

Department: MCLL

Course Number: CLST 101

Course Name: "In the Shadow of Olympus:  
The Classical Roots of American Culture"

## **AREAS OF INQUIRY**

### **WESTERN TRADITIONS**

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This form must be submitted to the Faculty Council on Liberal Learning and Academic Life as part of the submission process.

Please attach a proposed syllabus for this course and the Undergraduate Curriculum Course Proposal Form.

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DEADLINE FOR PROPOSALS: **16 September 2005**

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Please answer the following questions:

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#### **Check Only One:**

- ☐ This course is an existing course (in the current curriculum) that we are now proposing for this Area of Inquiry.  
☒ This is a new course that we are now proposing for this Area of Inquiry.

#### **1. Name and contact information for the department chair administering this course.**

Dr. Danielle Cahill Velardi (4-7107; dcahill@cnu.edu).

#### **2. In any given semester, how many sections of this course is your department willing to offer?**

Up to two.

#### **3. Why is this course being offered/what is it designed to achieve (Course purpose/goal)?**

The institutions, ideas, and ideals of Classical Greece and Rome have had a profound influence on many aspects of American culture: in this course, students will engage with the words, ideas, and images of classical authors and architects and the role they played in shaping contemporary American culture. Each week, students will be introduced (via primary documents, whenever possible) to a different aspect of classical culture – such as law, politics, medicine, oratory, architecture, education, and language – and its legacy in order to appreciate the (considerable) contribution to the American intellectual and cultural heritage made by antiquity.

#### **4. Check the objectives below that the course will address. The first two objectives are required and every proposal must include at least one more objective from the list below.**

- ☒ a. Critically examine the thought processes that have evolved in Western culture (**required**)  
☒ b. Analyze primary works within the framework the course provides (**required**)  
☒ c. Place one or more of the historical, artistic, or intellectual traditions of the West in its cultural context  
☒ d. Describe how the material under study has influenced the development of Western culture  
☒ e. Connect the historical roots of phenomena with later aspects of the tradition

**5. Briefly explain how this class addresses the above objectives. A course may cover more than three objectives.**

a. Critically examine the thought processes that have evolved in Western culture.

This course's primary methodology is to have students consider some of contemporary America's most prominent traditions, institutions, and ideas in areas such as law, politics, education, et al., and how they relate to and have evolved from their roots in antiquity.

b. Analyze primary works within the framework the course provides.

Students will be required to read and demonstrate an understanding of primary works from both ancient and modern authors on similar (or related) topics. For example, in considering the relationship between ancient forms of government – Democracies and Republics, in particular – and American Democracy, students will read and discuss selections from ancient authors (e.g., Pericles' "Funeral Oration" [from Thucydides' *Histories*], Plato's *Republic*, and Cicero's *On the Republic*) and early American authors, such as Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin (as quoted in course textbooks).

c. Place one or more of the historical, artistic, or intellectual traditions of the West in its cultural context.

Most of the topics covered by this course are routinely seen "in action" all around us every day. There can be no better example than the basic concept of a university and, in particular, the academic classroom, which owes its origins to Plato's Academy – a place where students were prepared to be productive citizens. Of course, unlike Plato's Academy, which denied its students instruction in areas such as art and literature, most contemporary institutions have embraced some form of Liberal Learning, which nourishes both the intellect and the soul and prepares students not only to be productive citizens, but also to lead truly satisfying lives.

d. Describe how the material under study has influenced the development of Western culture

Many of American (and Western) culture's institutions – and their rationales – have their roots in antiquity. Greek and Roman authors, artists, and architects all engaged with ideas that although still under discussion have nevertheless become the foundation upon which many contemporary institutions are built. For example, concepts of government, law, justice, religion, education, et al. are explored by ancient philosophers (e.g., Plato and Aristotle), historians (e.g., Thucydides and Livy), and poets (e.g., Homer and Vergil); each of the aforementioned authors having contributed a chapter to a discussion that continues to this day.

e. Connect the historical roots of phenomena with later aspects of the tradition.

Students will connect the creation or initiation of various phenomena, such as the Hippocratic Oath, democracy, architectural propaganda, liberal learning, et al. by the Greeks and Romans with their contemporary analogues.

