

Classics Programme

University of KwaZulu-Natal, Durban

Ground Floor Memorial Tower Building G014



Course Handbook

POSTGRADUATE STUDY IN CLASSICS

Honours

Classics offers an Honours Programme in Classical Civilisations or Latin or Classical Greek. The pre-requisite is a completed 3rd year major in Classics in the respective sub-discipline. The structure of the Classics Honours degree is as follows:

HONOURS DEGREE (128 credits)	
CORE MODULE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY (32 credits)	
CORE MODULE RESEARCH PROJECT (32 credits)	
CORE MODULE LANGUAGE (16 credits)	CORE MODULE LANGUAGE (16 credits)
HONOURS ELECTIVE (16 credits)	HONOURS ELECTIVE (16 credits)

Assessment: Class Mark (50%); Examination (50%)



**An Athenian vase from the Museum of Classical Archaeology,
showing a young man at a drinking-party**

Two of the following Honours electives will be offered each year in consultation with staff and students:

AUGUSTAN ROME (SJS)

Augustan Rome is a course of seminars that examines Roman culture at the time of the first Roman emperor, Augustus (63 BC to 14 AD). During this period the Roman political system was being violently transformed from a Republic to an Empire, although superficially much remained unchanged. This transformation produced an extraordinary growth in the literature (including the work of Virgil, Horace, Ovid, Livy). The art and architecture of this city has strongly influenced later cultures, including our own.

ROMAN SATIRE (SJS)

Latin verse satire was one of the few genres that the Romans considered entirely their own, according to Quintilian (10.1.93), since there was no Greek genre that corresponded to it exactly. In what was really a medley of genres, the verse satirists Lucilius, Horace, Persius and Juvenal all derided the vices of Roman society, placing (sometimes rather exaggerated) emphasis on common human failings and societal problems such as greed, dissatisfaction, adultery, debauchery, fraud, inheritance-hunting, murder, and many more. This module examines the bounds of Roman satire as a genre, the common themes, moralising tendencies and stylistic trends of the Roman verse satirists, and also explores the possible relation of satire to society itself. The satirists on whom we shall be focusing include the beguiling Horace, who often comes across as a friend giving us an informal chat, and the virulent Juvenal, who takes upon himself the role of ‘an angry young man’.

ROME OF THE CAESARS (SJS)

The aim of this module is to examine the history of ancient Rome under the early Principate, with particular attention being paid to the emperors themselves, as they are presented by a selection of near-contemporary and later ancient historical writers. We shall focus in detail on making comparisons between some of the so-called ‘Bad’ Emperors, and we shall also examine the periods interlinking them.

We shall examine: the Julio-Claudians, in particular Caligula and Nero; the Year of the Four Emperors (A.D. 69); the Flavian dynasty, with especial focus on Domitian; Trajan and Hadrian; the Antonines, with especial focus on the emperor Commodus, son of the philosopher Marcus Aurelius. The historiographers we shall be consulting include Tacitus, Suetonius and Cassius Dio.

LATIN LOVE ELEGY (SJS)

This module examines mainly a selection of the works of the Roman poets Propertius, Tibullus, and Ovid. All these writers, who lived during the age of Augustus, wrote highly literary love poetry in the elegiac metre. They were strongly influenced by Greek predecessors and by the Latin poet Catullus (84-54 B.C.E.), who is in some senses their model. They all compose poetry to mistresses that are modelled on Catullus' Lesbia, but who are possibly imaginary. The social status of these women, if they were real, has been greatly debated. In his *Elegies* Propertius celebrates the love he feels for but also extensively bemoans the faithlessness of his headstrong mistress Cynthia, Tibullus writes first to a mistress he calls Delia, then to one called Nemesis, but he also addresses boys in an erotic context. Ovid parodies the genre of love elegy extensively, writing poems that are witty and hugely conscious of their literary context. We shall look at Ovid's *Amores* ('Loves'), his *Ars Amatoria* ('The Art of Love'), and his *Remedia Amoris* ('Cures/Remedies for Love'). The latter two examples are amusing mock didactic poems that purport to give 'instruction' on love; the three books of the *Ars Amatoria* advise various addressees on how to fall in love, while the *Remedia Amoris* undoes the damage, advising recipients on how to escape love. Commonplaces that are used by all these writers, like the locked-out lover (*exclusus amator*), love described as warfare (*militia amoris*), and love as slavery (*servitium amoris*) will be examined.

