

# Magic in the Ancient World



## Critical Writing Seminar in Classical Studies

### Course Description

As a critical writing seminar, this course provides an introduction to college-level academic writing, and culminates in the production of a writing portfolio. As a freshman seminar, it offers an introduction to the discipline of Classical Studies.

How do you rig races so your team wins, make your neighbors' crops fail while yours flourish, compel that shopkeeper's daughter to love you? The ancient Greeks and Romans had spells, amulets and charms for all these purposes, and many more. In this class we will explore the place and practice of magic in the ancient world. What were the Greeks and Romans reaching out to in their efforts to control the world around them, and how did they imagine it worked? The magician's art was a source of tensions and controversies that gives us a glimpse into the hopes and fears of Classical antiquity. Studying how magic was portrayed in the literary sources as well as the spells and tablets themselves, we will think about magic's relationship to the religious, political and social contexts in which it was used.

This writing seminar fulfills the writing requirement and can count towards a major or minor in Classical Studies.



### BASICS

**DR. ALISON TRAWEEK**

[trawee@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:trawee@sas.upenn.edu)

Critical Writing Center  
3808 Walnut St., 410

### OFFICE HOURS

Tuesday and Thursday 2-4,  
by appointment only

Open Hours Wednesday  
2-5, Van Pelt Library Cafe

\* Sign up for office hours at  
the link below

### CLASS MEETINGS

Tuesday and Thursday  
12:00-1:30  
DRL 3N6



## REQUIRED TEXTS

**DEREK COLLINS, *MAGIC IN THE ANCIENT WORLD.***

Wiley-Blackwell, 2008.

ISBN 1405132396.

**DANIEL OGDEN, *MAGIC, WITCHCRAFT AND GHOSTS IN THE GREEK AND ROMAN WORLDS: A SOURCEBOOK.***

Oxford University Press, 2009.

ISBN 0195385209.

**CHRISTINE A. HULT AND THOMAS N. HUCKIN, *THE NEW CENTURY HANDBOOK, 4<sup>TH</sup> EDITION.***

Longman, 2007.

ISBN 0205553680.

## How This Class Works

This is not a lecture class where you will be passively soaking up knowledge, but rather a place for discussion, collaboration and debate. We will spend our class time thinking together about how interpretation and argumentation work, and will examine our own writing and the writing of our peers with an eye to figuring out how to make our scholarship as effective as possible.

Informed participation is the key to a productive semester. Read your texts actively and critically, and come to class ready to debate. Not all students participate in the same way, however, and the most important contributions to a discussion are not always those that are made first, or most frequently, or most insistently. Within the bounds of your own personal style, I demand that you take risks and think out loud. Apart from

occasional mini-lectures, I will act primarily as a guide and referee to make sure that our discussions stay on track and respectful. Beyond that, you are in charge of the direction of discussion, and the more engaged you are, the more interesting and rewarding the class will be for all of us.

### **A Note on the Required Texts**

The Collins and Ogden books have been ordered at the Penn Book Center on 34<sup>th</sup> and Sansom. You can also find them online easily. Used or digital copies are fine.

You will have to order the Hult and Huckins grammar on your own. Please be sure to order by the ISBN number so that you get the correct edition.

## GRADING BREAKDOWN

**COURSEWORK (INCLUDING MIDTERM PORTFOLIO): 45%**  
**FINAL PORTFOLIO: 45%**  
**PARTICIPATION: 10%**

Final grades are based on:

Attendance and timely arrival;  
Timely submission of all assignments;  
Quality of assignment submissions;  
Quality of work based on portfolio assessments.

Note that grades are not negotiable, and will not be discussed over email under any circumstances.



## Major Assignments

*Subject to change*

- Book outline and summary (150-200 words)
- Literature review (1400-1600 words, 5 or more sources)
- Public argument (600-750 words)
- Cover letters (2; 1-1.25 pages each)
- Resume (1 page)
- Peer reviews, outlines, in-class writing
- Class presentations

### **So you'd like to get an A in this class? I would like that too. Here's what you should do:**

- Turn in all your work. All of it. On time. Zeros can be devastating, especially for high stakes assignments.
- Come to class, come prepared, and come willing to engage.
- Do good work. You don't need to be perfect - no one can be perfect - but try to do better than you thought you could.

