**CLAS 0210 O/ARCH 0200**

**Sport in the Ancient Greek World**

Spring Semester 2015

Classics / Archaeology and the Ancient World

Brown University

**SYLLABUS**

**Class**: MWF 2-2:50 pm, Room 108 Rhode Island Hall

**Instructor**: Professor John Cherry **ph.**: 863-6412; **e-mail**: [john\_cherry@brown.edu](mailto:john_cherry@brown.edu)

**Teaching Assistant**: Luther Karper **e-mail**: [luther\_karper@brown.edu](mailto:luther_karper@brown.edu)

**Office Hours**: Cherry, Tuesday 2-4 pm (or by appointment); Karper, T–Th 9-10 am

**Office**: Room 105, Rhode Island Hall. **TA office:** 004, Wilbour Hall

**Class Canvas site**: https://canvas.brown.edu/courses/949666

**Course Description:**

*Athletics and sports were as popular and significant in the ancient Greek world as they are today, and so offer a good introduction to many aspects of Greek culture over the centuries. Illustrated lectures, reinforced and amplified by readings from ancient and modern writers, as well as by discussion in class, will introduce you to such topics as: the development of Greek athletics, sites where games were held, the nature of individual events, and social implications such as athletic professionalism, women and athletics, the role of sport in Greek education, etc. Wider cultural aspects to be explored include the religious, political, and economic contexts of athletics; how their ideology found expression in literature and the visual arts; issues of class, gender, nationalism, and ethnicity; and, of course, whether the modern Olympic Games are anything like the ancient ones. You will encounter the primary data drawn from archaeology, art, and literature, and read modern studies of this ancient evidence.*

**Grades will be based on:**

• take-home Midterm Exam (20%)

• Final Exam (20%)

• three short quizzes (5% each)

• three short writing assignments (5% each)

• one 8-10 page term paper (20%)

• attendance, active participation, office hours (10%)

**Expectations:**

• The essay-based, take-home, Midterm Exam will be handed out in class on Friday March 6, and will be due at the following class (Monday March 9). The Final Exam (2 hours) will consist of a combination of visual and verbal identifications, plus an essay.

• Your short paper will be based on a topic agreed upon with me in advance (you will need to come to office hours to discuss it) and should provide a detailed discussion of some aspect of sport in the ancient world. Since this paper is not due until the end of the Reading Period, there is no acceptable excuse for late papers.

• Readings from the required textbooks have been sequenced to correspond, approximately, to the topics we will be discussing in class at, or soon after, the time you’ll be reading them. I expect you to do these readings regularly by the stated deadlines (see below), and to come to class prepared to discuss them in an informed manner; your active participation in discussion will count towards your final grade.

**Provisional Course Outline:**

**Week 1**

Jan. 21 Introduction to the class and logistical matters. The nature of sport.

Jan. 23 Olympic facts and myths. Video: *The Real Olympics*, Part I.

**Week 2**

Jan. 26 The ancient games as ritual and politics.

Jan. 28 The prehistory of Greek sport: Minoan and Mycenaean.

Jan. 30 Sport in Homer and the epic tradition.

**Week 3**

Feb. 2 The origins of Greek athletic festivals.

Feb. 4 Olympia, the Olympic games and its athletic program.

Feb. 6 Spectators and facilities at the site of Olympia.

**Week 4**

Feb. 9 Inscriptions and literature as evidence for Greek sport [T.A. lecture]

**Writing assignment 1 due**

Feb. 11 Athletic events I: running and jumping

Feb. 13 **Quiz 1**. Experimental archaeology: Video, *Nemea and the hysplex*.

**Week 5**

Feb. 16 ***No class — Brown Long Weekend***

Feb. 18 Athletic events II: the pentathlon.

Feb. 20 Athletic events III: combat sports and equestrian events.

**Week 6**

Feb. 23 Festivals other than the Olympics: the rise of the *periodos.*

Feb. 25 The games at Delphi.

Feb. 27 The games at Isthmia and Nemea.

**Week 7**

Mar. 2 Rules, officials, judges, bribery, and corruption.

**Writing assignment 2 due**

Mar. 4 Gymnasia, training, trainers, and athletic diets.

Mar. 6 Ancient sports anecdotes.

**Take-home Midterm Exam issued.**

**Week 8**

Mar. 9 Civic athletics: the Panathenaia of Athens, I.

**Take-home Midterm Exam due.**

Mar. 11 Civic athletics: the Panathenaia of Athens, II.

Mar. 13 What happened if you won? I: Victors’ statues, politics.

