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Description

This course, making extensive use of resources available via the internet, focuses on the work of the Athenian comic playwright Aristophanes. Students will participate in a weekly webcast lecture, an on-line discussion moderated by faculty members from participating institutions, and weekly tutorials with faculty members at their home institutions. This course is specifically designed for advanced students and will include a rigorous study of the cultural and historical context during the 5th and 4th centuries BCE. Students will also become familiar with the current interpretative approaches to the material.

Course Components

Common Sessions: Beginning September 18, students and faculty members will "meet" for common sessions on Friday mornings. Those from institutions in the central time zone will have class from 8:00 a.m. to 9:00 a.m. Students in the eastern time zone will meet from 9:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. Please note that participants should plan on entering the Elluminate room no later than 7:45 central time or 8:45 eastern time, so the course can address any technical issues before the session begins. **Response Papers:** Students will submit response papers that will address study questions for each week of the course. The topics for their consideration will be available in the [Forum section](#) of the Sakai worksite for the course, where they will also post their responses by 5:00 p.m. (central time) every week (with some exceptions). **Tutorial:** Finally, students will meet by arrangement with the participating faculty members on their campuses for a one-hour tutorial each week.

Objectives

Advanced students of Greek will continue developing their understanding of ancient Greek by studying the poetry composed by Aristophanes for the Athenian dramatic festivals in the fifth and fourth centuries BCE. Among the issues this course will address are the place of Athenian comedy in the Greek poetic and cultural traditions, the relationship between recognized figures from Athenian religious life and the ways they were depicted in comedy, the nature of the productions themselves and questions about the staging that concern the interpretation of the play, and the political and social impact of Aristophanic comedy. To explore these issues, the course will examine in detail a number of themes throughout the semester that emerge from the *Frogs*. These include the role of education and religion in society, the nature of the family with special emphasis on the relationship between fathers and sons, the role of wealth and the legal system in establishing social status, and the nature of comedy itself.

Course Requirements

Preparation: All students will be expected to work through the assigned reading for each week, submit weekly response papers on topics germane to the course, participate in the common sessions, and work with their on-campus tutors. This course is intended for advanced, mature students, who can effectively and conscientiously work through the materials and fulfill the assignments with minimal supervision. The participating faculty members presuppose that students will come to each event prepared to participate actively. Students should take advantage of every resource to ensure that they thoroughly understand the readings and have a command of the interpretive issues that will form the basis of the lectures, response papers, and tutorials. This course is designed to accommodate advanced students at varying levels of experience and fluency. In general, students with five or more semesters of ancient Greek should enroll in ICAGR 393, and those with less than five, in ICAGR 293. Depending on the needs of students at individual campuses, the amount of assigned reading may vary from that posted on this syllabus. The tutor at each institution will work with students to determine appropriate assignments. The questions and topics for the response papers are based on the reading assignments for 293. Students working at the 393 level will have additional reading assignments. To ensure that the class works together as a whole regardless of the varying abilities of individual students, these additional assignments may come from passages before or after the section assigned for a particular week.

Common Sessions On Friday mornings, beginning on September 18, students will be expected to participate in the on-line common session, which will begin, as noted above, at 8:00 a.m. in the

central time zone and at 9:00 a.m. in the eastern time zone. The sessions will take place in an Elluminate classroom. The course director will introduce the topic of the day, which the scheduled moderator will present through an interactive seminar and conversation with the other participants. Archived versions of the sessions will be available on the Sakai worksite for the course. Shortly before the common sessions begin, students will join the room and make whatever technical adjustments are necessary to ensure that everyone can see and hear each other. The course director and the Sunoikisis coordinator will help with this process. Because the lectures will be available via the Internet both during the live session and as archived files, which participants can subsequently access from the website for the course, there will be no excuse for missing a lecture, and students can expect to encounter questions on the examinations based the content of the lectures and the lecturers' responses to questions from the participants.

Response Papers Students will be expected to share their views of the readings and lectures with their peers through the Sakai worksite. A set of topics will accompany each reading assignment. Students will post responses to these questions by no later than 5:00 p.m. each Wednesday as noted on the schedule below. The questions seek to evoke a sustained, synthetic engagement with the readings. At the conclusion of the course, the weekly contributions of each student to the discussion list should represent a significant body of interpretative work. Consequently, the response to each question should be considerably more than a sentence or two and each set of responses should represent a focused, reflective engagement with the readings **after** they have have thoroughly read and studied the texts. Depending on the nature of the questions and responses, the director of the course may assign students to comment on the responses of the other students. The grade for this element of the course will consist of two components. The first, which accounts for ten percent of the students' final grades, will depend on the students' adequately and timely responding to the study questions. Students will receive full credit for posting their response papers by the scheduled deadlines. The director of the course may single out particularly excellent papers and comments and award bonus credit. The second component, twenty percent of the final grade, will reflect the quality of the contributions. The course director will award this grade. (Please note that the on-campus tutors, or "mentors" as they will be designated in the following materials, may require additional work on this component of the course to reflect the time spent in the course before or after the period of collaborative activities. This work may take various forms such as an introduction, epilogue, critical review, or expansion on one or more of the topics.) These two components will account for thirty percent of the students' final grades.