**6. Course Assessment: Identify how this course will accomplish the above objectives (choose at least one).**

☒ Participating in class discussion and debate

☐ Engaging in teamwork and other collaborative exercises

☐ Writing analytical or evaluative papers, perhaps incorporating original research

☐ Making oral presentations

☐ Creating an artistic product or a performance

☐ Participating in fieldwork

☒ Other means: semester-long web-based discussion; in-class essay exams; comprehensive final essay.

**7. Attach a proposed syllabus, which includes a statement of purpose, course objectives, and how these objectives will be accomplished.**

Please see attached.

**8. If this course contributes to any of the foundations for liberal learning given below, please explain how:**

X Oral Communication Literacy: Along with each reading assignment (ancient and modern) I will supply the students with a series of "Discussion Questions" designed to focus attention on significant ideas/concepts and to help students prepare for class discussions; I will supply the necessary background information for each topic, but students will then be expected to explore said topic through class discussions (with guidance from the instructor, as necessary).

     Information Literacy:

X Writing Literacy: Students are required to participate in an ongoing web-based discussion, which (although informal in terms of writing style) will provide a forum for students to articulate their own ideas and observations in a clear, thoughtful, and succinct manner. Students will also be required to take in-class essay exams, including a comprehensive final essay exam – all of which will require students to evaluate and synthesize material from a broad range of topics.

**9. Explain how this course connects to Vision 2010 – the CNU Strategic Plan ([www.cnu.edu/Vision2010](http://www.cnu.edu/Vision2010)).**

According to Vision 2010, CNU students are expected in part "to be committed to civic and community service to participate as responsible citizens." After studying the classical roots of American culture, students will have a greater appreciation of America's rich cultural heritage and a deeper understanding of its institutions and traditions, two realizations which will underscore the importance and value of participating in civic and community service, as well as being a responsible citizen. Furthermore, because students will come to appreciate many key elements of their own cultural identity, they will naturally be in a better position "to recognize and respect the complex identities of others, their histories and their cultures."

Submission Checklist:

By the deadline, submit a packet with the following documents to the Assistant Dean for Liberal Learning. Please submit in electronic and hard copy form.

X Area of Inquiry Course Proposal Form

X Syllabus for the Course

If needed:

X Undergraduate Curriculum Committee New Course Proposal Form

     Undergraduate Curriculum Committee Changes to Existing Courses Form

# IN THE SHADOW OF OLYMPUS:

## THE CLASSICAL ROOTS OF AMERICAN CULTURE

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

The legacy of Classical Greece and Rome has had a profound influence on many aspects of western civilization, in general, and American culture, in particular. From the time of the first European settlements in Virginia and Massachusetts to the end of the Civil War, reverence for ancient models helped to structure ethical, judicial, political, oratorical, artistic, and educational ideas and ideals, sometimes overtly and, at other times, subtly. The development of the English language, too, has been greatly influenced by Latin and owes much of its scientific and medical terminology to Greek. Towards the end of the nineteenth century, however, interest in classical models waned, universities no longer required students to study Greek and Latin, and classical culture was widely perceived as being the preserve of aristocrats and scholars. Despite its diminution in prominence, the legacy of antiquity nevertheless continues to permeate and influence many aspects of contemporary American culture, just as it did in the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries.

In this course, students will consider the influence of words, ideas, and images of classical authors and artists on American culture. Each week, students will be introduced to a different area of classical culture and its legacy. We will consider areas such as language, literature, medicine, politics and law, philosophy and psychology, and history in order to acquire a knowledge of and greater sensitivity towards the legacy of Classical Greece and Rome and its impact on American intellectual and cultural heritage.

### **LEARNING GOALS**

By the end of this course, students will be able to

1. Examine critically the thought processes that have evolved in American culture;
2. Analyze primary works – both ancient and modern – within the framework of this course;
3. Locate and explain one or more of the historical, artistic, or intellectual traditions of contemporary American culture;
4. Describe how classical culture has influenced the development of American culture;
5. Connect the historical roots of various institutions, traditions, and ideas with their contemporary counterparts.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- L. Adkins & R. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford 1994)
- H. D. Amos and A. G. P. Lang, *These Were the Greeks* (Avon 1989)

- P. J. Rhodes, *Ancient Democracy and Modern Ideology* (Duckworth Publishing 2003)
- C. Winterer, *The Culture of Classicism* (Baltimore 2002)
- CNU Coursepack (readings from ancient authors)