## Nota Bene

- Failure in any category of the final portfolio assessment means a failure in the class and retake of the writing seminar.
- Attendance is mandatory.
- Most assignments are due at 11:59PM on dates listed on the schedule. Drafts for peer reviews are the major exception, and must be submitted at the beginning of class, without exception, for full credit.
- All assignments are to be submitted to Canvas. Portfolios and peer reviews should also be submitted to MyReviewers.
- Please bring two hard copies of your pieces or your laptop to class to facilitate classmate and professor reviews.
- Your participation grade is based on your active presence in class, engagement in collaborative work, quality of peer reviews, and collegiality.



# Q&A

## Answers to common student questions

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***What is the best way to communicate with you?***

Office hours are best, as I can give you my undivided attention. Email is next best, and preferable to Canvas messages. I usually respond to emails within 24 hours during the week, and by Monday for emails received over the weekend.

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***What kinds of questions are appropriate for email?***

Questions that are not answered on the syllabus or schedule. If you really cannot find the answer to your question on the syllabus, schedule, or Canvas site, and it is a basic question about due dates / assignments / etc., use the Canvas questions blog. Private concerns should be communicated over email or in person.

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***I have to miss a class. What should I do?***

First, let me know as soon as possible, and submit a Course Absence Report through Penn in Touch. Then, make sure you plan to meet with me on your return to catch up on what you missed. You may also want to talk to a classmate for more details.

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***I did all that, but I realized that the day I have to miss involves peer review. Now what?***

If you do not let me know in advance that you will be out on a peer review day, you will not be assigned a partner, and will receive a zero for the peer review assignment. This is to ensure that all students who are present in class have sufficient time to complete their review of their peers' work, which I cannot guarantee if I don't know where students are or when they will submit their work.

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***I know a draft of the assignment is due before class on peer review days, but I just have a little bit more I want to do before I submit it, so I figured I would finish it in class...***

You're making your classmates' lives more difficult when you do this! It is unfair to ask your classmates to rearrange their own busy schedules around yours. Please ensure that your drafts are ready to be submitted before class on peer review days.

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***I haven't gotten comments or feedback on some assignments. Are you going to grade them?***

Yes, but I may get behind on grading at various points in the semester. You will get faster and more thorough feedback by coming to office hours. Remember too that many assignments are graded for completion, and I don't prioritize changing those grades in the Canvas grade book.

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# Q&A cont'd

## Answers to common student questions

***I have a test / event / commitment that conflicts with class, is it okay if I leave early / arrive late?***

Penn requires professors to reschedule exams that conflict with other classes; please ask the instructor or TA of your other class to provide an alternate time so you don't have to miss class. Beyond that, you are adults: if you feel you need to arrive late or leave early, accept that it may impact your participation grade, explain your choice to me, make sure you know what you'll be missing, and try to be as non-disruptive as possible.

