Field of Study Course Proposal
CLSC 212

A. COVER APPLICATION

1. Proposed Field of Study: Social Analysis
2. Course Number: CLSC 212
3. Full Course Title: Dining and Drinking in Classical Antiquity
4. Catalog description: This course analyzes customs and ideologies of dining and drinking in the ancient Mediterranean world, from communal religious feasts to private banquets. Using primary ancient sources (literary texts, artistic representations, and archaeological finds), we will examine the roles of dining and drinking in ancient societies. And through cross-cultural analysis and comparison with modern beliefs and customs, we will explore how dining and drinking customs have been used to construct social identities, then and now.
5. Prerequisites: None
6. Units: 1
7. Estimate of student enrollment: 40
8. By whom and when the course will be offered: Elizabeth Baughan will offer the course every third fall or as needed by the Classical Studies department.
9. Staffing implications: None.
10. Adequacy of library, technology, and other resources: There are no special needs for this course.
11. Interdepartmental and interschool implications: This course may be used as an elective for majors and minors in Classical Studies, and it will support a Language Across the Curriculum ¼-unit for Latin students. It would also be of particular interest to students of anthropology, sociology, history, and art history.
12. Contact: Elizabeth Baughan

B. FIELD OF STUDY FULFILLMENT

This course approaches the theme of dining and drinking both as a gateway through which to explore the texts and material culture of the ancient Greeks and Romans and as a testing ground for how social behaviors and ideologies may be gleaned from archaeological and literary evidence. And by requiring students to compare ancient and modern practices, it encourages them to look critically at their own world and to analyze the behavioral patterns and social practices in which they engage in their own lives, on- and off-campus.

Students who are successful in this class will achieve the following objectives:

- understand the social and religious contexts of food and drink in the ancient world
- understand and assess major theories of social behavior in relation to dining and drinking customs and the ideologies surrounding them (for example, social bond theory)
- learn how to use evidence (textual and material) critically, as a means of understanding patterns of human behavior and social ideologies, and how to assess such arguments and test social theories
- compare ancient and modern social practices in order to relate better to the ancient world and to engage critically with our own while experiencing firsthand what can be learned from the study of human behavior.

Readings in social theory and anthropological and psychological approaches to drinking and eating in the first weeks of the class will provide a framework for students to apply to the ancient world. The class will then proceed chronologically, beginning with the origins of viticulture and beer production in the prehistoric Near East and proceeding through the feasting cultures of the Bronze Age to the private and religious banquets of the Greek, Roman, and early Christian eras. But the focus and goal will not be a historical survey—in each era, we will explore the social implications of dining and drinking practices and the ideologies surrounding them, with a view to understanding how patterns of human behavior involving food and drink reflect and construct social relationships and identities. For each distinct era or culture, we will examine the diverse evidence for different aspects of dining and drinking as clues of social behavior, and then ‘read’ that evidence analytically. For instance, we will study the role of re-distributive...
banqueting in maintaining dynastic power in the centralized economies of Mycenaean Greece; the politically subversive nature of the symposium in Archaic and Classical Greece; the place of wine and its methods of consumption in the construction of Greek and Roman identities; and the importance of dinner parties in creating and sustaining social hierarchies in the Roman world.

The final objective will be met through course assignments (three short papers and one longer paper) requiring students to compare ancient and modern practices. For instance, one of the short papers will ask students to compare systems of communal dining in ancient Greece (real or utopian) to ‘communal’ dining here on campus and to assess whether campus dining fosters community or reinforces social boundaries. Topics for the longer papers will also require a comparative analytical approach, such as assessing the ‘political’ nature of dining and drinking, then and now; comparing ancient and modern attitudes towards drunkenness or luxury; or examining how identities and ideologies have been and still are constructed through dining and drinking practices.

The overall goal of the course—what I want students to take away from the class, whether or not they go on in the study of Classics—is to promote awareness of how dining and drinking customs have been used, then and now, to construct and negotiate social identities.

C. COURSE SYLLABUS

Dining and Drinking in Classical Antiquity

An analysis of banqueting in the ancient Mediterranean world, from communal feasts at religious festivals to the private banquets of the Greek symposion and the Roman convivium. May be taken with an additional Language Across the Curriculum credit (see below).

Course description

Using primary ancient sources (literary texts, artistic representations, and archaeological finds), we will examine the roles of dining and drinking in ancient societies and social ideologies. What were the different social contexts of feasting? What were the roles of food and drink in Greek and Roman religious rituals? What was the significance of food and drink offerings in tombs and images of banqueting in funerary art? Where did the custom of reclining to dine originate, and what social implications did it carry? And, of course, what kind of food and drink was consumed at these banquets? Our primary focus will be Greece and Rome, but important parallels or corollary practices in neighboring and modern cultures will also be considered. The overall goal of the course is to explore how dining and drinking customs have been used, then and now, to construct and negotiate social identities.

Course objectives

- understand the social and religious contexts of food and drink in the ancient world
- understand and assess major theories of social behavior in relation to dining and drinking customs and the ideologies surrounding them (for example, social bond theory).
- learn how to use evidence (textual and material) critically, as a means of understanding patterns of human behavior and social ideologies, and how to assess such arguments and test social theories.
- compare ancient and modern social practices in order to relate better to the ancient world and to engage critically with our own while experiencing firsthand what can be learned from the study of human behavior.

