READ THE FACES OF ANCIENT CULTURES

IDSEM UG-1562
The Gallatin School of Individualized Study
New York University
Fall 2013
M & W, 9:30-10:45 PM
1 Washington Place, Room 527

COURSE DESCRIPTION
In this class, we will investigate the form, development, and role of images of people in ancient Egypt, the Near East, Greece, and Rome. Using visual and literary sources, we will focus on how we define a portrait and will confront the variety of problems that the representation of the individual entails. How essential are the concepts of “likeness” and “realism” to the definition of a portrait, and to its function? How are portraits manipulated to serve specific public or private roles? Who does the manipulating, and who is the audience? Does there exist a correlation between the portrait of an individual and that individual’s character? We will address these questions and others, concentrating on the use of portraiture in shaping personal, political, and cultural identities. Readings may include Plato, Apology; Aristophanes, Clouds; Pseudo-Aristotle, Physiognomics; Plutarch, Life of Alexander; Vasari, Life of Leonardo; and Wilde, The Picture of Dorian Gray. We will make use of objects in the Metropolitan Museum of Art.

LEARNING GOALS (COURSE OBJECTIVES)
- Depth of knowledge of the ancient world
- Reading and use of visual material as sources
- Nuanced approaches to the study of unfamiliar cultures
- Writing skills, particularly the use of primary and secondary sources to build persuasive argumentation

Professor Hallie M. Franks
hmf2@nyu.edu
Gallatin 603, (212)998-7333
Office hours:
Mondays 2-3, Tuesdays 9-noon
COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance and Participation (20%)
In-class written assignments (10%)
Paper assignments (70% total: 25/25/20)

GRADING

Grading of assignments will be based on the following criteria:

• Content (direct and focused engagement with the assigned topic; delineation of a coherent thesis; relevant engagement of primary material and, where relevant, secondary scholarship in support of your thesis).
• Structure (presentation of argument and supporting discussion in a clear and logical way).
• Grammar, punctuation, spelling, and word choice.

READINGS

The following text is available at Shakespeare & Company bookstore (716 Broadway @ Washington Place):


All other readings are available via the course site under the “Resources” folder.

COURSE SITE

Find readings, announcements, assignments, and more on our site through NYU Classes. Look under the Academics tab on your NYU Home page.
**COURSE POLICIES**

**Electronics**, including laptops and cell phones, should be turned off and put away during class.

Grades of **Incomplete** will only be given in cases of documented medical or family emergencies that interfere with your ability to complete coursework in a timely manner. Before requesting an Incomplete, please familiarize yourself with Gallatin’s school-wide policies at [http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/grades/incompletePolicy.html](http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/grades/incompletePolicy.html)

**Papers** are due on the day assigned and at the time assigned. **Late papers** will not be accepted except in cases of documented medical or family emergency.

Because the in-class writing assignments are designed to stimulate discussion and to raise questions in class, **make-up assignments** will not be accepted under any circumstances.

**EXPECTATION OF ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

As a Gallatin student you belong to an interdisciplinary community of artists and scholars who value honest and open intellectual inquiry. This relationship depends on mutual respect, responsibility, and integrity. Failure to uphold these values will be subject to severe sanction, which may include dismissal from the University. Examples of behaviors that compromise the academic integrity of the Gallatin School include plagiarism, illicit collaboration, doubling or recycling coursework, and cheating. Such behaviors are subject to sanction regardless of intent; in other words, accidental violations are still violations, and will be treated as such. For a full description of the academic integrity policy, please consult the Gallatin Bulletin or Gallatin website [www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html](http://www.gallatin.nyu.edu/academics/policies/policy/integrity.html).

If you have any questions about how to cite properly or about what constitutes plagiarism, **please ask me**!

In addition, please know that the internet is not a reliable source for papers written for this class: there is a great deal of misinformation out there, particularly about the ancient world. Websites ending in .com, .net, or .org are not acceptable sources for your papers, and it is in your interest to check with me before citing any information found online for your research in this class. **You will be held responsible for the integrity of any information gleaned from internet sources.** If you are having trouble locating information in other media, please let me know and I’ll be happy to help you.
YOUR RESPONSIBILITIES

A syllabus serves not only as a layout for the semester, but also as a contract between the instructor and you as a student. By remaining enrolled in this class, you agree to uphold your responsibilities as outlined here.

Attend class. The core of this class is our discussion in the classroom, and so your presence is essential to the success of the class and to your success in the class. More than two unexcused absences or persistent late arrivals to class will severely affect your final grade; excused absences are limited to documented medical and family emergencies and religious holidays.

Come to every class prepared and ready to participate. When class begins, you should have completed the assigned readings, and you should have in front of you a hard copy of the text(s) under discussion that day. You should also come with the expectation that you will fully engage in class discussion: Attendance does not constitute participation, and participation should be informed by the readings. Further, you are expected to stay awake during class, to give the discussion your full attention, and to refrain from the use of electronics.

