

# Greek and Roman Classics (GRC)

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Course information contained within the Bulletin is accurate at the time of publication in June 2025 but is subject to change. For the most up-to-date course information, please refer to the Course Catalog.

## **GRC 0803. The Art of Sacred Space. 3 Credit Hours.**

From curse tablets to animal sacrifice to places where the divinity was approached, human beings in every period and culture have communicated with the divine. We will explore together how a given culture used art to communicate with the deity, interrogate the meaning of sacred space itself, and look closely at the literary and material evidence for rituals and beliefs. Through the lens of a chosen time period, we will analyze and critique practices and behaviors through topics such as festivals, burial practices, magical ceremonies, and rites of passage, with a view to understanding the place of sacred space in our own lives. NOTE: This course fulfills the Arts (GA) requirement for students under GenEd and Arts (AR) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0803 if they have successfully completed GRC 0903, REL 0803 or ARTH 0803.

**Course Attributes:** GA

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

## **GRC 0804. Race in the Ancient Mediterranean. 3 Credit Hours.**

Learn about ancient thinking about race and ethnicity and how ancient thinking remains current and influential today. Investigate how categories of race and ethnicity are presented in the literature and artistic works of Greece and Rome. Our case studies will pay particular attention to such concepts as: notions of racial formation and racial origins; ancient theories of ethnic superiority; and linguistic, religious and cultural differentiation as a basis for ethnic differentiation. We will also examine ancient racism through the prism of a variety of social processes in antiquity: slavery, trade and colonization, migrations, imperialism, assimilation, native revolts, and genocide. NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0804 if they have successfully completed GRC 0904.

**Course Attributes:** GD

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

## **GRC 0811. Greek Theater & Society. 3 Credit Hours.**

Through close readings of surviving texts, through viewings of modern productions of ancient theatrical works, and through your own recreations of Greek performative media, we will examine and experience ancient Greek drama both as a product of its own historical period and as a living art form. We will ask fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of theater in the ancient world: Is this art just entertainment or does it engage and comment on the problems of Athens? How and why did this society invent theater in the Western world? We will also investigate the relationship of Greek drama to the modern world: Why do new versions of plays about Oedipus, Antigone and Dionysus keep popping up in places as diverse as New York, Utah, South Africa and China? How can ancient drama be staged now in a way that is both responsible to the surviving texts and stimulating to contemporary audiences? NOTE: This course fulfills the Arts (GA) requirement for students under GenEd and Arts (AR) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0811 if they have successfully completed GRC 0911.

**Course Attributes:** GA

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

## **GRC 0829. Ancient War Games: Sport and Spectacle in Greece and Rome. 3 Credit Hours.**

Every four years the world stages athletic contests that are based on the practices of ancient Greece. Every year the NFL assigns a Roman numeral to the Super Bowl and suggests its players are modern gladiators. Greek athletic games and Roman gladiatorial battles developed from the practice of warfare in their societies. American sports may be viewed as the descendants of these ancient "war games." This class examines the similarities and differences in such sports and the societies that enjoyed (and enjoy) them. The Greek games replaced the blood of the battlefield with dramatic displays of military physicality, while the Roman games replicated this blood with armed combat before crowds of thousands. We begin by examining the origins, events, architecture, and rules of the Greek games, from Homer's funeral contests to the development of the circuit of athletic festivals. Next we look at the "re-foundation" of the modern Olympics and its romanticized mythology in several important films. Then we turn to Roman blood-sports (animal fights, gladiatorial contests and spectacular criminal punishments) and chariot-racing, considering also the filters of modern Hollywood. We end with the rise of modern spectator sports, especially football.

**Course Attributes:** GB

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 0903. Honors Art of Sacred Space. 3 Credit Hours.**

From course tablets to animal sacrifice to places where the divinity was approached, human beings in every period and culture have communicated with the divine. We will explore together how a given culture used art to communicate with the deity, interrogate the meaning of sacred space itself, and look closely at the literary and material evidence for rituals and beliefs. Through the lens of a chosen time period, we will analyze and critique practices and behaviors through topics such as festivals, burial practices, magical ceremonies, and rites of passage, with a view to understanding the place of sacred space in our own lives. NOTE: This course fulfills the Arts (GA) requirement for students under GenEd and Arts (AR) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0903 if they have successfully completed GRC 0803, REL 0803 or ARTH 0803.

