

## **DEREE COLLEGE SYLLABUS FOR:**

### **CL 3227 ANCIENT GREEK AND ROMAN COMEDY IN TRANSLATION**

**3/0/3**

(Previously CL/GL 3227)

(Updated Spring 2010)

#### **PREREQUISITES:**

WP 1010 Introduction to Academic Writing

WP 1111 Integrated Academic Writing & Ethics

#### **CATALOG**

#### **DESCRIPTION:**

Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus, Terence, in English translation by modern poets and scholars. Commentary by ancient and modern scholars.

#### **RATIONALE:**

It is imperative for students studying literature and the humanities in general to have a good knowledge of the dramatic and theatrical foundations of Western literature. This course helps acquaint the student with the comic masterpieces of Greek and Roman dramatists, who created the genre of comedy and influenced subsequent European drama. More than any other genre, comedy reflects social and political life. The course also familiarizes the student with critical theories and appraisals of Greco-Roman comedy by ancient and modern commentators.

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

As a result of taking this course, the student should be able to:

1. Define and distinguish between the various genres of dramatic literature, with special emphasis on the genre of comedy; develop an understanding of the nature and function of old, middle, and new comedy (Greek and Roman).
2. Describe and evaluate the development of literary themes, and changes in style and structure in the works of the classical authors of comedy.
3. Place these works of literature within their cultural context, i.e., trace the influence within their cultural context, as well as study the impact of religious, philosophical, social and political ideas in the comedies studied; outline the major historical events and intellectual currents that gave birth to such masterpieces; evaluate these works within the context of such ideas.
4. Evaluate the contribution made by Greek and Roman comedy writers to the genre of comedy in Western culture.
5. Demonstrate the universality of themes and analyze the underlying concepts in the works studied; define the comic hero and draw distinctions with the tragic and the epic hero; draw conclusions regarding Greek and Roman societies and the nature of humanity through the study of comedy.
6. Improve reading and analytical skills and develop an appreciation of literature.
7. Express views and offer interpretations on the material studied; develop critical thinking and practice in evaluating the views of various scholars concerning the works studied.

#### **LEARNING**

#### **ACTIVITIES:**

The class will combine lectures, directed discussions and student reports (written and oral). The students will be asked to read some of the masterpieces of Greek and Roman comedy in English translation. He/she should be prepared to participate in class discussion and to deliver reports on topics chosen in cooperation with the instructor.

**EVALUATION:**

The students must satisfactorily fulfill the following requirements:

1. Regular and meaningful class participation. For this, the student must study carefully each assignment before class discussion in order to express his/her views on the assigned reading.
2. Homework and reports: The student is expected to write a brief essay (no more than one page daily) with observations and questions on the assigned reading, which will either be delivered orally in class or handed in (15 points).
3. Two examinations on the material studied: a midterm and a final (25 points each).
4. A short, 3-page paper (on a topic approved by the instructor) in which the student presents his/her views on an aspect of one of the works studied (10 points).
5. A paper on some of the works studied, which includes a critical bibliography (6-8 pages long) on a topic approved by the instructor (15 points).
6. Written and oral quizzes (10 points).

Grading scale

90-100% A

80-89% B

70-79% C

60-69% D

**REQUIRED  
MATERIAL:**

1. Aristophanes. Aristophanes: Four Comedies. William Arrowsmith, ed. Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan Press, 1969; 1994.
2. Aristophanes. Aristophanes: Three Comedies. William Arrowsmith, ed. Ann Arbor Paperbacks, The University of Michigan Press, 1969; 1993.
3. Aristophanes. Aristophanes ("The Knights", "Peace", "The Birds", "The Assemblywomen", "Wealth"). Trans. David Barrett and Alan Sommerstein. Penguin Books, 1978.
4. Menander. Menander: Plays and Fragments. Trans. Miller. Penguin Books.
5. Plautus, Plautus: The Rope and Other Plays. Ed. B. Radice, trans. E. F. Watling. Penguin Books, 1964; 1983.
6. Terence. Terence: The Comedies. Ed. and trans. by B. Radice. Penguin Books, 1976.

