

***Classics 376: Love Poetry of the Ancient Mediterranean
Spring 2012 Honors Seminar Proposal***

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Course Description: this class will introduce you to the love poetry of three ancient Mediterranean cultures: Ancient Israel, Greece, and Rome. Ideas of love and desire are culturally determined, reflecting assumptions often very different from our own. We will read a variety of poems in the context of their socio-historical settings, and confront a range of issues including physical vs. spiritual love, cultural ideals of beauty, literary representations of gender roles and sexual preferences, the dynamics of tradition and imitation in literature, and conventions of literary form. This course will be taught as a small seminar, allowing for discussion and in-depth analysis of the poetry; students will write a total of 20-25 pages during the semester, with a final project consisting of a 10-12 page research paper.

Prerequisites: there are no formal prerequisites, but this class assumes a basic knowledge of the ancient Greek and Roman civilizations, and a familiarity with the Hebrew Bible, Homer, and Vergil in translation. Useful courses for basic knowledge are Classics 320 (Greek Civilization) and Classics 322 (Roman Civilization), as well as selected courses in Comparative Literature, English, and Jewish Studies.

Requirements and Grading:

4 short written assignments for class	20 %
Midterm with essay answers	30 %
Final research paper	50 %

- Attendance is very important for understanding the material; you are expected to arrive punctually and remain until the end of class.
- Reading assignments must be completed on the indicated day.
- Four short written assignments for class will be required during the semester: 2-page question or comment on the material for the week, to be handed in during class.
- The midterm will consist of essays
- The final project will be a 10-12 page research paper on a topic to be determined in consultation with the professor.

Required Texts:

S = S. Lombardo, *Sappho: Poems and Fragments* (Hackett, Indianapolis 2002)

C = D. Mulroy, *The Complete Poetry of Catullus* (UW Press, Madison 2002)

SoS = A. and C. Bloch, R. Alter, S. Mitchell, *The Song of Songs* (Modern Library, 2006)

MS = M. Skinner, *Sexuality in Greek and Roman Culture* (Blackwell, Malden MA 2005)

CP = Coursepack

Syllabus: Classics 376

I. Introduction

- 1 *chronological overview*
- 2 *definitions and tools for reading a poem*

II. Archaic Greek Love Poetry

- 3 *Overview: sexuality in Greek culture*
MS pp. 1-20
R. Rutherford, "Erotic Literature" = CP
- 4 *the early archaic period: male voices*
Archilochus = CP
MS pp. 21-44
- 5 Ibycus, Mimnermus = CP
MS pp. 45-111
- 6 Images of the symposium: an illustrated lecture
MS pp. 112-147
Short assignment due
- 7 Theognis = CP
- 8 *the archaic period: a female voice*
Sappho = S pp. v-xxiii, 1-73
J. Snyder, "Sappho of Lesbos" = CP
- 9 Sappho, continued
M. Johnson, "Songs for the Gods" = CP
- 10 Sappho, concluded
M. Johnson, "Mythical Lyrics" and "Love of Women" = CP
Short assignment due
- 11 *the later archaic period*
Anacreon = CP
P. Rosenmeyer, pp. 37-49 = CP
- 12 Anacreon, continued
M. Williamson, "Eros the Blacksmith" = CP
- 13 review
- 14 **MIDTERM**

III. *Song of Songs*

- 15 *overview of Biblical poetry*
R. Alter, *The Art of Biblical Poetry*, selections = CP
- 16 *Song of Songs*
Bloch, Alter, et al., pp. 119-32 = SoS
- 17 *Song of Songs, continued*
H. Patrick, *Poetry in the Song of Songs*, selections = CP
- 18 *Song of Songs, concluded*
J. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Poetry*, pp. 189-206 = CP

IV. *Roman Love Poetry*

- 19 *overview of Roman sexuality*
MS pp. 212-239
- 20 *early Roman love poetry*
Catullus = C pp. 3-11, 26, 30-31, 33-36, 38-39, 41-44,
89-92, 94-97, 100-04
- 21 Catullus, continued **Short assignment due**
C. Martin, "Life Into Art" = CP
- 22 Catullus, concluded
- 23 *Augustan voices: Horace's Greek muse*
Horace = CP
MS pp. 192-211
- 24 *Augustan voices: elegy and a female voice*
Tibullus and Sulpicia = CP
I.M. Plant, ed., "Sulpicia" = CP
C. Merriam, "Sulpicia and Art of Literary Allusion" = CP
- 25 *Augustan voices: more elegy*
Propertius = CP
M. Wyke, "Mistress and Metaphor in Augustan elegy" = CP
Short assignment due
- 26 Ovid *Amores* = CP
P. Hardie, "Ovid and the cultured reader" = CP
- 27 Ovid *Heroides* 1
J. Farrell, "Reading and Writing the Heroides" = CP
- 28 conclusions and review
- 29 **FINAL PAPER DUE**