## ON RESERVE

- G. Gromort, *The Elements of Classical Architecture* (NY 2001)
- G. Highet, *The Classical Tradition* (Oxford 1985 [orig. 1949])
- J. M. Kelly, *A Short History of Western Legal Theory* (Oxford 1992)
- E.C. Kopff, *The Devil Knows Latin* (ISI Books 1999)
- M. Reinhold, *Classica Americana: The Greek and Roman Heritage in the United States* (Detroit 1984)
- C. J. Richard, *The Founders and the Classics: Greece, Rome, and the American Enlightenment* (Cambridge [MA] 1994)

## GRADING POLICY

Homework/Participation (100 points)

Web-based Discussion (200 points)

3 Exams (100 points each = 300 points)

Final Exam (400 points)

**Your final grade will be based on a 1000-point scale:**

A = 930-1000 points, A- = 900-929, B+ = 870-899, B = 830-869, B- = 800-829, C+ = 770-799, C = 730-769, C- = 700-729, D+ = 670-699, D = 630-669, D- = 600-629, and F = below 600.

### Homework/Participation

Participation is an integral component of the course, as all readings will be discussed and all homework assignments will be reviewed and corrected in class. You will be expected not only to come to class prepared, but also to contribute on a regular basis. Attendance is, of course, mandatory; especially since the exams – while based on the assigned readings – will emphasize material raised in lectures and class discussions.

### Web-based Discussion

Students will be required to participate in an ongoing, semester-long, web-based discussion through WebCT, in which we will consider those classical elements of contemporary American culture that we see all around us in everyday life and their significance. I will moderate the discussion and pose questions based on student observations.

### Exams (nb: texts and notes may not be used)

The Exams will require students to demonstrate an understanding of various aspects of classical culture *within their historical and intellectual context*: that is, while it is important to demonstrate an understanding of names, dates, and places, students will also be expected to describe the circumstances under which an idea or institution arose, as well as its immediate impact, significance, and legacy. Furthermore, students will be expected to identify and discuss the relationship between classical models and their influence on American culture,

supporting their arguments with specific examples. The format of the exam will consist primarily of short answer and essay questions.

Final Exam (nb: class notes may be used)

The Final Exam will have the same basic format as the Exams, but will require students to examine the legacy of antiquity in American culture in a comprehensive essay, which will cover material from the entire semester.

## **OUTLINE OF ASSIGNMENTS AND EXAMS**

### **Week 1: Introduction**

*Required Reading:* Reinhold, "The Cult of Antiquity in America" (pp. 23-49).

### **Weeks 2—3: Pre-Civil War America and Classical Models**

*Required Reading:* Kopff, "The Classics, the Founding, and American Creativity" (pp. 43-54); Reinhold, "Opponents of Classical Learning in America during the Revolutionary Period" (pp. 116-41); Richard, "The Classical Conditioning of the Founders" (pp. 12-38); Winterer, "Antiquity in the New Nation" (pp. 11-43).

### **Week 4: The Rise (and Fall?) of Classical Culture in Post-Civil War America**

*Required Reading:* Winterer, "Classical Civilization Consecrated: 1870-1910" (pp. 99-151).

### **Week 5: Classical Greek and American Education**

*Required Reading:* Highet, "Education" (490-500); Kopff, "The Classics and the Traditional Liberal Arts Curriculum" (pp. 97-114); Reinhold, "Philhellenism in America in the Early National Period" (pp. 214-20).

- **Exam 1**

### **Week 6: Classical Latin and American Education**

*Required Reading:* Kopff, "The Latin Invasions of English" (pp. 25-32), "Postmodernism and the End of the Humanities" (pp. 115-24), & "The Final Solution of the Philological Problem" (pp. 125-36).

### **Week 7: Classical Art and Architecture**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Selections from Vitruvius' *On Architecture*."

*Required Reading:* Adkins & Adkins, "Art" (pp. 350-2); Gromort, "The Classical Orders: The American Contribution" (pp. 219-46).

### **Weeks 8—9: Politics and the Birth of Democracy**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Pericles' Funeral Oration" (Thucydides), "Selections from Plato's *Republic* & Aristotle's *Constitution of the Athenians*," and "Selections from Cicero's *On the Republic*."

*Required Reading:* Amos & Lang, "Democracy and Law" (pp. 105-16); Rhodes, "Athenian Democracy and Us" (pp. 54-69).