Tutorials: Each students will meet for at least one hour every week with a mentor at her or his home institution. The participants on each campus will determine the times and locations of these meetings. Students are responsible for contacting their faculty mentors and finalizing the details of their weekly meetings. The quality of these meetings, as measured by students' preparation, attendance, and engagement with the readings, will account for forty percent of their final grades.

Examinations: There will be two examinations, a midterm and final over the content, cultural context, and interpretation of the literature. These will be based on the readings, response papers, and lectures. Individual campuses may choose to additional examinations that pertain more specifically to the language of Aristophanes. Here are some additional points to bear in mind with regard to this aspect of the course:

1. Design of the examinationsThe mentors from each campus will collaborate on the design of these examinations to ensure that they reflect the common experience of

the students in the course. During this design process, the mentors also establish the evaluative guidelines they will follow when grading the examinations.

- The grading process The mentors along with the course director will grade at least some sections of the examinations collaboratively to ensure that all students in the course receive grades that accurately reflect their work and contributions to the course. Questions about the grading should be referred to the director of the course.

Evaluation: Grades will be based on the following components:

Class preparation and work in tutorial:	40%
Response papers:	30%
Midterm:	10%
Final:	20%

Primary Readings

In Greek: Aristophanes *Frogs*

In translation: Aristophanes *Acharnians, Thesmophoriazusai*

Schedule of Readings and Events

Preparation up to 9/18		
First weeks of the semester	<u>Reading</u> (293 & 393)	Students should have read the complete play in translation and made significant progress on the Greek text. By Monday, September 21, they should be up to line 165.
Week 1 (9/14-18)		
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (due 9/23)	<p>Students should prepare two responses: one response to one of the alternatives under the topic of modern comedy and one response to one of the options under the topic of ancient comedy.</p> <p>A. Modern comedy and its setting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Select a comic performance of some type, for example, and episode of Saturday Night Live, the Daily Show, the Colbert Report. Bear in mind that this should be a performance before a real audience with some interaction with the audience. So, an episode of the Simpson's would not be appropriate for this response. Analyze this performance, document what were the comedic elements and why they were comical. Choose an article from a humor magazine, e.g., the Onion. Analyze the article in the same way. What is comedic and why? <p>B. Ancient comedy and its setting</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Look closely at the opening scene of the play, lines 1-37. Issues of staging aside, how does the audience know that this is a comedy? What is funny about this scene? What expectations does the

		<p>playwright establish for the audience in this passage? Identify, in particular, any words that, in your opinion, belong to comedy. Check your hypotheses by looking at the word frequency statistics in Perseus for the appearance of those words in the works of Aeschylus, Sophocles, and Euripides. Report your findings. To see the statistics for a word, click on the word in the text, which will open the "Greek Word Study Tool." That window will provide a link to one or more dictionaries as well as one to "more statistics" next to "Word Frequency Statistics." Follow that link to see whether the word appears in the works of the Athenian tragedians.</p> <p>2. Go to the Beazley Archive at the Classical Art Research Center and collect two or three images each of Herakles and Dionysus from vase paintings from the 6th and 5th centuries. Describe the images. Were there labels for the images? If not, how do we know they are Herakles and Dionysus?</p>
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (1):	We will meet in the Elluminate classroom, introduce ourselves, and discuss the elements of the Sunoikisis course.
Week 2 (9/21-25)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 165 -268; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 181 -268
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (due 9/30)	<p>Prepare responses on each of the following topics that concern staging:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Imagine that you have received the commission to stage the original production of the <i>Frogs</i>. Based on what we know about the ancient theatre, how would you have created the setting for this play and staged the action up to the passage of where Kharon ferried Dionysus across the river into the underworld. 2. Now imagine that you are responsible for a modern production of the play. This production will travel, taking place on conventional stages in three different cities. How would you create the setting for this modern version and stage the action up to Dionysus arrival in the underworld?
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (2):	" The Genre of Old Comedy ," Professor Hal Haskell (Southwestern University). Follow this link to access the audio recording (mp3).
Week 3 (9/28-10/2)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 269 -459; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 323 -459
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (due 10/7)	<p>Prepare responses on each of the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look for the ways the chorus refers to itself in the two choral passages (209-268 and 316-459). What do these references suggest about the identity of the chorus and how the chorus presents itself to the audience? 2. Watch <i>Beetlejuice</i>, (1988) a film by Tim Burton which presents a vision of the afterlife. Events in the film take place in three distinctive "places." The first is the house (and community) inhabited initially by Adam and Barbara Maitland (played by Alec Baldwin and Geena Davis) and then