**Course Attributes:** GA, HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 0904. Honors Race in the Ancient Mediterranean. 3 Credit Hours.**

Learn about ancient thinking about race and ethnicity and how ancient thinking remains current and influential today. Investigate how categories of race and ethnicity are presented in the literature and artistic works of Greece and Rome. Our case studies will pay particular attention to such concepts as: notions of racial formation and racial origins; ancient theories of ethnic superiority; and linguistic, religious and cultural differentiation as a basis for ethnic differentiation. We will also examine ancient racism through the prism of a variety of social processes in antiquity: slavery, trade and colonization, migrations, imperialism, assimilation, native revolts, and genocide. NOTE: This course fulfills the Race & Diversity (GD) requirement for students under GenEd and Studies in Race (RS) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0904 if they have successfully completed GRC 0804.

**Course Attributes:** GD, HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 0911. Honors Greek Theater & Society. 3 Credit Hours.**

Through close readings of surviving texts, through viewings of modern productions of ancient theatrical works, and through your own recreations of Greek performative media, we will examine and experience ancient Greek drama both as a product of its own historical period and as a living art form. We will ask fundamental questions about the nature and purpose of theater in the ancient world: is this art just entertainment or does it engage and comment on the problems of Athens? How and why did this society invent theater in the Western world? We will also investigate the relationship of Greek drama to the modern world: why do new versions of plays about Oedipus, Antigone and Dionysus keep popping up in places as diverse as New York, Utah, South Africa and China? How can ancient drama be staged now in a way that is both responsible to the surviving texts and stimulating to contemporary audiences? NOTE: This course fulfills the Arts (GA) requirement for students under GenEd and Arts (AR) for students under Core. Students cannot receive credit for GRC 0911 if they have successfully completed GRC 0811.

**Course Attributes:** GA, HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 0929. Honors Ancient War Games: Sport and Spectacle in Greece and Rome. 3 Credit Hours.**

Every four years the world stages athletic contests that are based on the practices of ancient Greece. Every year the NFL assigns a Roman numeral to the Super Bowl and suggests its players are modern gladiators. Greek athletic games and Roman gladiatorial battles developed from the practice of warfare in their societies. American sports may be viewed as the descendants of these ancient "war games." This class examines the similarities and differences in such sports and the societies that enjoyed (and enjoy) them. The Greek games replaced the blood of the battlefield with dramatic displays of military physicality, while the Roman games replicated this blood with armed combat before crowds of thousands. We begin by examining the origins, events, architecture, and rules of the Greek games, from Homer's funeral contests to the development of the circuit of athletic festivals. Next we look at the "re-foundation" of the modern Olympics and its romanticized mythology in several important films. Then we turn to Roman blood-sports (animal fights, gladiatorial contests and spectacular criminal punishments) and chariot-racing, considering also the filters of modern Hollywood. We end with the rise of modern spectator sports, especially football.

**Course Attributes:** GB, HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2000. Special Topics. 3 Credit Hours.**

Topics will be arranged each semester; please consult with the instructor for more information.

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 2002. Gender in Classical Antiquity. 3 Credit Hours.**

What can we learn about the lives of ancient Greek and Roman women from ancient literature - literature written primarily by men? Can we piece together the everyday lives of Greek or Roman women of any social class? Even if we believe in the equality of the sexes, would a word like "equality" have had any meaning to the ancients? In this class, we will find answers to these questions by reading Greek and Latin sources in translation as well as the works of modern Classicists. While focusing on women's lives, we will gain a greater understanding of what was expected of both genders in the ancient world.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2004. The City of Rome. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course includes a study of the archaeology and topography of ancient Rome; it explains, analyzes and interprets the public and private buildings of the village that became the capital of an empire. Attention, in both lectures and on-site excursions out in the city, is paid to the location, functioning and person who commissioned the construction of these buildings. Archaeological evidence, literary and epigraphical sources are used to reconstruct the history of Rome and to understand the role that its buildings have played in conveying ideas of patronage, Roman identity, propaganda and rulership to the citizens. The course concludes with an immersive expedition out to Ostia Antica.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2011. Classical Greek and Roman Mythology. 3 Credit Hours.**

An overview of the major myths of Greek and Roman antiquity including appropriate gods, heroes and heroines, and the stories told about them. The course examines the nature and social function of mythology, studying a number of different ancient and modern theories that attempt to account for this seemingly universal phenomenon. Also considered is the legacy of classical mythology in modern art and literature, including popular culture. This course provides students with the tools to understand other myths, both ancient and modern. Students encounter ancient myths through a variety of primary sources. NOTE: Formerly known as GRC 3001 Classical Greek and Roman Mythology. Students may receive credit for only one of the following courses: GRC 3001 or GRC 2011.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2101. The Greeks. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course explores who the ancient Greeks were, what they did, how they lived and what they believed. It focuses on both what we owe to the Greeks and how radically different they are from us. This is not a history of ancient Greece, but a journey through a series of connected units that explore different facets of ancient Greek civilization, from the Trojan War, to the ancient Olympics, to slavery, the family life and other topics. These topics are pursued in an interdisciplinary manner so that students examine evidence from Greek art, literature, history and philosophy. This course can serve the needs of students who seek a broad background in ancient Greek civilization and those who seek an introduction to this subject before pursuing more advanced work in Classics. NOTE: Prior to fall 2009, the course title was "Ancient Greek Civilization."

