

UW-MADISON HISTORY

HIST200: ATHENS C. 550-450 BCE

THE MAKING OF A CITY

Instructor: Prof. Claire Taylor (claire.taylor@wisc.edu)
Office: 5122 Mosse Humanities Building
Office hours: Wednesday 11am-1pm (or by appointment)
Telephone: 608 263 2339
Seminar: Wednesday 8.50-10.45am; Memorial Library 424 (Greek & Latin Reading Room)

This course looks at the city of Athens during what is conventionally called the late Archaic and early Classical periods (c. 550-450 BCE). This period of momentous change in Athenian politics, society, economy and religion shaped the Athens of later periods and provides a great challenge (as well as being an enigma) for historians today. In this course you will be introduced to the variety of evidence that survives from this period (literary, archaeological, art-historical, epigraphic) in order to piece together what happened and why. In 550, Athens was (arguably) a backwater. In 450, it was an imperial power. What factors shaped this change?

Learning outcomes

Upon successful completion of this course, students will be able to:

- understand and use appropriately the specific terminology (names, places, concepts) of archaic and early classical Greek history
- discuss with appropriate methodological awareness conflicting views expressed in modern scholarship
- analyze problems relating to the reconstruction of historical concepts in the ancient world with reference to relevant source material
- critically read and engage with complex academic texts (both ancient sources and modern literature)
- present knowledge, ideas, and analysis orally (in classroom discussion) and in written format

Credits

The credit standard for this 3-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 135 hours of student engagement with the course's learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit or 9 hours per week), which include regularly scheduled meeting times (group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week), dedicated online time, reading, writing, field trips, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Assignments and assessment

1. Participation and discussion in class: 20%

If you need to miss class for any reason, you should email me.

2. Summaries of weekly readings: 20%

You will need to do **SIX** summaries, each of **250 words** of one of the weekly readings (not including ancient sources). Starting in week 3, you can choose which 6 you do but it is your responsibility to keep track of how many you have done. These are graded on a complete/incomplete basis. Please upload to Canvas **by 6pm on the day before the class**. The aim is to develop your skills in the comprehension of difficult texts and help you prepare for class discussion by identifying and summarizing complex arguments.

3. Source analysis paper: 20%

This is a 1-2 page paper in which you will analyze an ancient source. **Due Friday 21 October, 6pm.**

4. Final paper: 40%

This is an 8-10 page research paper where you perform your own research based on ancient sources and modern scholarship and present your work in an appropriately scholarly fashion (i.e. with references in the Chicago style and with a bibliography).

Due Friday 16 December, 6pm.

Books

(i) Herodotus, *The Histories*

Any translation will do; I recommend the Penguin Classics edition.

(ii) Each week I will give you specific direction for readings for class discussion (both ancient sources and scholarly literature). Many of these readings will be available online via the library catalog. In cases where an online text does not exist, these will be posted on Canvas.

Expect to read approx. 50-80 pages per week of core readings. Suggestions will also be given for additional readings which will be useful for written assignments.

Class schedule

	Date	Topic	Deadlines
Week 1	7 Sept	Introduction	
Week 2	14 Sept	Political culture in the mid-sixth century	
Week 3	21 Sept	The end of the tyranny	
Week 4	28 Sept	Political tension, democratic revolution	
Week 5	5 Oct	Building the Acropolis	
Week 6	12 Oct	The Athenian elite & the symposium	
Week 7	19 Oct	Individual meetings	Source analysis paper
Week 8	26 Oct	The Persians arrive	<i>If you have not done any summaries yet, you have to do one a week from now on</i>
Week 9	2 Nov	The city takes shape	
Week 10	9 Nov	Athenian society at the turn of the century	
Week 11	16 Nov	Athens after Kleisthenes	
Week 12	23 Nov	Thanksgiving	
Week 13	30 Nov	The Persian Wars	
Week 14	7 Dec	After the Persian Wars	
Week 15	14 Dec	Individual meetings	Final paper