**Week 9**

Mar. 16 What happened if you won? II: Victory poetry

Mar. 18 Women and ancient Greek sport.

Mar. 20 **Quiz 2**. Opening ceremonies: Video and discussion.

**Week 10**

Mar. 23 ***No class — Spring Recess***

Mar. 25 ***No class — Spring Recess***

Mar. 27 ***No class — Spring Recess***

**Week 11**

Mar. 30 Sport and the erotic.

Apr. 1 The issue of nudity*.*

Apr. 3 Hellenistic athletics and the internationalization of sport.

**Week 12**

Apr. 6 What did the Romans do with Greek sport?

**Writing assignment 3 due.**

Apr. 8 Dissenting voices: ancient critics of athletes and the games.

Apr. 10 **Quiz 3.** Discussion

**Week 13**

Apr. 13 Video: *The Real Olympics*, Part II.

Apr. 15 Into the modern era: transformation of the ancient Olympics.

Apr. 17 Modern myths of Olympic amateurism and professionalism.

**Week 14**

Apr. 19 Dangerous Olympics: Nazism and Riefenstahl’s *Olympia* [video].

Apr. 21 **Short reports on student term papers** [as time allows]

Apr. 24 Wrap-up and review for final exam [led by Luther Karper]

Apr. 24-May 5 *Reading Period*

May 5 **Written paper due**

May 11 (2-4 pm) **FINAL EXAM**

**Required textbooks:**

(1) Stephen G. Miller, ***ARETE*: *Greek Sports from Ancient Sources*** (3rd edn., Berkeley 2004)

(2) Stephen G. Miller, ***Ancient Greek Athletics*** (Yale U.P., 2004)

(3) Judith Swaddling, ***The Ancient Olympic Games*** (2nd edn., Texas U.P. 2002)

(4) David C. Young, ***A Brief History of the Olympic Games*** (Blackwell 2004)

*• Books 1-3 available at the Brown Bookstore; Book 4 is available via Canvas (Discussions)*

**Schedule of readings from required textbooks:**

***Arete*** = Stephen G. Miller, ***ARETE*: *Greek Sports from Ancient Sources***

**Miller** = Stephen G. Miller, ***Ancient Greek Athletics***

**Swaddling** = Judith Swaddling, ***The Ancient Olympic Games***

**Young** = David C. Young, ***A Brief History of the Olympic Games***

Week 1 Miller, chs. 1-3; Young, ch. 1

Week 2 Miller, ch. 6; *Arete*, ch. I; Young, ch. 2

Week 3 Swaddling, chs. 1-5; Young, ch. 5

Week 4 Swaddling, chs. 6-8; Young, ch. 3

Week 5 Miller, ch. 4; *Arete*, ch. III; Young, ch. 4

Week 6 Miller, ch. 5

Week 7 Miller, ch. 7; *Arete*, ch. IV; Young, chs. 7-8

Week 8 Miller, chs. 10-11; *Arete*, chs. V and VI; Young, ch. 6

Week 9 Miller, ch. 8; *Arete*, chs. VIII and X; Young, chs. 9-10

Week 10 *Arete*, chs. II and VII

Week 11 Miller, chs. 9 and 12; Young, ch. 11

Week 12 [*Thanksgiving*] *Arete*, chs. XI and XII; Young, ch. 12

Week 13 Miller, chs. 13-16; *Arete*, chs. XIII-XV; Young, ch. 13

Week 14 Swaddling, ch. 9

**Other Resources:**

• A selection of key books on topics relating to ancient Greek sport, in its widest sense, will be placed on the reserve shelves in the non-circulating library of the Joukowsky Institute for Archaeology and the Ancient World (Rhode Island Hall, second floor).

• You will use *The* *Perseus Digital Library* (a huge text and image database of ancient Greek civilization, accessible at <http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/> ). I will direct you to, and encourage you to make use of, other resources available on the Web, including a few on-line articles. Here are some links to start with (mostly about ancient Olympic Games, but with much information about ancient sport in general)

<http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/Olympics/>

[The Ancient Olympics: A Special Exhibit of the Perseus Digital Library Project]

http://www.penn.museum/sites/olympics/olympicintro.shtml

[The Real Story of the Ancient Olympic Games, from the University of Pennsylvania Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology]

<http://www.olympic.org/uk/index_uk.asp>

[Official website of the Olympic movement]

<http://corinth.sas.upenn.edu/dgr/clips.html>

[Press clippings and weblinks about the Ancient and Modern Games]

<http://www.archaeology.org/online/features/olympics/index.html>

[Ancient Olympics Guide, from *Archaeology* magazine]