Textbooks

Readings on E-Reserve [abbrev. ER] and in the on-line journal, Food, Culture, and Society.

Course requirements and grading:
10% Attendance and participation (in class and on discussion board)
10% Quizzes (announced and unannounced)
15% Three short papers (2-3 pages each)
20% Longer analytical paper (5-7 pages)
20% Midterm exam
25% Final exam

+++ Extra Credit: Participation in the organization and preparation of a Graeco-Roman banquet at the end of the semester.

Language Across the Curriculum (LATIN):
Students with Latin experience and an interest in furthering their Latin skills while learning about the social and history of Roman dining are eligible for an extra language component (0.25 unit). We will read portions of Petronius’s Satyricon in Latin and meet once a week to review and discuss the text. Students may select additional readings based on their research interests and use them to develop term paper topics.

Course Schedule

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topics Introduction</th>
<th>Reading assignments</th>
<th>Course events</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Social theories and contexts of drinking and eating</td>
<td>Garnsey, Intro. and Chapter 1 ER: Selections from Psychological Theories of Drinking and Alcohol and Cross-Cultural Approaches to the Study of Alcohol</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Feasting in Bronze Age societies</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Homeric feasting and xenia</td>
<td>Odyssey Books I, III-IV, VI-VIII (pp. 27-38, 51-87, 102-136)</td>
<td>Short paper due</td>
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<td>Odyssey Books IX-X (pp. 137-167), XIV lines 1-120 (pp. 210-213), XVII lines 328-end (pp. 261-269), XX (pp. 298-308); CR: Selections from Homer’s Iliad; excerpt from Euripides, Alcestis</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>Food and drink in Greek religion</td>
<td>ER: Excerpts from Hesiod’s Theogony and Works and Days; Burkert, “Sacrifice as an Act of Killing”</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Demeter</td>
<td>ER: Homeric Hymn to Demeter; Foley, “The Eleusinian Mysteries”</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>Dionysos and wine</td>
<td>Euripides, Bacchae</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Festivals of Dionysos</td>
<td>ER: Excerpts from Euripides, Cyclops; Bérard and Bron, “Satyric Revels”</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>Origins of the reclining banquet</td>
<td>Garnsey pp. 128-131; ER: Dunbabin pp. 36-38</td>
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<td>Symposion and andron</td>
<td>ER: Sources on the Greek symposion; Durand et al., “Wine, Human and Divine”; Excerpts from Apollodorus, Against Neaera</td>
<td>Short paper due</td>
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<td>Symposion and entertainment</td>
<td>ER: Xenophon, Symposium; Philoxenos, Banquet (Deipnon); Archestratos of Gela, Life of Luxury (Hedupatheia)</td>
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<td>Symposion, politics, and philosophy</td>
<td>Plato, Symposium</td>
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<td>Family dining?</td>
<td>Death feasts</td>
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<td>MIDTERM</td>
<td>Civic and cultic dining in Greece</td>
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<td>Communal dining in Sparta, Crete, and utopian societies</td>
<td>ER: Dalby 1997 pp. 2-16; Menander, Dyskolos (The Bad-Tempered Man) Garnsey pp. 131-134; ER: Dunbabin pp. 50-52; Bookidis, “Ritual Dining at Corinth”; Camp pp. 69-70 (on the Tholos in the Athenian Agora) ER: Plato and others on dining in Sparta, Crete, and utopian societies</td>
<td>MIDTERM</td>
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<td>Wine-drinking and concepts of civilization</td>
<td>Garnsey chapter 5, “Otherness”; ER: A Macedonian Feast (letter of Hippolochos); selections from Herodotos and others on ‘Barbarians’ Garnsey pp. 136-138; ER: Shelton pp. 79-85 and 314317; Other sources on the Roman convivium; Selections from Plautus ER: Faas (1994) pp. 40-65; Dunbabin pp. 38-50, 5271; Selections from the Letters of Pliny the Younger Petronius, Satyricon, pp. 20-70 (“Dinner at Trimalchio’s”) ER: Excerpt from Cato, On Agriculture (Shelton #207); Excerpts from Cicero, Against Verres; Selections from Juvenal, Satires; Sources on sumptuary laws in Rome ER: Selected sources on imperial feasts; Garnsey pp. 134-136; Donahue chapter 1, “The Roman Feast” ER: Selections from Plutarch, Quaestiones Convivales; Selections from Athenaeus, Deipnosophists ER: Selections from Homer’s Iliad; Garland pp. 38-41, 110-115; Toynbee pp. 50-54</td>
<td>Short Paper due</td>
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<td>The Roman convivium</td>
<td>ER: Dunbabin pp. 141-174; Faas pp. 30-37</td>
<td>Longer Paper due</td>
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<td>Triclinia and tabernae</td>
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<td>Banquet</td>
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<td>Portrait of a convivium</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>Class and consumption in Roman dining</td>
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<td>Public and imperial feasts in the Roman empire ‘Table Talk’</td>
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<td>Course Bibliography</td>
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*Food, Culture, and Society: An International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research.*


Donahue, J.F. 2004. *The Roman Community at Table During the Principate* (Ann Arbor).


Wilkins, J., D. Harvey, M. Dobson, eds. 1995. Food in Antiquity (Exeter)
