HELENIC STUDIES

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Hellenic Studies is a program of the European Studies Council. The core of the program is the teaching of modern Greek, supplemented with other courses and events related to the study of postantiquity Greece, as well as the society and culture of modern Greece and its interaction with the rest of Europe and the world. Related courses can be found in the listings of Anthropology, History, History of Art, Comparative Literature, Political Science, Religious Studies, and Russian and East European Studies. A major in Ancient and Modern Greek is described under Classics. Students who have an interest in postantiquity Greek language, society, or culture are advised to consult with the program director of the Hellenic Studies program.

Hellenic Studies is an interdisciplinary program of the European Studies Council located at the Whitney and Betty MacMillan Center for International and Area Studies. The core of the program is comprehensive instruction in the modern Greek language at the elementary, intermediate, and advanced levels. The program supplements this language instruction with a variety of courses and events focused on modern Greek literature and culture as well as Ottoman, Balkan, and modern Greek history, all situated within the broader geographical, historical, and comparative context of postantiquity Greece. Relevant courses are taught in various departments in the humanities and social sciences.

A major in Ancient and Modern Greek is offered in conjunction with the Department of Classics. In addition, the program in Hellenic Studies offers language and research fellowships to eligible Yale students. First-year students are encouraged to consult with the directors of the program for advice on appropriate programs of study.

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF HELLENIC STUDIES

Professor John Geanakoplos (Economics)

Lecturers Paris Aslanidis (Political Science), George Syrimis (Comparative Literature)

Senior Lector Maria Kaliambou (Language and Folklore)

View Courses

Courses

MGRK 110a, Elementary Modern Greek I  Maria Kaliambou
An introduction to modern Greek, with emphasis on oral expression. Use of communicative activities, graded texts, written assignments, grammar drills, audiovisual material, and contemporary documents. In-depth cultural study.  L1  1½ Course cr

MGRK 120b, Elementary Modern Greek II  Maria Kaliambou
Continuation of MGRK 110. Prerequisite: MGRK 110.  L2  1½ Course cr

* MGRK 130a, Intermediate Modern Greek I  Maria Kaliambou
Further development of oral and written linguistic skills, using authentic readings and audiovisual materials. Continued familiarization with contemporary Greek culture. Prerequisite: MGRK 120 or equivalent.  L3  1½ Course cr

* MGRK 140b, Intermediate Modern Greek II  Maria Kaliambou
Further development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills in modern Greek. Presentation of short research projects related to modern Greece. Prerequisite: MGRK 130 or equivalent.  L4  1½ Course cr

* MGRK 212b / LITR 328b, Folktales and Fairy Tales  Maria Kaliambou
History of the folktale from the late seventeenth through the late twentieth centuries. Basic concepts, terminology, and interpretations of folktales, with some attention to twentieth-century theoretical approaches. Performance and audience, storytellers, and gender-related distinctions. Interconnections between oral and written traditions in narratives from western Europe and Greece.  WR, HU  TR

* MGRK 216b / CLCV 216b / LITR 239b / WGSS 209b, Dionysus in Modernity  George Syrimis
Modernity’s fascination with the myth of Dionysus. Questions of agency, identity and community, and psychological integrity and the modern constitution of the self. Manifestations of Dionysus in literature, anthropology, and music; the Apollonian-Dionysiac dichotomy; twentieth-century variations of these themes in psychoanalysis, surrealism, and magical realism.  HU  TR

* MGRK 222b / HIST 237Jb, History of Modern Greece  Paris Aslanidis
This seminar studies the history of modern Greece since the early 19th century. Greece’s contested position between East and West, both geopolitically and symbolically, functions as the ideal backdrop for the study of the country’s historical trajectory and the development of its main institutions. Discussion of the future of the Greek state vis-à-vis the ongoing sociopolitical crisis it has been facing since its near bankruptcy in 2010 is also considered.  HU
* MGRK 237a / GLBL 215a / LAST 386a / PLSC 375a / SOCY 389a, Populism  Paris Aslanidis
Investigation of the populist phenomenon in party systems and the social movement arena. Conceptual, historical, and methodological analyses are supported by comparative assessments of various empirical instances in the US and around the world, from populist politicians such as Donald Trump and Bernie Sanders, to populist social movements such as the Tea Party and Occupy Wall Street.

* MGRK 238a / FILM 341a / WGSS 233a, Weird Greek Wave Cinema  George Syrimis
The course examines the cinematic production of Greece in the last fifteen years or so and looks critically at the popular term “weird Greek wave” applied to it. Noted for their absurd tropes, bizarre narratives, and quirky characters, the films question and disturb traditional gender and social roles, as well as international viewers’ expectations of national stereotypes of classical luminosity—the proverbial “Greek light” #Dionysian exuberance, or touristic leisure. Instead, these works frustrate not only a wholistic reading of Greece as a unified and coherent social construct, but also the physical or aesthetic pleasure of its landscape and its ‘quaint’ people with their insistence on grotesque, violent, or otherwise disturbing images or themes (incest, sexual otherness and violence, aggression, corporeality, and xenophobia). The course also pays particular attention on the economic and political climate of the Greek financial crisis during which these films are produced and consumed and to which they partake.

* MGRK 300b / CLCV 319b / HIST 242Jb / WGSS 293b, The Olympic Games, Ancient and Modern  George Syrimis
Introduction to the history of the Olympic Games from antiquity to the present. The mythology of athletic events in ancient Greece and the ritual, political, and social ramifications of the actual competitions. The revival of the modern Olympic movement in 1896, the political investment of the Greek state at the time, and specific games as they illustrate the convergence of athletic cultures and sociopolitical transformations in the twentieth century.

* MGRK 304b / ER&M 376b / PLSC 376b / SOCY 307b, Extreme and Radical Right Movements  Paris Aslanidis
Extreme and radical right movements and political parties are a recurrent phenomenon found in most parts of the world. Discussion of their foundational values and the causes of their continuous, even increasing, support among citizens and voters.

* MGRK 305a / HIST 294Ja, The Age of Revolution  Paris Aslanidis
The course is a comparative examination of the international dimensions of several revolutions from 1776 to 1848. It aims to explore mechanisms of diffusion, shared themes, and common visions between the revolutionary upheavals in the United States, France, Haiti, South America, Greece, and Italy. How similar and how different were these episodes? Did they emerge against a common structural and societal backdrop? Did they equally serve their ideals and liberate their people against tyranny? What was the role of women and the position of ethnic minorities in the fledgling nation-states? As the year 2021 marks the bicentennial of the Greek Revolution of 1821, special attention is given to the intricate links forged between Greek revolutionary intellectuals and their peers in Europe and other continents.