		by the Deetz family, consisting of Charles (Jeffrey Jones), Delia (Catherine O'Hara) and Lydia (Winona Ryder). The second is the realm of the dead, where Adam and Barbara periodically go. The third is the model of the house and community where Beetlejuice (played by Michael Keaton) apparently lives. What is the relationship between the model as a mimetic device and the "real world" it depicts? How do the two realms relate to each other as performative contexts?
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (3)	" Performance ," Professor Scott Garner (Rhodes College)
Week 4 (10/5-9)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	The readings for this week will include the next section from the <i>Frogs</i> along with some selections (in translation) from other Greek texts. (Students may want to try reading the selections from Plato and the <i>Odyssey</i> in Greek.) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 460-548; for students in 293: <i>Frogs</i> 460-464, 479-533 2. Selections from Plato, <i>Republic</i> 614b-621d, Orphic tablets, <i>Nekuia</i> from the <i>Odyssey</i> 10.503-11.332
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> :	Please note that for the students from Rhodes, these responses will be due on Wednesday, October 14. For students from Southwestern, they will be due on Wednesday, October 21. Prepare responses on two of the following topics: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare the vision of the underworld in the following passage from the <i>Odyssey</i> with the vision in the <i>Frogs</i>. 2. Compare the topography of the Orphic tablets with Dionysus and Xanthias' journey. 3. The Orphic tablets provide instructions to the deceased for integrating themselves into a new community. Drawing on your own experiences or those of your family or friends, describe the steps involved in joining a new group, club, community. Ground your description with real examples.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (4)	"Afterlife," Professor Kenny Morrell (Rhodes College)
Week 5 (10/12-16) [Fall break for Southwestern]		
	<u>Reading:</u>	The readings for this week will include the next section from the <i>Frogs</i> along with a selection from the secondary literature on the play. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 549-673; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 590-673 2. I. Lada "Richards, "'Separation, 'Limen, 'Aggregation': The Frogs as a Rite of Passage," in <i>Initiating Dionysus. Ritual and Theatre in Aristophanes' Frogs</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 45-122.

Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u>	<p>Please note that for students at Southwestern, these responses will be due on Wednesday, October 21. For those from Rhodes they will be due in two weeks on Wednesday, October 28. Prepare responses to the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Closely examine the way Dionysus and Xanthias change roles in this scene. How do these changes relate to the rest of the play? 2. Read Radcliffe G. Edmonds III, "Who in Hell is Heracles? Dionysus' disastrous disguise in the <i>Frogs</i>," in <i>Initiation in Ancient Greek Rituals and Narratives: New Critical Approaches</i>, edited by David B. Dodd and Christopher A. Faraone (London: Routledge, 2003), pp. 181-200 and respond to the Edmund's critique of Lada-Richards. Is it possible to stage a comical torture scene? Explain.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (5)	"Initiation and Rites of Passage," Professor Kenny Morrell (Rhodes College)
Week 6 (10/19-23) [Fall Break for Rhodes]		
	<u>Reading:</u>	<p>The readings for this week will include the next section from the <i>Frogs</i> along with a selection from the secondary literature on the play.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 674-813; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 676-737, 754-813 2. G. M. Sifakis, "Dramatic Illusion and Old Comedy," in <i>Parabasis and Animal Choruses. A Contribution to the History of Attic Comedy</i> (London: University of London Press, 1971), pp. 7-14. 3. K. Dover, "The Choruses," in <i>Aristophanes Frogs</i>, edited by K. Dover (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 55-69.
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (due 10/28)	<p>Prepare responses for two of the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Read the hypothesis and K. Dover, "Politics," in <i>Aristophanes Frogs</i>, edited by K. Dover (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 69-76. Why did the parabasis (674-737) evoke such praise for Aristophanes? 2. When the leader of the chorus addresses the audience in the parabasis, he breaks the "dramatic illusion," i.e., "the uninterrupted concentration of the fictitious personages of the play on their fictitious situation" (Dover 1972, 56). Look for other passages in the play that appear to break this illusion and discuss whether the actors and chorus play primarily <i>before</i> or <i>to</i> the audience. 3. Examine the ideas and themes in the parabasis (674-737). Do these same ideas appear elsewhere in the play? What do these connections or lack of connections imply.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (6)	"Choral Voices" Professor MaÅ¸a Å¸ulumoviÄ¸ (Furman University)
Week 7 (10/26-30)		

