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.

Literature, Culture & History

The World Responds to the Greeks, Nikolas P. Kakkoufa
CLGM 3920 *Cross-listed with ICLS and ISSG; 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.

Mediterranean Humanities II, Konstantina Zanou
CLIA4500
T 10:10 AM -12:00 PM

Cross-Listed

What is the Mediterranean and how was it constructed and canonized as a space of civilization? A highly multicultural, multilingual area whose people represent a broad array of religious, ethnic, social and political difference, the Mediterranean has been seen as the cradle of western civilization, but also as a dividing border and a unifying confluence zone, as a sea of pleasure and a sea of death. The course aims to enhance students' understanding of the multiple ways this body of water has been imagined by the people who lived or traveled across its shores. By exploring major works of theory, literature and cinema since 1800, it encourages students to engage critically with a number of questions (nationalism vs cosmopolitanism, South/North and East/West divides, tourism, exile and migration, colonialism and orientalism, borders and divided societies) and to 'read' the sea through different viewpoints: through the eyes of a German Romantic thinker, a Sephardic Ottoman family, an Algerian feminist, a French historian, a Syrian refugee, an Italian anti-fascist, a Moroccan writer, an Egyptian exile, a Bosnian-Croat scholar, a Lebanese-French author, a Cypriot filmmaker, an Algerian-Italian journalist, and others. In the final analysis, Med Hum II is meant to arouse the question of what it means to stand on watery grounds and to view the world through a constantly shifting lens.

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, 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, Dimitris Antoniou	GRKM GU4460 004	

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