THE PHILOSOPHY OF PLATO (ES)

This module will deal with the central question of Plato's early philosophy: Is it possible to teach *arete* (*Protagoras*)? It will then follow the gradual development of Plato's thought towards the doctrine of Ideas (*Meno* and *anamnesis*), explicitly

expressed for the first time in the speech of Diotima (*Symposium*). It will also deal with other topics of Plato's philosophy such as rhetoric (*Gorgias*, *Phaedrus*), eros (*Symposium*, *Phaedrus*), the sophists (*Protagoras*, *Gorgias*), the nature of the soul (*Phaedo*, *Phaedrus*, *Gorgias*, *Timaeus*), the creation of the world (*Timaeus*). Time permitting, excerpts from the *Republic* and the *Seventh Letter* could be included. These texts (or a selection of them) will be read in English translation.

WOMEN IN GREEK TRAGEDY (ES)

This module will study the representation in Greek Tragedy of female figures such as Medea, Phaidra, Electra, Hekabe, Iphigeneia and Antigone or others. The relevant tragedies will be read in English translation. The module will also familiarize students with the current scholarship about the interpretation of women in tragedy.

FROM CLASSICAL TRADITION TO RECEPTION STUDIES (ES)

It is the aim of this module to introduce students to this sub-discipline in the field of Classical Philology, "probably the fastest growing area in the field of classical studies" (Susanna Braund). After a theoretical overview of "the state of the art", various techniques and methods will be explored, using various examples from antiquity and modern times. The main focus will be on literary adaptations; however music and visual arts might be included as well. Students will gain first-hand experience in researching the primary sources of a given topic and will look at selected adaptations from modern times. Since this is an extremely vast field, there is no standard repertoire for this module. The actual selection of topics will be finalised in discussion with the participating students and lecturer in order to suit individual interests.

READING ROMAN WOMEN (SN)

This course explores the lives of Roman women from the time of Aeneas and Romulus and Remus, through the Roman Republic and Roman Empire to the time of Early Christianity. This course looks at how Roman authors depicted

women and how this has shaped our perception of both women and their roles in the Roman world. This course aims to deconstruct Roman perceptions of women and strives to provide the student with a more holistic view of the women who lived their lives in the Roman world.

ART AND THE EVOLUTION OF BEAUTY (SN)

Through an exploration of Greek vase painting, sculpture and architecture, this course explores the constantly changing perspectives of beauty, life and perfection in the Ancient Greek world. The aim of this module is to create a deeper understanding of Greek life through the medium of art which provides us with unique insights into the political, social, gendered and sexual lives of the Greeks.

In addition to the above, Classics offers additional electives for Honours students in Latin or Classical Greek on a Latin or Greek author whose work will be read in the original language.

MASTERS (M.A.)

Classics offers a Masters by Research only (192 credits) under the supervision of one of the permanent staff members. The pre-requisite is an Honours Degree in Classics and at least one completed year in either Latin or Classical Greek. Masters students must have completed at least one additional year of either Latin or Classical Greek as the minimum language requirement before the degree can be awarded. Additional language requirements remain at the discretion of the supervisor. For the areas of specialisation of the staff members, please consult the STAFF section on the website.

Some topics of recently completed M.A. dissertations include, among others:

- Haggard, Great Zimbabwe and the Classics: Constructing lost cities in *King Solomon's Mines*, *She* and *Elissa*
- The Spartans and the amaZulu: a comparison of their military and social systems
- Scholarship and Multiculturalism in Ptolemaic Egypt

- The parent-child relationship and the Homeric Hero in the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*
- Girl Guides: Towards a model of female guides in ancient epic

Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)

Classics offers a PhD programme (384 credits) by thesis only under the supervision of one of the permanent staff members. The pre-requisite is a Masters' Degree in Classics and at least two completed years in either Latin or Classical Greek. PhD students must have completed at least one additional year of either Latin or Classical Greek as the minimum language requirement before the degree can be awarded. Additional language requirements remain at the discretion of the supervisor. For the areas of specialisation of the staff members, please consult the STAFF section on the website.

Some topics of recently completed PhD theses include, among others:

- Computer aided techniques for the attribution of Attic Black-Figure Vase-Paintings using the Princeton Painter as a model
- Plaintive Nightingale or Strident Swan? – The reception of the Electra myth from 1960-2005
- The Judgement of an Ass: Constructions of female sexuality in Apuleius' *Metamorphoses*

Post-Doctoral Scholarships

Classics offers a full Post-Doctoral Programme within the framework of the College of Humanities under the supervision of one of the permanent staff members and invites applications from interested qualified candidates. All inquiries and applications should be addressed to the Head of Department (for details, please consult the STAFF section of the website).

Former Post-Doctoral students include, among others:

- Dr Segun Ige (now: University of Cape Town)
- Dr Mairéad McAuley (now: University College London, UK)
- Dr Francesco Lupi (now: University of Verona, Italy)
- Dr Alan Ross (now: University of Southampton, UK)