	<u>Reading:</u>	For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 814 -947; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 814 -850, 895 -947
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u>	There are no response papers this week. Students should review and prepare for the midterm examination.
Week 8 (11/2-6)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 948 -1098; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 992 -1098
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u>	There are no response papers this week. Students should review and prepare for the midterm examination.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (7)	Midterm Examination
Week 9 (11/9-13)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	The readings for this week will include the next section from the <i>Frogs</i> along with a selection from Plato's <i>Republic</i> and the secondary literature on the play. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For students in 393: <i>Frogs</i> 1099-1250; for students in 292: <i>Frogs</i> 1119-1179, 1198-1236 2. <i>Republic</i> 374e-403c and 595a-608b 3. A. Willi, "The Language of Literary Criticism," in <i>The Languages of Aristophanes: Aspects of Linguistic Variations in Classical Attic Greek</i> (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003), pp. 87-95
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (due 11/18)	Prepare responses to the following topics: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Compare Euripides' objectives as a playwright, e.g., creating more "democratic" plays (952), developing a greater sense of critical inquiry in his audience (954-961), and making them better managers of their households (971-979) and better citizens (1009-1010), and those of Aeschylus, e.g., intilling in his audience a desire to be great warriors (1026-1027), concealing what is wicked, and depicting what is beneficial (1053-1056). How does these ideas relate to the views of Plato? Which is more compelling or beneficial from your perspective? 2. In lines 1119-1250, the competitors critique each other's prologues. At Euripides' prompting, Aeschylus recites a little over four lines from the prologue of the <i>Oresteia</i> (1126-1128, 1172f). Summarize and discuss his critique of Aeschylus' lines. How do the lines Aeschylus chooses and Euripides' critique relate to the views of the playwrights on the responsibilities of a poet.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (8)	"Frogs and Literary Criticism," Professor MaÅja ÄulumoviÄ (Furman University)
Week 10 (11/16-20)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	The readings for this week will NOT include selections from the <i>Frogs</i> . There

		<p>will be readings from other works of Aristophanes (in translation). and secondary scholarship. These assignments pertain to students at both levels.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Aristophanes, <i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> ("Women at the Thesmophoria") [the entire play] 2. Aristophanes, <i>Acharnians</i> 394-488 3. A. Bierl, "The Comic Chorus in Comparison with Tragedy and Satyr Play," "The Comic Chorus in the <i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> of Aristophanes," and "Summary and Outlook," in <i>Ritual and Performativity: The Chorus in Old Comedy</i>, translated by Alexander Hollmann (Washington: Center for Hellenic Studies, 2009), pp. 47-93, 327-340.
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (Due 12/2)	<p>Prepare responses for two of the following topics:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Are the depictions of Euripides in Aristophanes' <i>Acharnians</i> and <i>Thesmophoriazusae</i> consistent with his character in the <i>Frogs</i>? Discuss the consistencies and inconsistencies. 2. Who constitutes the chorus at this point in the play. Are they frogs? Are they initiates? Has the role of the chorus changed in the play? 3. Read "The Contest of Homer and Hesiod" chapters 1-13 and discuss the basis of the competition and the criteria for choosing a winner.
Thursday-Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (9)	"Genre of Old Comedy, Part 2," Professor Anton Bierl (Universität Basel)
Week 11 (11/23-27) Thanksgiving		
	<u>Reading:</u>	<i>Frogs</i> 1251 -1411, <i>Frogs</i> 1261 -1329
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u> (Due 12/2)	Read, " The Demos and the Comic Competition ," a chapter by Jeffrey Henderson in <i>Nothing to Do with Dionysos?</i> , which discusses the role comic performances played in reflecting and shaping civic ideology and perceptions. Then chose any episode of a political comedy, e.g., The Daily Show , The Colbert Report , or Saturday Night Live and offer some observations about the role of comedy as a cultural force in our society for presenting and altering the political landscape.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u>	No common session
Week 12 (11/30-12/4)		
	<u>Reading:</u>	<i>Frogs</i> 1412 -1533, <i>Frogs</i> 1413 -1481
Wednesday:	<u>Response Papers</u>	Last set of response papers are due.
Friday:	<u>Common Session</u> (10)	"Laughter and Humor," Professor Scott Garner (Rhodes College)