An introduction to Greek drama and its impact on later theater. This course will focus on the development of tragic drama from the fifth century B.C.E. in Athens to the plays of Seneca in 1st century C.E. Rome. Attention will be given to the production of plays and to theories of tragedy. Selected works of the modern theater -- including plays by Racine, Fugard, E. McLaughlin, W. Soyinka -- will be studied as interpretations of the forms and themes of ancient tragedy.

September 7
Introduction; Greek theater production; Pindar Olympian 1 (handout); background of Aeschylus’ Oresteia trilogy ( =Agamemnon; Libation Bearer; Eumenides).

September 14

*September 21

September 28

October 12 no class, BUT…reading: Seneca, *Thyestes*; Hammond, P. *The Strangeness of Tragedy* 106-122

Get together to work on group scene readings.

October 19 short paper due (topic to be assigned). Reading: Racine, J.
*Iphigénie*. Group scene readings.

October 26 reading: Euripides, *Iphigeneia at Aulis* (vol. IV); Ellen McLaughlin, *Iphigenia and Other Daughters*. Class visit.


November 9 reading: Plato, *Republic* (selections); Aristotle, *Poetics*


December 14 reading: Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*; McLaughlin, E.
*Lysistrata*

December 19 Final take-home exam due by email to my address above by 5 p.m.; please deliver (or mail) hard copy to my office.

Primary texts are available at the campus bookstore; secondary (required) and
recommended (optional) readings are posted on Blackboard.

Course requirements: 1) class attendance and participation [see below*]; absence -- except for documented emergency -- will **automatically** lower your final grade; 2) required readings; 3) weekly questions to be posted on Blackboard (see below**); 4) 3-4 pp. paper; 5) one in-class report; 6) final take-home exam.

Grading will be based on class participation (*including class discussion; Blackboard questions; in-class report; and scene readings) 40%; paper 20%; take-home final 40%. All your written work must be your own; “borrowed” work will be severely sanctioned in accordance with school policies. See the following for the university’s response to plagiarism: [http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies___procedures.html](http://www.nyu.edu/cas/ewp/html/policies___procedures.html)

If you have any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask me.

**Weekly questions:** beginning next week (Sept. 14), please post on Blackboard no later than 8 p.m. the night before class THREE substantive, clearly formulated questions about the week’s reading (required or recommended) that you think will stimulate or enrich class discussion. Everyone will be responsible for reading all the postings each week and for being prepared to respond to them in class discussion the next day.

Please also bring them to class with you and be prepared to be called on to present one or more of your questions and to hand them in (in typed form) at the end of class. These **will not be graded separately**, but will be considered part of your class participation for the purposes of your final grade. The week you are giving an in-class report, you do not need to post questions.

**In-class reports:** beginning on Weds. 9/14, you’ll choose a text on which you’ll be responsible for giving a brief report, to launch the class discussion. You may report on a particular scene within the play, a particular character, the play’s dramatic structure, distinctive use of language or a key theme; your discussion should include issues you think it would be important for your fellow-students to focus on in their ongoing thinking about the play. If you prefer, you may report instead on one of the secondary readings.

**Scene readings:** on dates specified above, the class will divide up into groups of 4-5 and each will do a dramatic reading of a scene; this will be followed by a q & a from the class about the group’s understanding of the scene and its importance within the play.