**RECOMMENDED  
MATERIAL:**

1. Pickard-Cambridge, A. Dithyramb, Tragedy and Comedy, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Revised by T. B. L. Webster, Oxford U. Press, 1962.
2. Pickard-Cambridge, A. The Dramatic Festivals of Athens. Oxford University Press, 1953.
3. Lesky, Albin. A History of Greek Literature, 2d ed. Trans. J. Willis and C. de Heer. Methuen, 1963. English trans., 1966.
4. Lever, K., The Art of Greek Comedy. London, 1956.
5. Bieber, M., History of the Greek and Roman Theater, 2d ed. Princeton, 1939; 1961.

6. Webster, T. B. L. Monuments Illustrating Old and Middle Comedy. University of London, Institute of Classical Studies Bulletin, suppl. 9. 1960.
7. Arnott, P. D. Greek Scenic Conventions in the Fifth Century B.C. Oxford, 1962.
8. Norwood, G. Greek Comedy. London, 1931.
9. Pickard-Cambridge, A. The Theatre of Dionysus at Athens. Oxford, 1946.
10. Webster, T. B. L. Greek Theatre Production. London, 1956.
11. Whitman, C. H. Aristophanes and the Comic Hero. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard U. Press, 1964.
12. Duckworth, G. E. The Nature of Roman Comedy.
13. Golden, L. In Praise of Prometheus.
14. Segal, E., Roman Laughter
15. Dover, K. J. Aristophanic Comedy. University of California Press, 1972.
16. Ehrenberg, V. The People of Aristophanes. 2d ed. Oxford, 1951.
17. Barrett, D. Wasps, Women at the Thesmophoria and Frogs. English trans. Harmondsworth, 1964.
18. Dickinson, P. Aristophanes. English trans. London, Oxford, 1970.
19. Fitts, D. Lysistrata, Frogs, Birds and Women at the Thesmophoria. New York, 1962.
20. Gomme, A. W. More Essays in Greek History and Literature. Oxford, 1962.
21. Grene, D. The Comic Technique of Aristophanes, Hermathena (1937), pp. 87-125.

**WWW RESOURCES:**

Journals:

On-Line Journals:

<http://www.usu.edu/history/ploutarchos/journals.html>

L'Année Philologique:

<http://callimac.vjf.cnrs.fr:8080/AnPhilNetUs.html>

General Resources:

Classics Courses:

<http://www.colleges.org/cgi-bin/coursebrowse.pl>

Library of Congress:

<http://lcweb.loc.gov/global/classics/claslink.html>

The Atrium:

<http://web.idirect.com/~atrium/>

Perseus Project:

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/>

Greek:

<http://www.txclassics.org/greeklinks.htm>

Latin:

<http://patriot.net/~lillard/cp/latlib>

Special Sites:

Classical Atlas Project:

[http://www.unc.edu/depts/cl\\_atlas/](http://www.unc.edu/depts/cl_atlas/)

Women in Antiquity:

<http://www.stoa.org/diotima/>

Virtual Classics Community:

<http://www.vroma.org/>

Theater:

<http://didaskalia.berkeley.edu/>

Organizations:

American Classical League:

<http://www.aclassics.org/>

APA:

<http://www.apaclassics.org/>

American School at Athens:

[http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/asca\\_info.html](http://www.ascsa.edu.gr/asca_info.html)

**SOFTWARE**

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Word

**COMMUNICATION**

**REQUIREMENTS:**

Effective oral communication in class discussions

Written reports

Oral reports

Oral and written quizzes

Exams

**CONTENT OUTLINE:**

The comedies of Aristophanes, Menander, Plautus and Terence will be studied. Lectures and class discussions will focus on the following:

1. The origins of drama and especially comedy
2. Political and historical events that influenced the dramatists
3. Comedy as a genre of drama
4. The cultural influences on the creation and production of Greek comedies (old, middle and new)
5. The cultural influences on the creation and production of Roman comedies
6. Comparison of thought and style between the various dramatists studied
7. Relation of the genre of comedy with other genres of Greek and Roman literature
8. Conclusions and appraisal of each author studied; comparison between Greek and Roman authors of comedy.

*More specific topics will be given to students with daily class assignments in the "Course Outline".*