General Bibliography

- Anderson, G. (2003). *The Athenian Experiment. Building an Imagined Political Community in Ancient Attica, 508-490 BC*. Michigan.
- Camp, J. M. (2001). *The Archaeology of Athens*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Coulson, W. D. E., Palagia, O., Shear Jr, T. L., Shapiro, A., & Frost, F. (eds) (1994). *The Archaeology of Athens and Attica under the Democracy: Proceedings of an International Conference Celebrating 2500 Years since the Birth of Democracy in Greece, held at the American School of Classical Studies at Athens, December 4-6, 1992*. Oxford: Oxbow Books.
- Dimitriadou, E. M. (2019). *Early Athens: Settlements and Cemeteries in the Submycenaean, Geometric, and Archaic Periods*. Los Angeles: Cotsen Institute of Archaeology.
- Fornara, C. W., & Samons, L. J. (1991). *Athens from Cleisthenes to Pericles*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Forsdyke, S. (2005). *Exile, Ostracism, and Democracy: The Politics of Expulsion in Ancient Greece*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Hurwit, J. (1999). *The Athenian Acropolis: History, Mythology, and Archaeology from the Neolithic Era to the Present*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Lavelle, B. M. (1993). *The Sorrow and the Pity: a Prolegomenon to a History of Athens under the Peisistratids, c. 560-510 B. C.* Stuttgart: F. Steiner.
- (2005). *Fame, Money, and Power: the rise of Peisistratos and 'democratic' tyranny at Athens.* Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Lynch, K. M. (2011). *The Symposium in Context: Pottery from a Late Archaic House near the Athenian Agora.* Princeton: American School of Classical Studies at Athens.
- Nevett, L. C. (2011). 'Towards a Female Topography of the Ancient Greek City: Case Studies from Late Archaic and Early Classical Athens (c.520–400 BCE)', *Gender & History*, 23: 576–96.
- Ober, J. (1996). 'The Athenian revolution of 508/7 BC: violence, authority and the origins of democracy'. Ober J. (ed.) *The Athenian Revolution: Essays on Ancient Greek Democracy and Political Theory*, pp. 32–52. Princeton University Press: Princeton.
- Osborne, R. (1996). *Greece in the Making, 1200-479 BC.* London: Routledge.
- (2018). *The Transformation of Athens: Painted Pottery and the Creation of Classical Greece.* Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Paga, J. (2021). *Building Democracy in Late Archaic Athens.* New York: Oxford University Press.
- Raaflaub, K. A., & van Wees, H. (2009). *Blackwell's Companion to Archaic Greece.* Chichester: Wiley-Blackwell.
- Raubitschek, A. E. (1949). *Dedications on the Athenian Acropolis.* London: Harvard University Press.
- Shapiro, H. A. (1989). *Art and Cult under the Tyrants.* Mainz.

Goals of the History Major

The goal of the history major is to offer students the knowledge and skills they need to gain a critical perspective on the past. Students will learn to define important historical questions, analyze relevant evidence with rigor and creativity, and present convincing arguments and conclusions based on original research in a manner that contributes to academic and public discussions. In History, as in other humanistic disciplines, students will practice resourceful inquiry and careful reading. They will advance their writing and public speaking skills to engage historical and contemporary issues.

To ensure that students gain exposure to some of the great diversity of topics, methodologies, and philosophical concerns that inform the study of history, the department requires a combination of courses that offers breadth, depth, and variety of exposition. Through those courses, students should develop:

1. Broad acquaintance with several geographic areas of the world and with both the pre-modern and modern eras.
2. Familiarity with the range of sources and modes through which historical information can be found and expressed. Sources may include textual, oral, physical, and visual materials. The data within them may be qualitative or quantitative, and they may be available in printed, digital, or other formats. Modes of expression may include textbooks, monographs, scholarly articles, essays, literary works, or digital presentations.
3. In-depth understanding of a topic of their choice through original or creative research.
4. The ability to identify the skills developed in the history major and to articulate the applicability of those skills to a variety of endeavors and career paths beyond the professional practice of history.