Turn in your assignments completed, proofread, and on time. This means budgeting your time carefully, starting on the first day of class, and giving yourself time to reflect upon and proofread everything that you turn in. This also means that your assignments should be completed in accordance with NYU/Gallatin’s policy on academic integrity (see Course Policies).

Be respectful. Everyone comes to this class from a different background, with different kinds of knowledge, and with different questions. Because of this, it is especially important that every student be responsible for helping to create and maintain a classroom environment in which everyone else feels comfortable asking questions and contributing to discussion. Any behavior that diminishes the contribution of another student—including comments, gestures, and attitudes in class, as well as any comments about class, class discussion, or other students in a public forum or online—is unacceptable and will be severely sanctioned.

This does not mean that we all have to agree all the time: I invite debate, in fact, both between students and with me, but disagreement should be expressed in productive and respectful ways.
SEMESTER CALENDAR

Week 1
W. Sept. 4. Introduction

Week 2
M. Sept. 9. Subjects without portraits
W. Sept. 11. Portraits without subjects

Read for Monday:

Read for Wednesday:

Week 3
M. Sept. 16. Royal portraits in the Ancient Near East
W. Sept. 18. The Egyptian canon

Read for this week:

Week 4
M. Sept. 23. Akhenaten and Nefertiti
W. Sept. 25. Practicing formal analysis

Read for this week:
- The Great Hymn to Aten

Friday, Sept. 27. Trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
There are two options for times: 4:30 pm or 6:00 pm. The tours will cover the same material, so you only have to attend one. Classes will be held in the Ancient Near Eastern and Greek galleries and will last approximately one hour. We will meet in the main lobby. The Met is located at 1000 Fifth Avenue at East 82nd Street; get directions at www.metmuseum.org. This trip is a required component of the course, and will contribute to your Attendance and Participation grade.
Week 5
M. Sept. 30. Portrait types in Greece
W. Oct. 2. The many faces of Socrates

Read for this week:
• Aristophanes, *Clouds*.

Week 6
M. Oct. 7. Likeness, a case study: Alexander; **PAPER 1 DUE in class**
W. Oct. 9. The all-purpose prince: Later portraits of Alexander

Read for Wednesday:

Week 7
M. Oct. 14. NO CLASS: COLUMBUS DAY
W. Oct. 16. Alexander’s Successors

Week 8
M. Oct. 21. Verism and the Roman Republic
W. Oct. 23. Caesar and Cleopatra

Read for this week:

Friday, Oct. 25. Trip to the Metropolitan Museum of Art.
There are two options for times: 4:30 pm or 6:00 pm. The tours will cover the same material, so you only have to attend one. Classes will be held in the Roman galleries and will last approximately one hour. We will meet in the main lobby. The Met is located at 1000 Fifth Avenue at East 82nd Street; get directions at [www.metmuseum.org](http://www.metmuseum.org). This trip is a required component of the course, and will contribute to your Attendance and Participation grade.

Week 9
M. Oct. 28. Augustus and the image of empire
W. Oct. 30. The Prima Porta

Read for Monday:

Read for Wednesday:
Week 10
M. Nov. 6. Roman hair; PAPER 2 DUE in class
W. Nov. 8. Dressed up
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Week 11
M. Nov. 11. Dressing up
W. Nov. 13. The Tetrarchy
Read for Wednesday:

Week 12
M. Nov. 18. Aristotle’s physiognomics
W. Nov. 20. Modern physiognomics
Read for Wednesday:
• Pseudo-Aristotle, Physiognomics

Week 13
M. Nov. 25. NO CLASS (Met trip 1 held in lieu of this class period)
W. Nov. 27. NO CLASS (Met trip 2 held in lieu of this class period)
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Week 14
M. Dec. 2. Portraits of morality: The Picture of Dorian Gray
W. Dec. 4. The Picture of Dorian Gray
Read for this week:
Wilde, O. 1891 [1993 ed., Dover]. The Picture of Dorian Gray

Week 15
M. Dec. 9. The Picture of Dorian Gray; PAPER 3 DUE in class
W. Dec. 11. Conclusions

Week 10
M. Nov. 4. Beards and beardiness
W. Nov. 6. Roman hair; PAPER 2 DUE in class

Week 11
M. Nov. 11. Dressing up
W. Nov. 13. The Tetrarchy
Read for Wednesday:

Week 12
M. Nov. 18. Aristotle’s physiognomics
W. Nov. 20. Modern physiognomics
Read for Wednesday:
• Pseudo-Aristotle, Physiognomics

Week 13
M. Nov. 25. NO CLASS (Met trip 1 held in lieu of this class period)
W. Nov. 27. NO CLASS (Met trip 2 held in lieu of this class period)
HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Week 14
M. Dec. 2. Portraits of morality: The Picture of Dorian Gray
W. Dec. 4. The Picture of Dorian Gray
Read for this week:
Wilde, O. 1891 [1993 ed., Dover]. The Picture of Dorian Gray

Week 15
M. Dec. 9. The Picture of Dorian Gray; PAPER 3 DUE in class
W. Dec. 11. Conclusions