- **Exam 2**

### **Weeks 10—11**

#### **Law**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Selections from Plato's *Laws* & Cicero's *On the Laws*."

*Required Reading:* Kelly, "The Greeks" (pp. 1-38) & "The Romans" (pp. 39-78).

#### **Medicine**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Selections from Hippocrates, Soranus, and Galen."

*Required Reading:* Adkins & Adkins, "Medicine" (pp. 354-5); Amos & Lang, "Medicine" (pp. 174-6).

### **Week 12: Philosophy**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Selections from Plato, Aristotle, and Cicero."

*Required Reading:* Adkins & Adkins, "Philosophy" (pg. 355); Amos & Lang, "Science, Mathematics, and Philosophy" (pp. 169-76).

### **Week 13: History and Historiography**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Livy's *Praefatio*" and "Plutarch's *Life of Cato*."

*Required Reading:* Reinhold, "Plutarch's Influence in America from Colonial Times to 1890" (pp. 250-64).

### **Week 14**

#### **Athletics and the Theater**

*In Their Own Words:* CNU Coursepack, "Selections from Ovid & Seneca on Roman Spectacle."

*Required Reading:* Adkins & Adkins, "Festivals" (pp. 280-6) & "Entertainment" (pp. 347-9); Amos & Lang, "The Games" (pp. 83-92) & "The Theater" (pp. 129-40).

### **Does Zeus Still Dwell on Olympus?**

*Required Reading:* "Thomas Jefferson and the Classics" (handout); Richard, "The Myth of Classical Decline" (pp. 196-231).

- **Exam 3**

### **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Academic Integrity [courtesy of S. St. Onge, Dept. MCLL]

Plagiarism is the stealing or passing off as your own the writings or ideas of someone else.

Examples of plagiarism include, but are not limited to, quoting, summarizing, or paraphrasing ideas without giving credit to their source; submitting as your own work that has been copied or purchased from another student or other source; permitting someone else to revise or edit a paper to the extent that it is no longer your own work; lifting off the Internet wording or ideas that are not your own without crediting the Internet source.

Plagiarism is a very serious violation of the CNU Honor Code and may result in penalties that can include, at the discretion of the instructor, rewriting the entire assignment, having to complete an alternative assignment, getting a zero on the plagiarized assignment or getting an "F" for the course. In addition to these penalties, the instructor has the right to place a note in the student's university file, which could result in an Honors Council sanction such as suspension or expulsion from CNU. I expect that you will uphold the CNU Honor Code in all work submitted for this course.

*We want you to succeed at CNU; therefore, I may notify the Academic Advising Center if you seem to be having problems with this course. Someone may contact you to help you determine what assistance you need to succeed; you will be sent a copy of the referral form. Please remember: you should feel free to speak with me during my scheduled office hours or by appointment at any time throughout the semester for any reason – please do not let a potential (or easily correctible) problem turn into a major crisis.*



**UNDERGRADUATE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE  
NEW COURSE PROPOSAL FORM**

Does this proposal affect Liberal Learning requirements? Yes \_\_\_\_\_ No **X**

**1. Title of Course:**

“In the Shadow of Olympus: The Classical Roots of American Culture”

**Proposed Course Number (cleared with Registrar):**

CLST 101.

**Prerequisite Courses:**

(if you require a minimum acceptable grade greater than the default of D- , please indicate the grade you require) \_\_\_\_\_

There are no prerequisites.

**Catalogue Description (including credits, lecture, and lab hours):**

The institutions, ideas, and ideals of Classical Greece and Rome have had a profound influence on many aspects of American culture: in this course, students will engage with the words, ideas, and images of classical authors and architects and the role they played in shaping contemporary American culture. Each week, students will be introduced to a different aspect of classical culture – such as law, politics, medicine, architecture, and education – and its legacy in order to appreciate the considerable contribution to the American intellectual and cultural heritage made by antiquity. 3hrs.

**Is the course cross-listed? If so, what is the number of the other course?**

No.

**\*\*A proposed syllabus, including complete text and/or reference information, as well as any relevant information to this decision, must be appended.**

**NOTE: All affected department chairs must sign approval on last page.**

**2. For whom is the course primarily intended? Explain why it should be added to the curriculum.**

This course is intended for Freshmen and Sophomores, but is appropriate for any students interested in the historical/intellectual roots of contemporary American institutions and traditions. The course should be added to the curriculum because students will have the opportunity to learn more about the society into which they will be entering upon graduation and to appreciate the value and significance of being “committed to civic and community service to participate as responsible citizens” (Vision 2010).

