you must be absent, please email me to let me know in advance, and plan to attend office hours to get caught up. If you know you must be absent for multiple class sessions, please contact me immediately to discuss accommodations.

Communication: All information about the course will be communicated through Canvas. You are responsible for reading all communications sent about this course. If you have a question, email me directly at fertik.1@osu.edu. I do my best to respond to all emails within 24 hours during the week, or 48 hours over the weekend.

Electronic Devices: You are welcome to use your computer or tablet for class-related purposes only. Cell phones must be set to silent and put away unless you are using them to access Carmen for an in-class assignment. Using electronic devices for purposes not related to class is distracting, not only to you but to your fellow students: be considerate of your classmates' learning as well as your own.

Extensions and Make-Ups: Extensions for the reflection papers must be requested via email at least 48 hours in advance of the due date and are subject to approval. Make-ups for the midterm exam will only be permitted in case of illness or emergency and require approval from me.

Late Submissions: If you submit an assignment within 24 hours after the deadline, 0.5 points will be deducted from the grade; 48 hours after the deadline – 1 point; 72 hours after the deadline – 1.5 points; after 72 hours – 2 points.

Office Hours: If you need to discuss any course material or assignments, you should plan to attend my office hours. I encourage you to come to office hours to introduce yourself, chat about your academic interests, and discuss further opportunities for studying the ancient world at OSU.

University Policies

Academic Honesty: Academic integrity is essential to maintaining an environment that fosters excellence in teaching, research, and other educational and scholarly activities. The Ohio State University and the Committee on Academic Misconduct (COAM) expect that all students have read and understand the University's Code of Student Conduct, and that all students will complete all academic and scholarly assignments with fairness and honesty. University rules require that all cases of suspected plagiarism be reported to the Committee on Academic Misconduct. For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct <http://studentlife.osu.edu/csc/>. Please contact Prof. Fertik if you have any questions about the above policy or what constitutes academic misconduct in this course.

Accommodations: If you anticipate or experience academic barriers based on disability (including mental health, chronic or temporary medical conditions), please let me (Prof. Fertik) know so that we can discuss reasonable accommodations as soon as possible. I may request that you register with Student Life Disability Services. After registration, make arrangements with me as soon as possible to discuss your accommodations. SLDS contact information: slds@osu.edu.

Counseling and Support: College life can be challenging for many reasons: if you are interested in counseling, you can find more information on what OSU offers here: <https://ccs.osu.edu/>

Diversity: The Ohio State University affirms the importance and value of diversity in the student body. Our programs and curricula reflect our multicultural society and global economy and seek to provide opportunities for students to learn more about persons who are different from them. We are committed to maintaining a community that recognizes and values the inherent worth and dignity of every person; fosters sensitivity, understanding, and mutual respect among each member of our community; and encourages each individual to strive to reach his or her own potential. Discrimination against any individual based upon protected status, which is defined as age, color, disability, gender identity or expression, national origin, race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, or veteran status, is prohibited.

Course Schedule

Unit 1: Introductions: Materials and Approaches

Introduction to the Course

January 9

- **In class:** view selection of Danielle Allen's 2019 lecture at the OSU Center for Ethics and Human Values ([The Meaning of America: Laying a New Foundation for Commitment to American Democracy and One Another](#)) and **small-group writing exercise 1**

Classics and Black Classicisms

January 11

- Rachel Poser (2021), ["He Wants to Save Classics from Whiteness: Can the Field Survive?"](#) (*The New York Times*)
- Sarah Derbew (2022), ["Blackness in Antiquity"](#) (Aeon)

January 16

- Patrice Rankine (2006), *Ulysses in Black: Ralph Ellison, Classicism, and African American Literature*, pp. 22-34
- Eric Ashley Hairston (2013), *The Ebony Column: Classics, Civilization, and the African American Reclamation of the West*, pp. 1-24

African American Political Thought

January 18

- Melvin L. Rogers and Jack Turner, "Political Theorizing in Black: An Introduction," *African American Political Thought: A Collected History*, pp. 1-29 (AAPT)
- Podcast: ["Out of Africa: Slavery and the Diaspora"](#) (Peter Adamson and Chike Jeffers, *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps*, May 26, 2019)
- **Last day to submit Forum Post 1**

Unit 2: Citizenship and EnslavementAristotle

January 23

- Aristotle, *Politics* Book I, Chapters 1-7 & 12-13 (4th century BCE)
- *Optional*: Podcast: ["Constitutional Conventions: Aristotle's Political Philosophy"](#) (Peter Adamson, *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps*, October 2, 2011)

Frederick Douglass

January 25

- Sharon R. Krause, "Frederick Douglass: Non-Sovereign Freedom and the Plurality of Political Resistance," *AAPT*, pp. 116-141
- Frederick Douglass (1855), *My Bondage and My Freedom*, Chapters 1-2, 6, 9-11, 23

