

CLT 3371  
RELIGIONS OF GRECO-ROMAN WORLD  
SPRING 2025

**Instructor**

Dr. Chrysostomos Kostopoulos, Classics, Center for EU Studies

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Office Hours: *Monday to Wednesday periods 2-3 or by appointment*

The best way to reach me is through email. You do not need an appointment for walk-in office hours, but without an appointment, you may have to wait your turn.

**Lectures and Classroom**

Tuesday | Period 5-6 (11:45 PM - 1:40 PM) TUR 2336

Thursday | Period 6 (12:50 PM - 1:40 PM) TUR 2333

**Course Description**

In this course we will trace the evolution of Greek and Roman religion from its earliest beginnings to the end of paganism and the emergence of Christianity. The plural “Religions” in the title of the course reflects the variety of religious systems and approaches in the ancient Greek and Roman World. In our examination, we will utilize a variety of ancient literary and artistic sources, as well as archaeological material. While our examination will be mostly chronological, individual lectures will focus on specific themes, such as religious places and centers of worship, common religion vs intellectual religion, death and the afterlife, magic and mystery cults.

**Course Objectives**

Students will explore various aspects of the Greek and Roman Religions through a variety of multi-disciplinary approaches based on the arts and humanities.

Upon successful completion of the course the students will accomplish the following objectives:

**Content Objectives:**

- Students will be able to identify and describe the main Greek and Roman deities, their cults and sanctuaries.
- Students will be able to examine the most relevant aspects of ancient polytheism as manifested in the Greek and Roman antiquity.
- Students will be able to evaluate ancient religious behaviors and beliefs within the social, cultural and political background of the Graeco-Roman world.

**Communication Objectives:**

- Students will be able to communicate their knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning about the ancient Greek and Roman polytheistic religions clearly and affectively in written and oral form through the class assignments.

**Critical Thinking Objectives:**

- Students will be able to analyze opposite points of view concerning the ancient Greek and Roman religions and interpret and evaluate relevant sources.
- Students will be able to compare critically the Greek and Roman polytheistic traditions with modern monotheistic religions.

## General Education Credit

- Humanities, International

This course accomplishes the [General Education](#) objectives of the subject area listed above. A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

### Texts

Required:

Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks (Cambridge, 1999).

ISBN-10: 0521388678

Additional readings and materials are available on the course site on canvas.

### Class Website

[TBA](#)

### Assignments and Requirements

Assignment	Assignment Description	Points
<b>Discussion Activities</b>	a. Answer the question(s) posted in the discussions. (100 points) b. Respond to one of your fellow students' original post. (50 points)	<b>150</b>
<b>Examination</b>	Two forty-five-minute Exams in lecture on <b>Tuesday, March 4</b> and <b>Tuesday April 22</b> . The exams will be based on the course material and the format will be as follows: a) 80 Multiple Choice Questions b) Five Key term short analysis	<b>500</b>
<b>Quizzes</b>	There will be regular quizzes during the semester based on course readings and class discussion and lectures. The format will be a combination of short answer, multiple-choice, and fill in the blank questions. These will not be difficult but will be intended to test whether you have done the readings and are prepared for class.	<b>150</b>
<b>Reflection Activities</b>	These activities will give you the opportunity to reflect and make connections between the concepts discussed in the class and your own personal experiences and histories, work experience, personal relations, family interactions, etc.	<b>150</b>
<b>Attendance</b>	Attendance in lecture	<b>50</b>
<b>Total Points</b>		<b>1000</b>

## Grading Scale and Assignment Summary

### Assignment Weights

Attendance: 50 points (5%)
Reflection Activities: 150 points (15%)
Discussion Activities: 150 points (15%)
Exam 1: 250 points (25%)
Exam 2: 250 points (25%)
Quizzes 150 points (15%)
Total: 1,000 points (100%)

### Grading Scale

Percent	Grade
90.0 – 100.0	A
87.0 – 89.99	A-
84.0 – 86.99	B+
81.0 – 83.99	B
78.0 – 80.99	B-
75.0 – 79.99	C+
72.0 – 74.99	C
69.0 – 71.99	C-
66.0 – 68.99	D+
63.0 – 65.99	D
60.0 – 62.99	D-
0 – 59.99	E

For information on how UF assigns grade points, visit: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/grades-grading-policies/>

A minimum grade of C is required for General Education credit. Courses intended to satisfy General Education requirements cannot be taken S-U.

### Attendance and Make-up Policies

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/UGRD/academic-regulations/attendance-policies/>

Students may only participate in classes if they are registered officially or approved to audit with evidence of having paid audit fees. The Office of the University Registrar provides official class rolls to instructors.

Students are responsible for satisfying all academic objectives as defined by the instructor. Absences count from the first-class meeting.

Acceptable reasons for absence from or failure to engage in class include illness; Title IX-related situations; serious accidents or emergencies affecting the student, their roommates, or their family; special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences); military obligation; severe weather conditions that prevent class participation; religious holidays; participation in official university activities (e.g., music performances, athletic competition, debate); and court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena).

For all planned absences, a student in a situation that allows an excused absence or make-up exam or other assignment must inform the instructor as early as possible prior to the class. For all unplanned absences because of accidents or emergency situations, students should contact their instructor as soon as conditions permit.

In all other cases, or if you are unsure, please e-mail me as soon as feasible. Absences are generally not excused for non-emergency travel and personal schedule conflicts. You are required to provide appropriate documentation for absences (except for religious holidays), missed work, or inability to fully engage in class.

Technical difficulties are not generally an excuse for missing an assessment; students should have contingency plans in case any such issues arise (see below).

### Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started/>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

### UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/>.

### University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructors in this class.

## Counseling and Wellness Center

Contact information for the Counseling and Wellness Center: <http://www.counseling.ufl.edu>, 392-1575; and the University Police Department: 392-1111 or 9-1-1 for emergencies.

## Attendance and Participation

**Class attendance is required for this course and constitutes 10% of your grade.** We will regularly circulate an attendance sheet, which you should sign. Signing in for others is considered academic dishonesty. Repeated absences may affect your performance on exams and quizzes since they will be based on the class lectures. Also missing class means possibly missing quizzes and late submission of homework assignments. Excused absences are consistent with university policies in the undergraduate catalog and require appropriate documentation: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

## Student Learning Outcomes (SLOs)

### Humanities (H)

This course is a Humanities (H) subject area course in the [UF General Education Program](#). Humanities courses provide instruction in the key themes, principles and terminology of a humanities discipline. These courses focus on the history, theory and methodologies used within that discipline, enabling students to identify and to analyze the key elements, biases and influences that shape thought. These courses emphasize clear and effective analysis and approach issues and problems from multiple perspectives.

### Humanities SLOs

- **Content:** Identify, describe, and explain the history, underlying theory and methodologies used in the course. After completing this course, students will be able to identify and describe the main Greek and Roman deities, their cults and sanctuaries, examine the most relevant aspects of ancient polytheism as manifested in the Greek and Roman antiquity, and evaluate ancient religious behaviors and beliefs within the social, cultural and political background of the Graeco-Roman world. (Assessed through discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.)
- **Critical Thinking:** Identify and analyze key elements, biases and influences that shape thought within the subject area. Approach issues and problems within the discipline from multiple perspectives. After completing this course, students will be able to analyze opposite points of view concerning the ancient Greek and Roman religions, interpret and evaluate relevant sources, and compare critically the Greek and Roman polytheistic traditions with modern monotheistic religions. (Assessed through discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.)
- **Communication:** Communicate knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning clearly and effectively. After completing this course, students will be able to communicate their knowledge, thoughts, and reasoning about the ancient Greek and Roman polytheistic religions clearly and affectively in written and oral form through the class assignments. (Assessed through reflection activities, discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.)

### International (N)

This course also meets the International (N) of the UF General Education Program. International courses promote the development of students' global and intercultural awareness. Students examine the cultural, economic, geographic, historical, political, and/or social experiences and processes that characterize the contemporary world, and thereby comprehend the trends, challenges, and opportunities that affect communities around the world. Students analyze and reflect on the ways in which cultural, economic, political,

and/or social systems and beliefs mediate their own and other people's understanding of an increasingly connected world. After completing this course, students will be able to identify different religious theories and tenets pertaining to ancient and contemporary Europe. Students will be able to analyze and reflect on the ways in which religious beliefs influenced the social, political, and cultural history of ancient and contemporary Europe. (Assessed through reflection activities, discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.)

## Weekly Schedule

### PART 1: INTRODUCTION

#### Orientation – Syllabus - Course Introduction

#### Module 1: UNDERSTANDING RELIGION.

Introduction. Brief Overview of the Greek and Roman World. General Characteristics of Greek Religion.

##### Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Introduction

#### Module 2: MYTHOLOGY, LITERATURE AND RELIGION I

Religion during the Greek Bronze Age. Panhellenic Myths. Religion in Homer and Hesiod.

##### Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 2, 11-19

#### Module 3: MYTHOLOGY, LITERATURE AND RELIGION II

Local Myths. The Origins of Sacrifice according to Walter Burkert.

##### Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 2, 25-46
- Kitts, Margo. "SACRIFICIAL VIOLENCE IN THE ILIAD." *Journal of Ritual Studies*, vol. 16, no. 1, 2002, pp. 19-39

#### Module 4: PLACES OF WORSHIP – SACRED CENTERS

Greek and Roman Centers of Worship. Sanctuaries

##### Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 2, 47-66
- C Morgan, "The Evolution of a Sacral 'Landscape': Isthmia, Perachora, and the Early Corinthian State," in *Placing the Gods: Sanctuaries and Sacred Space in Ancient Greece*, ed. S. E. Alcock and R. Osborne (Oxford 1994), pp. 105-142

#### Module 5: GODS AND FESTIVALS

Greek Religious Calendar. Panhellenic Festivals. Athenian Festivals.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 2, 25-46

Module 6: MAGICAL PRACTICES. ORACLES AND DIVINATION

Consulting the Gods. Consulting the Dead. Various Methods of Divination. Delphi and Dodona.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 3, 73-81

Review Lecture for the Upcoming Exam February 27-29

[Examination 1 March 4](#)

Module 7: MYSTERY RELIGIONS I

The Afterlife. The Eleusinian Mysteries. The Orphic Cult. The Pythagoreans.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter Five 102-107

Module 8: MYSTERY RELIGIONS II

Hellenistic Mystery Religions. Isis. The Cult of Mithras. The Apocalyptic Movement.

Readings: Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter Six, 108-125

Module 9: PHILOSOPHY AND RELIGION

Xenophanes and the Origins of Philosophical Atheism. Plato and Religion. Aristotle and the Religion of the Natural Laws. Epicurus.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 7

Module 10: REACTIONS TO GREEK RELIGIONS

The Roman Reaction to Greek Religion. Imperial Cult.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 8, 143-158

Module 11: THE ARRIVAL OF CHRISTIANITY

St. Paul in Athens. Greek Religion and Christianity.

Readings:

- Simon Price, Religions of the Ancient Greeks, Chapter 8, 158-171

Module 12: CONCLUSION (April 16)

Review Lecture for the Upcoming Exam April 18

Exam 2 April 22