**3. If this course is required, append a description of how the course fits into the curriculum. Indicate how it affects hours required for graduation.**

This course is not required.

**4. Has this course been offered previously as a special topics course? If so, when? What course number was used?**

No.

**5. Has this course, or one closely related to it, been offered at CNU previously? If so, is that course currently being offered? How does the proposed course differ? When is the last term the old course will be offered?**

No.

**6. What is the anticipated enrollment per offering for the next three years?**

30 students per class.

During which term will this course first be offered?

Fall 2007

Spring 20\_\_\_\_

Summer 20\_\_\_\_

During which semesters will this course regularly be offered?

Fall 2007

Spring 20\_\_\_\_

Summer 20\_\_\_\_

Print in the 2007-2008 (academic year) Undergraduate Catalog.

**7. How will the course be staffed?**

Classical Studies Program faculty.

**8. Does the course involve a particular classroom, special equipment, or costs beyond those usually associated with a course at CNU? If so, please explain.**

A “smart” classroom would be required, especially for the section of the course devoted to art and architecture.

**9. Is the course repeatable for additional credit? If so, is there a limit to the number of times the course can be repeated? (e.g., applied music courses)**

No.

**10. If this course is for an Area of Inquiry**

a. Identify the Area of Inquiry Western Traditions

b. Demonstrate how your course will meet the objectives of this Area of Inquiry

*Objective 1: Critically examine the thought processes that have evolved in Western culture.*

This course’s primary methodology is to have students consider some of contemporary America’s most prominent traditions, institutions, and ideas in areas such as law, politics, education, and how they relate to and have evolved from their roots in antiquity.

*Objective 2: Analyze primary works within the framework the course provides.*

Students will be required to read and demonstrate an understanding of primary works from both ancient and modern authors on similar (or related) topics. For example, in considering the relationship between ancient forms of government – Democracies and Republics, in particular – and American Democracy, students will read and discuss selections from ancient authors (e.g., Pericles’ “Funeral Oration” [from Thucydides’ *Histories*], Plato’s *Republic*, and Cicero’s *On the Republic*) and early American authors, such as Thomas Jefferson and Benjamin Franklin (as quoted in course textbooks).

*Objective 3: Place one or more of the historical, artistic, or intellectual traditions of the West in its cultural context.*

Most of the topics covered by this course are routinely seen “in action” all around us every day. There can be no better example than the basic concept of a university and, in particular, the academic classroom, which owes its origins to Plato’s Academy – a place where students were prepared to be productive citizens. Of course, unlike Plato’s Academy, which denied its students instruction in areas such as art and literature, most contemporary institutions have embraced some form of Liberal Learning, which nourishes both the intellect and the soul and prepares students not only to be productive citizens, but also to lead truly satisfying lives.

*Objective 4: Describe how the material under study has influenced the development of Western culture*

Many of American (and Western) culture’s institutions – and their rationales – have their roots in antiquity. Greek and Roman authors, artists, and architects all engaged with ideas that although still under discussion have nevertheless become the foundation upon which many contemporary institutions are built. For example, concepts of government, law, justice, religion, education, et al. are explored by ancient philosophers (e.g., Plato and Aristotle), historians (e.g., Thucydides and Livy), and poets (e.g., Homer and Vergil); each of the aforementioned authors having contributed a chapter to a discussion that continues to this day.

*Objective 5: Connect the historical roots of phenomena with later aspects of the tradition.*

Students will connect the creation or initiation of various phenomena, such as the Hippocratic Oath, democracy, architectural propaganda, liberal learning, et al. by the Greeks and Romans with their contemporary analogues.

This course was approved by:

**(Liberal learning core courses must be reviewed by BOTH academic Deans.)**

**Concur**

**Do Not**

**Concur\*\***

Department(s): (1) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐

(2) \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐

College Curriculum  
Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dean: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Dean: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Undergraduate Curriculum  
Committee: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐

***Changes to the Liberal Learning requirements must be reviewed by the Faculty Senate.***

Faculty Senate President: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Provost \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

☐☐

Distribution by Provost Office following approval:

Department Chair(s), UCC Chair, Deans, Registrar

**\*\* If "Do Not Concur" is checked, please attach a statement of explanation.**