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.

FACULTY ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROGRAM OF HELLENIC STUDIES

Professor John Geanakoplos (Economics)

Senior Lecturer George Syrimis (Comparative Literature)

Lecturer Paris Aslanidis (Political Science)

Senior Lector Maria Kaliambou (Language and Folklore)

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 216a / CLCV 216a / LITR 239a / WGSS 209a, 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.  

* 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 306b / AMST 307b / ER&M 298b / HIST 117b / LITR 375b, The Greek Diaspora in the United States  
Maria Kaliambou  
The seminar explores the history and culture of the Greek diasporic community in the United States from the end of the 19th century to the present. The Greek American experience is embedded in the larger discussion of ethnic histories that construct modern America. The seminar examines important facets of immigration history, such as community formation, institutions and associations, professional occupations, and civic engagement. It pays attention to the everyday lives of the Greek Americans as demonstrated in religious, educational, and family cultural practices. It concludes by exploring the artistic expressions of Greek immigrants as manifested in literature, music, and film production. The instructor provides a variety of primary sources (archival records, business catalogs, community albums, personal narratives, letters, audiovisual material, etc.). All primary and secondary sources are in English; however, students are encouraged to read available material in the original language.  

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