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2102. The Romans. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course explores in an interdisciplinary manner who the ancient Romans were, what they did, how they lived and what they believed. Students will read some of the great works of Roman historians, poets and novelists, as well as study the physical and artistic culture of Rome, with a view to understanding the Romans' beliefs about themselves and their world. Each week, one class will be devoted to learning about larger issues of Roman daily life (education, spectacles), history (civil wars, the Augustan world) and people (men, women, slaves, Christians), and one class to learning about the authors who wrote on these subjects or during these historical periods. This course can serve the needs of students who seek a broad background in ancient Roman civilization and those who seek an introduction to this subject before pursuing more advanced work in Classics. NOTE: Prior to fall 2009, the course title was "Ancient Roman Civilization."

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2900. Honors Special Topics in Classical Culture. 3 Credit Hours.**

Topics from classical antiquity which are of general and current interest based on reading Greek and Roman texts in translation. Lectures, audiovisual presentations, and large and small group work used to explore the significance of the texts.

**Course Attributes:** HO

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 2902. Honors Gender in Classical Antiquity. 3 Credit Hours.**

What can we learn about the lives of ancient Greek and Roman women from ancient literature - literature written primarily by men? Can we piece together the everyday lives of Greek or Roman women of any social class? Even if we believe in the equality of the sexes, would a word like "equality" have had any meaning to the ancients? In this class, we will find answers to these questions by reading Greek and Latin sources in translation as well as the works of modern Classicists. While focusing on women's lives, we will gain a greater understanding of what was expected of both genders in the ancient world.

**Course Attributes:** HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 2911. Honors Classical Greek and Roman Mythology. 3 Credit Hours.**

An overview of the major myths of Greek and Roman antiquity including appropriate gods, heroes and heroines, and the stories told about them. The course examines the nature and social function of mythology, studying a number of different ancient and modern theories that attempt to account for this seemingly universal phenomenon. Also considered is the legacy of classical mythology in modern art and literature, including popular culture. This course provides students with the tools to understand other myths, both ancient and modern. Students encounter ancient myths through a variety of primary sources. NOTE: Formerly known as GRC 3901 Honors Classical Greek and Roman Mythology. Students may receive credit for only one of the following courses: GRC 3901 or GRC 2911.

**Course Attributes:** HO

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3000. Topics in Classical Culture. 3 Credit Hours.**

Topics from classical antiquity which are of general and current interest based on reading Greek and Roman texts in translation. Lectures, audiovisual presentations, and large and small group work used to explore the significance of the texts.

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 3002. Ancient City: Augustan Rome. 3 Credit Hours.**

As first princeps (emperor of Rome) Augustus claimed to re-establish republican Rome after years of external and internal wars. We will study the city that emerged from the efforts of architects, engineers and artists of all kinds enlisted to assist Augustus in the new founding of Rome.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3003. Ancient City: Byzantium. 3 Credit Hours.**

The Greek colony Byzantium found new life as capital of the Christianized Roman Empire from the 4th century to the 15th century CE. This course explores the art, architecture, literature, military, political and social history of Constantinople from its re-founding by Constantine I through the early centuries of its eminence.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3011. The History of Ancient Greek Theater. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course traces the development of the ancient Greek theater, from its invention when Thespis stepped out of the chorus to sing solos, through the important tragedies of Aeschylus, Sophocles and Euripides that addressed the great questions of individual, the gods and society, through the early comedies of Aristophanes, to the final evolution of the ancient theater into something we would call melodrama and sit-com. We will study the development of the physical theaters in Athens and the wider Mediterranean, ancient staging techniques, the development of the early acting profession, the portrayal of women in Athenian theater, and the complex relationship between Athenian theater and democracy, as well as with religion. As the scholarly ground of the ancient Greek theater has shifted radically over the past forty years and continues to move, students will participate in the fundamental questions in this exciting field. Duplicate Credit Warning: This course is cross-listed with English 3011. Students who have earned credits for ENG 3011 will not earn additional credits for this course.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3102. Comparative Mythology. 3 Credit Hours.**

