Columbia University
Program in Hellenic Studies
Spring 2027 Courses



Language Courses

Elementary Modern Greek II, Argyro Nicolaou
GRKM UN1102
M/W 12:10-2:00 PM

A continuation of UN1101 but new students may be placed into it, after special arrangement with the instructor. The students are expected to be able to read texts containing high frequency vocabulary and basic structures; understand basic conversations or understand the gist of more complex conversations on familiar topics; produce simple speech on familiar topics; communicate in simple tasks requiring a simple and direct exchange of information on familiar and routine matters; write short texts or letters on familiar subjects. In parallel, the students continue to explore Modern Greece's cultural landscape and deepen their understanding of Greek culture.

Intermediate Modern Greek II, Chrysanthe Filippardos
GRKM UN2102
M/W 6:10-8:00 PM

A continuation of UN2101, upon completion of the course, the students are able to read simple Greek newspaper articles, essays and short stories and to express their opinion on a number of familiar topics. In addition to these skills, students will be exposed to a number of authentic multi-modal cultural material that will allow them to acquire knowledge and understanding of the vibrant cultural landscape of Greece today.

Multilingual Worlds: Translation, Gender and the Greek Diaspora, Karen Van Dyck
CLGM GU4600 - *Cross-listed with ICLS; Global Core*
M 10:10-12:00 PM

This course introduces students to the rich tradition of literature about and by Greeks in America over the past two centuries exploring questions of multilingualism, translation, migration and gender with particular attention to the look and sound of different alphabets and foreign accents – "It's all Greek to me!" To what extent can migration be understood as translation and vice versa? How might debates in Diaspora and Translation Studies inform each other and how might both, in turn, elucidate the writing of and about Greeks and other ethnic minorities, especially women? Authors include Olga Broumas, Elia Kazan, Alexandros Papadiamantis, Ellery Queen, Eleni Sikelianos, Irini Spanidou, and Thanasis Valtinos as well as performance artists such as Diamanda Galás. Theoretical and comparative texts include works by Walter Benjamin, Rey Chow, Jacques Derrida, Franz Kafka, Toni Morrison, and Lawrence Venuti, as well as films such as Charlie Chaplin's The Immigrant and The Wizard of Oz. No knowledge of Greek is necessary, although an extra-credit directed reading is open to those wishing to read texts in Greek

Literature, Culture & History

The World Responds to the Greeks, Nikolas P. Kakkoufa
CLGM 3920 - *Cross-listed with ICLS; Global Core*
T 2:10-4:00 PM

This course examines how literary, artistic, and cultural traditions receive and reinvent some of the most recognizable motifs of Greek myth, theater, and politics. It approaches critical reception —through translation, adaptation, performance, and experimental rewriting—as a practice of interpretation, critique, and world-making. What possibilities do ancient motifs offer writers and artists working in particular social and historical contexts? How do their reimaginings transform our understanding of antiquity, challenging its inherited meanings and claims to cultural authority? How do modern Greek writers and artists negotiate inheritance and estrangement—in language as well as cultural identity—as they respond to an ancient past understood both as their own and as belonging to the world? Drawing on queer, feminist, postcolonial, and critical race approaches, the course explores how engagements with antiquity reconfigure race, gender, and sexuality, belonging and exclusion, power and resistance. Central to this inquiry is how appeals to antiquity make unequal social arrangements appear natural, legitimate, or inevitable—and how the creative possibilities of fragmentation, anachronism, and revision can unsettle these claims, give form to often marginalized experiences, and imagine alternative futures.

Public Humanities, Dimitris Antoniou
GRKM GU4040
T 12:10-2:00 PM

What does it mean to bring the humanities into the public sphere? How can scholars, archivists, curators, and communities work together to produce knowledge, and what challenges does such an endeavor entail? This course invites students to explore the field of public humanities and gain hands-on experience with its aims, methods, and outcomes. The course is structured around three components: (1) seminars exploring how partners inside and outside the university can work together to make knowledge accessible and meaningful; (2) workshops in which students are introduced to the methods and tools of public-facing research, including conducting oral histories, producing podcasts, and curating online exhibitions; and (3) contributions to existing projects of the Stavros Niarchos Foundation Public Humanities Initiative (SNFPHI).

The Century of Mikis Theodorakis: Greece from the 20th to the 21st Century through the Life and Music of Mikis Theodorakis, Paraskevi Martzavou
GRKM UN3180
W 4:10-6:00 PM

Mikis Theodorakis's passing in 2021 marked a pivotal moment in how this great composer is seen as an agent of social and political change, not only in Greece but also in Europe and on the international stage. In this course, we will explore the life and work of the great Greek composer Mikis Theodorakis in the context of the troubled passage from the 20th to the 21st century. This course aims to be an exploration of the historical circumstances in the early 20th-century Balkans, and the way literary production, notably poetry through the work of Theodorakis, expressed and shaped the social and political struggles worldwide. The focus will be on popular culture and popular music—and notably popular song-- as a means of political struggle through everyday life experience. We will focus on popular song as an artistic creation, as Theodorakis shaped it, using poetry brought to the masses through radio and popular concerts.

Man-machine: Medical technology, democracy, and the question of the human, Neni Panourgia
CPLSGU4225
M 6:10-8:00 PM

The rapid proliferation, over the last fifteen years, of technologies that aim at the preservation of life at the edges of illness has created a conceptual, intellectual, and political fissure in the ways in which life and death can be fixed with any degree of certainty. This is true as much in chronic cases, such as the various neurodegenerative diseases, as in acute cases, such as COVID-19, managed in the ICU, where life is being preserved through mechanical intervention. Are these mechanical interventions (ventilators, stomas, monitors) prosthetics that become part of the human body, or do they remain within the space of signification of the extracorporeal? What is the glamour of the "cyborg" when it appears within the context of medico-mechanical intervention? These questions are not academic intellectual abstractions but they become pressing questions when they inform the decision-making process in the context of encounters between physicians and patients, patients and families, or physicians and the State. Cases such as Terry Schiavo's, which captured the global imaginary as it posited the question of "what is a human being" and what is "life" and what is not, belie the deepanxieties that appear when medical interventions are in the process of becoming naturalized and normalized, as if the questions that they posit are exhausted when they are approved by the IRB or the Ethics Board. These questions become even more pressing when they are articulated within the framework of already existing systems of exclusion that seek to cancel the humanity of "other populations," Blacks, refugees, Latinx, LGBTQI. This course will examine the conceptual spaces that are being created in the crevices of the fixity of life, death, and the human/non-human being by looking at concerns that have been voiced by various thinkers and social movements.

Directed Readings, Independent & Senior Research Seminars

Directed Readings, Nikolas P. Kakkoufa	GRKM UN3997 001	1-4 Points
Directed Readings, Paraskevi Martzavou	GRKM UN3997 002	
Directed Readings, Karen van Dyck	GRKM UN3997 003	
Directed Readings, Dimitris Antoniou	GRKM UN3997 004	
Senior Research Seminar, Nikolas P. Kakkoufa	GRKM UN3998 001	1-4 Points
Supervised Independent Research, Nikolas P. Kakkoufa	GRKM GU4460 001	3 Points
Supervised Independent Research, Paraskevi Martzavou	GRKM GU4460 002	
Supervised Independent Research, Karen van Dyck	GRKM GU4460 003	
Supervised Independent Research, Dimitris Antoniou	GRKM GU4460 004	

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