W. E. B. Du Bois

January 30

- W. E. B. Du Bois (1920), "The Servant in the House," in *Darkwater*
- Podcast: ["Lifting the Veil: Introducing W. E. B. Du Bois"](#) (Peter Adamson and Chike Jeffers, *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps*, December 27, 2020)

Toni Morrison

February 1

- Emily Greenwood (2022), “Reconstructing Classical Philology: Reading Aristotle *Politics* 1.4 After Toni Morrison,” *American Journal of Philology* 143.2, pp. 335-357
- **In class:** read selections of Toni Morrison, “Unspeakable Things Unspoken: The Afro-American Presence in American Literature,” and **small-group writing exercise 2**

Unit 3: Education for Citizenship and LeadershipPhillis Wheatley: Poetry

February 6

- Vincent Carretta, “Phillis Wheatley and the Rhetoric of Politics and Race,” *AAPT*, pp. 32-51
- Selections from Phillis Wheatley (1771), *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*
 - Preface and To the Public
 - To Maecenas
 - On Virtue
 - To SM a Young African Painter on Seeing his Works
- Selections from Horace, *Odes* (1st century BCE)

February 8

- Wheatley, “Niobe in Distress”
- Selections from Ovid, *Metamorphoses* (1st century CE)
- Nicole A. Spigner (2021), “Phillis Wheatley’s Niobe Poetics,” in *Brill’s Companion to Classics in the Early Americas*, pp. 320-342
- **In class:** Eve Ewing (2019), “1773” (poem about Wheatley for “The 1619 Project” in *The New York Times Magazine*)

Du Bois: Oratory and Mythology

February 13

- Cicero, *Pro Archia Poeta* (“In Defense of Archias the Poet”) (1st century BCE)
- Du Bois (1903), “Of the Meaning of Progress” in *The Souls of Black Folk*
- Mathias Hanses (2019), “Cicero Crosses the Color Line: *Pro Archia Poeta* and W. E. B. Du Bois’s *The Souls of Black Folk*,” *International Journal of the Classical Tradition* 26.1, pp. 10-26

February 15

- Du Bois (1911), *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, Chapters 1-12

February 20

- Du Bois (1911), *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, Chapters 13-26

February 22

- Du Bois (1911), *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*, Chapters 27-38
- Jackie Murray (2019), "W. E. B. Du Bois' *The Quest of the Silver Fleece*: The Education of Black Medea," *Transactions of the American Philological Association* 149.2 Supplement, 143-162

Reflection Essay due by February 23rd, 11:59 pm

Ancient History

February 27

- Herodotus, *Histories*, selections from Book 2 (5th century BCE)
- Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War*, selections from Book 1 (5th century BCE)
- Livy, *History of Rome*, preface (1st century BCE/CE)

American History

February 29

- Shelley P. Haley (1993), "Black Feminist Thought and Classics: Re-membling, Re-claiming, Re-empowering" in *Feminist Theory and the Classics*, pp. 23-38
- Nikole Hannah-Jones (2019), "The Idea of America" (introduction to "The 1619 Project" in *The New York Times Magazine*)

Midterm Exam

March 5

Orientation to the Final Essay/Project

March 7

- **In class:** introduction to options for final essay/project, review of assignment guidelines, brainstorming

SPRING BREAK

Unit 4: Political Conflict and Political Change

Demands for Justice

March 19

- Livy, *History of Rome*, selections from Books 2 and 3 (1st century BCE/CE)

March 21

- David Walker (1830), *Walker's Appeal to the Colored Citizens of the World*, Preamble and Articles I and II

- Melvin Rogers, “David Walker: Citizenship, Judgment, Freedom, and Solidarity,” *AAPT*, pp. 52-66
- *Optional*: Podcast: “Killed or Be Killed: David Walker’s Appeal” (Peter Adamson and Chike Jeffers, *History of Philosophy Without Any Gaps*, January 5, 2020)

Anger and Resistance

March 26

- Selections from Seneca, *On Anger* (1st century CE)

March 28

- Audre Lorde, “The Uses of Anger” (1981) and “The Master’s Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master’s House” (1984)
- Jack Turner, “Audre Lorde’s Politics of Difference,” *AAPT*, pp. 563-583
- **Last day to submit report on campus or community event**

Responsibility and Redemption

April 2

- Sophocles, *Oedipus the King* (selections) and *Oedipus at Colonus* (complete) (5th century BCE)

April 4

- **In class viewing:** *The Gospel at Colonus* (1983)
- **Last day to submit Forum Post 2**

Think Globally, Act Locally

April 9

- **In class:** Read [Resolution Declaring Racism a Public Health Crisis in Columbus \(0095X-2020\)](#) and **small-group writing exercise 3**

Unit 5: Conclusions

Student Presentations

April 11 & 16

- **Elevator Speeches for Final Essays/Projects (attendance required to support and learn from your peers)**

Final Essay/Project due by April 19th, 11:59 pm

Certificate Of Completion

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