Materials from a variety of cultures will show how human beings deal with such ideas as the creation of the universe and mankind, the definition of the hero, order in the cosmos, and eschatology. Greek and Roman myths will serve throughout as the basis for comparison with a varying selection of myths from other cultures. This course was formerly known as GRC 3296 and GRC 3996. Students who have taken GRC 3296 or GRC 3996 may not receive additional credit for this course.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3311. Ancient Greek Historians. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will survey Greek history from 800 BCE until the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE) and the works of two of the most important Greek historians: Herodotus and Thucydides. A major component of the course will be an examination of the historiographical methods of these writers, but attention also will be paid to the other types of sources that are available.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3312. Ancient Roman Historians. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will survey Roman history from the founding of Rome in the 8th century BCE through the fall of Rome in the 5th century CE. A major component of the course will be an examination of the texts and historiographical methods of important Roman historians such as Livy, Sallust and Tacitus, but attention also will be paid to other types of sources.

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**GRC 3496. Writing Seminar. 3 Credit Hours.**

Topics from classical antiquity which are of general and current interest based on reading Greek and Roman texts in translation. Lectures, audiovisual presentations, and large and small group work used to explore the significance of the texts.

**Course Attributes:** WI

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 3596. Ancient City: Periclean Athens. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will survey Athens in the 5th and 4th centuries BCE, examining the accomplishments and failures of one of the few truly participatory democracies the world has known. In addition to studying the history of the city as it gained and lost an empire, we will explore its arts (including theater, philosophy, and architecture) and the everyday life of its denizens.

**Course Attributes:** WI

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**Pre-requisites:** Minimum grade of C- in any GRC course numbered 0800 to 3400.

**GRC 3696. Ancient City: Hellenistic Alexandria. 3 Credit Hours.**

At the death of Alexander his general Ptolemy moved the capital of Egypt from Memphis to Alexandria, which soon became renowned for buildings such as the Library and the Lighthouse, and as a center for commerce and arts. We will survey the art, literature, philosophy, social and economic foundations, and urban problems of this largest of Greek cities.

**Course Attributes:** WI

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**Pre-requisites:** Minimum grade of C- in any GRC course numbered 0800 to 3400.

**GRC 3796. Ancient City: Augustan Rome. 3 Credit Hours.**

Upon achieving mastery of the Roman world through key military victories, Octavian ostensibly returned control of the restored Republic to the Senate and People of Rome in exchange for the quasi-religious, honorific title Augustus (worthy of honor). But he retained command of Rome's armies and transformed himself into the first true emperor of a vast territory that encompassed the entire Mediterranean basin. To legitimate and raise popular support for his rule, he instituted a massive building and beautification program in Rome, promoted the literary arts, and instituted legal and religious reforms, all of which ushered in Rome's Golden Age. In this course we will study--and interact with--the influential history, physical structures, ideals, social institutions and arts of Augustan Rome.

**Course Attributes:** WI

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**Pre-requisites:** Minimum grade of C- in any GRC course numbered 0800 to 3400.

**GRC 3897. Ancient City: Jerusalem. 3 Credit Hours.**

This course will investigate the history, society, culture, topography and art of this immensely important city during one of its most historically significant periods, focusing mainly on the period after Jerusalem fell into the ambit of the Roman Empire (63 BCE) to its destruction by the armies of Titus (70 CE). It will also consider the development of the relationship between Jerusalem and Rome, and the important role played by ethnic, cultural, and religious differences in the ultimate failure of Romano-Judaeen relations, with a view to understanding how overcoming such differences today is necessary to create a successful and functioning global community. Source material will include the historical writings, contemporary non-literary sources such as coins and inscriptions, and articles or videos by modern historians and archaeologists on relevant topics.

**Course Attributes:** WI

**Repeatability:** This course may not be repeated for additional credits.

**Pre-requisites:** Minimum grade of C- in any GRC course numbered 0800 to 3400.

**GRC 3900. Honors Topics in Classical Culture. 3 Credit Hours.**

Topics from classical antiquity which are of general and current interest based on reading Greek and Roman texts in translation. Lectures, audiovisual presentations, and large and small group work used to explore the significance of the texts.

**Course Attributes:** HO

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 4082. Independent Study. 1 to 6 Credit Hour.**

Intensive study under individual guidance in a specific area suggested by the student and approved by the department advisor.

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.

**GRC 4182. Independent Study. 3 Credit Hours.**

Intensive study under individual guidance in a specific area suggested by the student and approved by the department advisor.

**Repeatability:** This course may be repeated for additional credit.