ATHENIAN DEMOCRACY

Course description
The “Historian’s Craft” courses offer an opportunity to experience the excitement and rewards of doing original historical research and conveying the results of that work to others. Through engagement with varying source materials, the courses encourage undergraduates to become historical detectives who can define important historical questions, collect and analyze evidence, present original conclusions, and contribute to ongoing discussions. These are the skills we have defined as central to the history major.

With that in mind, this course explores some key issues in the ancient practice and modern discussion of Athenian democracy. It will examine democratic values, institutions, rhetoric, and sociology in order to provide students with the basic tools to understand democracy in both its ancient and modern context. It will engage with a variety of source material (literary, archaeological, epigraphic) in order to develop multiple skills of interpretation.

Some key questions we will seek to answer here: What are the key features of Athenian democracy and how did it differ from modern democracy? Why did the Athenians think voting was undemocratic? How did they reconcile citizen egalitarianism with social inequalities? (or, why were women and slaves excluded from political power?) To what extent did the wealthy elite support democracy? Were there social tensions between the rich and the poor?

Learning outcomes
Upon successful completion of this course, students will be prepared to undertake substantial historical research and writing in a variety of courses, including the HIST 600 seminar. Specific goals for this course include learning to:
1. **Ask Questions**: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.
   - Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
   - Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
   - Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. **Find Sources**: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, and libraries, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.
   - Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
   - Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
   - Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
   - Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. **Evaluate Sources**: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.
   - Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
   - Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
   - Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
   - Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
   - Summarize an argument presented in a text.
   - Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. **Develop and Present an Argument**: use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.
   - Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
   - Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
   - Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
   - Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. **Plan Further Research**: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.
   - Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.
   - Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. **Communicate Findings Effectively**: make formal and informal, written and oral presentations tailored to specific audiences.
   - Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.
• Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material.
• Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea.

Credit hours
This 4-credit course has 4 hours of group meetings per week (each 50 minute segment of lecture and discussion counts as one hour according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and exams for this class.

Reading
You will need a copy of:


Not compulsory, but recommended:

A useful guide to writing:

Your responsibilities
Classes will include lectures, discussions, and student-led group activity. The aim of classes are for you to learn, therefore you need to be **active in your own learning**. If you do this, you will get much more out of the course.

In summary, your responsibilities are to:
• Attend all sessions (or email the professor in advance of any absence)
• Take notes in class and participate in class activities
• Prepare for class by doing the assigned readings
• Prepare the assignments to the best of your ability and submit them by the deadline

Laptops etc
Writing emails, online shopping, checking football stats: all necessary parts of the day, but not in class. Unfortunately, too many students cannot distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of laptops which leads me, regrettably, to ban them from the classroom.
Research shows that taking notes by hand is more effective for student learning. Please see me if you need accommodations. Please also silence phones in the classroom and put them away: it is a distraction for everyone when they ring, beep, buzz or light up.

Assignments

1. Source summary: 250 word summary of source
   Deadline: Friday 11 February
   Credit: 10%

2. Source analysis exercise (2 pages)
   Draft deadline: Friday 18 February
   Revised version deadline: Friday 4 March
   Credit: 20%

3. Library exercise: equivalent of 1 page
   Deadline: Friday 25 February
   Credit: 10%

4. Scholarship analysis (2 pages)
   Deadline: Friday 11 March
   Credit: 10%

5. Research paper: 8-10 page analysis
   History Lab: make an appointment in weeks 7-10 to brainstorm ideas
   Proposal: Friday 1 April
   Draft deadline: Friday 15 April
   Revised version deadline: Friday 6 May
   Credit: 35%

6. Informed and engaged participation, including two oral presentations
   Credit: 15%
Class topics
Week 1: Introduction
Wed 26 Jan: Introduction
Fri 28 Jan: Athens in the classical period

Reading

Part 1: Primary sources
Week 2: Democratic theory
Mon 31 Jan: What is democracy?
Wed 2 Feb: Democratic values and ideology
Fri 4 Feb: Reading primary sources

Reading
*Thucydides 2.34-46: Pericles’ funeral speech

Week 3: Democratic practice
Mon 7 Feb: Decision making in a direct democracy: the Assembly
Wed 9 Feb: Other democratic institutions
Fri 11 Feb: Finding sources
Assignment 1 due: Friday 11 February

Reading
*Herodotus 3.80-2; Euripides, Suppliant Women 346-57, 403-50; Aristotle, Politics 1292b21-34, 1317a40-1318a10
Rampolla ch. 2

Week 4: ‘Local’ and ‘national’ democracy
Mon 14 Feb: Demes and local democracy
Wed 16 Feb: Critics and criticism
Fri 18 Feb: Finding Ancient History sources
Assignment 2a (draft) due: Friday 18 February
Reading
*The “Old Oligarch”, Athenaios Politeia [i.e. Constitution of the Athenians]

Week 5: Laws, the law courts, and the power of persuasion
Mon 21 Feb: The Athenian legal system
Wed 23 Feb: Approaching forensic evidence
Fri 25 Feb: Making arguments from lawcourt speeches
Assignment 3 due: Friday 25 February

Reading
*[Demosthenes] 57: Against Euboulides

Part 2: Secondary literature
Week 6: Democratic beginnings
Mon 28 Feb: Solon, Cleisthenes, Ephialtes
Wed 2 Mar: The wider Greek context
Fri 4 Mar: Understanding scholarship and building an argument
Assignment 2b (revisions) due: Friday 4 March

Reading

Week 7: Leaders, demagogues, sykophants and experts
Mon 7 Mar: Leaders and demagogues
Wed 9 Mar: Leaders and demagogues
Fri 11 Mar: Understanding scholarship and building an argument
Assignment 4 due: Friday 11 March

Reading


**Week 8: No classes (spring break)**

**Part 3: Historical argumentation and writing**

**Week 9: Equality and inequality**

Mon 21 Mar: Democracy and slavery

Wed 23 Mar: Free non-citizens

Fri 25 Mar: Posing historical questions: Were women citizens?

**Assignment 5a: Make an appointment at the History Lab**

**Reading**


**Week 10: Democratic participation**

Mon 28 Mar: The demos

Wed 30 Mar: The wealthy

Fri 1 Apr: Posing historical questions: Who ran democratic Athens?

**Assignment 5a (proposal) due: Friday 1 April**

**Reading**


**Week 11: A robust democracy? A system in crisis?**

Mon 11 Apr: Arginousai, Herms
Wed 13 Apr: Socrates
Fri 15 Apr: Posing historical questions: A robust democracy? A system in crisis?

**Reading**
Xenophon, *Hellenika* 1.6.19-7.35
Plato, *Apology*
Thucydides 6.24-32

**Week 12: Change over time**
Mon 18 Apr: Fifth- and fourth-century democracy compared
Wed 20 Apr: Fifth- and fourth-century democracy compared
Fri 22 Apr: Discussion: What changes and why?
**Assignment 5b due (research paper drafts): Friday 15 April**

**Reading**

**Week 13: Evaluating ancient democracy**
Mon 25 Apr: The archaeology of democracy
Wed 27 Apr: Hellenistic democracy
Fri 29 Apr: Democracy: good or bad?

No assigned reading: choose some things from the bibliography that most interest you or is most relevant for your paper

**Week 14: No class: Individual meetings with instructors**
Work on papers

**Week 15: No class: Individual meetings with instructors**
**Assignment 5c (final research paper) due: Friday 6 May**