***Is it cool if I answer this text really quickly?***

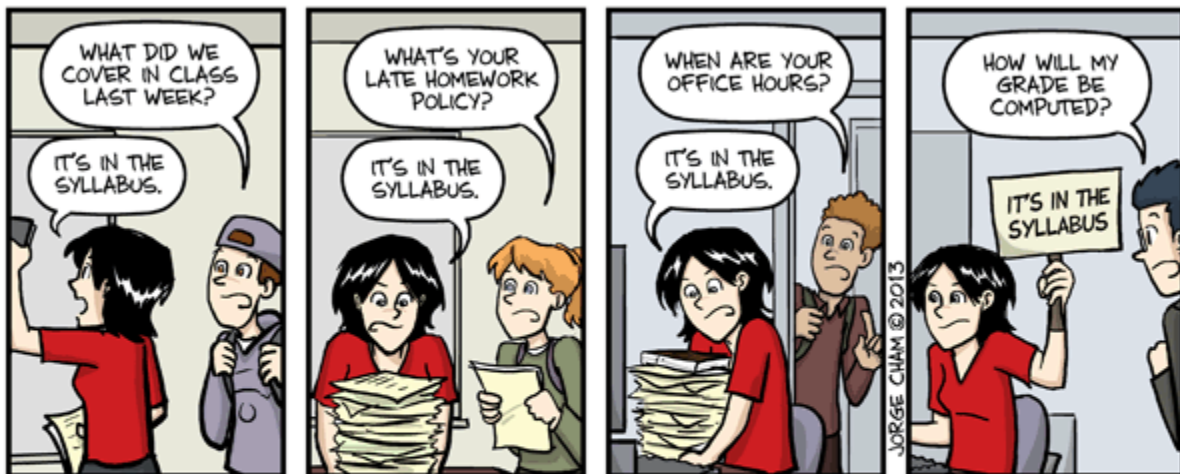
No. Do not use your phones in class. Phones should be put away in bags or pockets. The only acceptable reason for a phone to be out during class is if you're using it for classwork (and it's a good idea to clarify that with me so I don't think you're just on your phone). I am old, and phone use during class time, and especially in office hours, reads as rude and disrespectful to me.

***I'm just going to discretely respond to this message from my roommate, no one will notice...***

I guarantee you I will notice, either because you're smiling (I'm not that funny) or because you're typing when there is no reason you should be typing. I can show you how to turn off notifications to minimize distractions during our 80 minute class meetings.

***I'm feeling overwhelmed and behind. What should I do?***

Talk to me in office hours. I can help you get back on track in writing sem, can recommend additional resources available at Penn, and will do everything I can to help you succeed, but I can't help you if I don't know you're struggling.



# IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

[WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM](http://WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM)

## **Writing Support**

Students are encouraged to make generous use of the Writing Center while enrolled in their writing seminars as well as thereafter. Tutors in the Writing Center were nominated by their writing instructors for their outstanding work; the ten finalists chosen each semester from across the schools and disciplines are not only superb writers and peer reviewers, they are also well-versed in the assessment criteria of the writing seminars. In turn, they complete a semester of coursework and fieldwork devoted to writing pedagogy, co-taught by the director of the writing program and the associate director of the writing center. Students who use the Writing Center are thus assured of carefully selected, knowledgeable writing tutors.

Appointments and drop-in hours are available from Sundays through Thursdays from 10 a.m. to 10 p.m., and Fridays from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

For more information, visit [http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/writing\\_center/](http://writing.upenn.edu/critical/writing_center/)

## **Students with Disabilities**

Please let me know if you anticipate any issues that might affect your performance in the class, for example related to the format or requirements of the course; or if you need to make any special arrangements or have emergency medical information you wish to share with me.

If you require disability-related accommodations, such as a note-taker, extended time on timed writings, or captioning, please register with the Office of Disability Services (ODS). Disabilities may include learning, psychiatric, or physical disabilities. ODS can assist you with finding out if you qualify for Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) accommodations.

*Office of Disability Services*

*Stouffer Commons, Suite 300*

*3702 Spruce Street*

*Phone: (215) 573.9235*

*Email: [sds@mail@zimbra.upenn.edu](mailto:sds@mail@zimbra.upenn.edu)*

*Monday-Friday, 9:00am to 5:00pm*

For additional resources, visit [http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/cs\\_resources.php](http://www.vpul.upenn.edu/lrc/sds/cs_resources.php)

## **Plagiarism Policy**

- 1) In the Critical Writing Program, plagiarism is regarded as a university offense. Instructors are expected to report, in a timely fashion, all incidents of plagiarism to the director of the program.
- 2) Plagiarism in most instances will result in an "F" for the writing seminar, for it signals a failure to meet the basic expectations and perform the fundamental tasks of a writing seminar.
- 3) All parties to plagiarism are considered equally guilty. If a student shares coursework with another student and s/he plagiarizes it, both are considered guilty.