WRPR 191B  
Constructions of Race and Ethnicity in the Classical World  
First-Year Writing Seminar  

Professor Marilyn Evans  
Office: 302 Woodside Cottage  
Office Hours: T Th 4:15pm-5:30pm  
Room: STO102  
email: jevans3@haverford.edu  
Spring 2019  
T Th 2:30pm-4:00pm

Course Description

In this course, we will explore the various ways in which people in the Greek and Roman world created constructs of race and ethnicity. Drawing on sources ranging from Greek and Roman historiography, to artworks, and Roman love poetry, we will examine questions such as: What criteria did people in the Classical world use to create constructions of race and ethnicity? How was self-definition developed as a contrast/comparison to an “Other”? In what ways did ancient views of race and ethnicity differ from our own? How were race and ethnicity used in political discourse to justify courses of action? While many of our surviving sources present a Greek or Roman perspective, we will draw as much as possible on the perspectives of other peoples in the Classical world as well. Through the lens of Cleopatra we will also investigate how race may, or may not play a role in the lasting legacy of historical figures from the Classical past. We will perform close readings of texts such as Caesar’s *Gallic Wars*, Demosthenes’ *Philippics*, and Plutarch’s *Parallel Lives*. Our readings of these texts will be augmented by modern scholarship on critical race theory and the Classics.

Course Goals

- To gain skills that will help you write a successful research paper and improve your written communication proficiency  
- To improve your ability to analyze primary sources (written and visual)  
- To practice analyzing scholarly texts with an eye towards identifying the main thesis, arguments, and scholarly merit as well as quality of writing  
- To build on your oral communication skills through peer tutorials, class discussion, and oral presentations

Required Texts


Evaluation

Attendance and participation: 25%
Essays: 45%
  - Essay 1 (due Friday, Feb. 15th, at 5 pm): 5%
  - Essay 2 (due Friday, Mar. 1st, at 5 pm): 5%
  - Essay 3 (first draft due Friday, Mar. 22nd, at 5 pm; final draft due Friday, Apr. 5th, at 5 pm): 15%
  - Essay 4 (first draft due Friday, Apr. 19th, at 5 pm; final draft due Friday, May 17th at NOON): 20%
Class discussion guide: 10%
Reading journal: 10%
Peer tutorials: 10%

Grade scale


Assignments and expectations

1. **Attendance** is expected at every class session. Absences are excused on the grounds of illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions. All other absences are unexcused and will negatively affect your participation grade. Assignments that are not completed due to an unexcused absence will receive a zero and cannot be made up. Each student is responsible for making sure she, he or they understands what material was covered in the event of an absence. More than three unexcused absences is grounds for a failing grade in the class.

**Participation** in every class meeting is expected of each student. This involves preparing the assigned readings and contributing to class discussion. Asking questions is encouraged! In addition, please be respectful and attentive when other students and the professor are speaking. Even if you have not prepared the assigned readings for the day, I still expect that you will participate in class. Such situations will not negatively impact your grade unless I notice them becoming routine. Make sure you bring your copy of the readings to class.

2. **Essays** There will be four essays due over the course of the semester. Each is essay is designed to help you develop your skills as a researcher and writer. The first essay will be a primary source analysis; the second will be a critical analysis of a work or works of scholarship. The last two essays will combine elements of the first two: the third will be a comparative paper and the fourth will be well-developed research paper. These last two essays will be submitted first as a draft and then as a revision. After the first draft of both research essays, we will meet in writing tutorials in groups of four students who read and comment on one another’s work.
Details for each essay assignment will be provided at least two weeks before the due date. Due dates for each assignment are listed in the weekly schedule of the syllabus.

3. **Reading journal** Once a week you will be asked to write a response to the readings on Moodle. You can choose which day to post (Tuesday or Thursday) and this can change from week to week. Your posts must be recorded by 1pm on the day that the reading is assigned in order to receive credit. Each post should be approximately 250 words.

4. **Discussion guide** In pairs, you will lead the discussion of one class meeting. Consider yourself professor for the day. You will guide the class through the assigned readings and discussion. As part of your preparation for serving as discussion guide, I recommend that you meet with me prior to the class meeting assigned to you. You will be evaluated on your preparation of stimulating discussion questions, your knowledge of the assigned readings and your ability to engage with the questions and responses of your classmates.

5. **Tutorials** For the last two essays, we will hold tutorial sessions in groups of four. Your attendance and participation in these tutorials is mandatory. You will be expected to read the essays of your assigned group as well as to offer constructive criticism on each essay. Preparation for tutorial is an important part of the course as you will learn by reading one another’s drafts as well as by listening to your fellow students comment on yours. **You must turn in your essays on time since other people are depending on you.**

**Course policies**

1. **Academic honesty** Academic honesty is expected of and required from each student. While I encourage you to meet in pairs or small groups to discuss the material, and have no problem with you discussing paper topics with one another, all work, including exams and written assignments, must be your own. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to: cheating, plagiarizing, fabricating information or citations, facilitating acts of academic dishonesty by others, having unauthorized possession of examinations, submitting work of another person or work previously used without informing the instructor, or tampering with the academic work of other students. Any willful violation of the Academic Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Council for disciplinary action. If you have any questions about what constitutes academic dishonesty for the purposes of this course, please ask. Every student is expected to uphold Haverford’s Academic Honor Code (the Honor Code can be read here: [http://honorcouncil.haverford.edu/the-code/](http://honorcouncil.haverford.edu/the-code/)).

2. **Accommodations policy** Haverford College is committed to providing equal access to students with a disability. If you have (or think you have) a learning difference or disability – including mental health, medical, or physical impairment, please contact the Office of Access and Disability Services (ADS) at [he-ads@haverford.edu](mailto:he-ads@haverford.edu). The Coordinator will confidentially discuss the process to establish reasonable accommodations.

Students who have already been approved to receive academic accommodations and want to use their accommodations in this course should share their verification letter with me and also make
arrangements to meet with me as soon as possible to discuss their specific accommodations. Please note that accommodations are not retroactive and require advance notice to implement.

It is a state law in Pennsylvania that individuals must be given advance notice if they are to be recorded. Therefore, any student who has a disability-related need to audio record this class must first be approved for this accommodation from the Coordinator of Access and Disability Services and then must speak with me. Other class members will need to be aware that this class may be recorded.

3. Academic environment Please be respectful of the academic environment. Engaging in personal conversations, using cell phones, text messaging, interneting, listening to music, reading newspapers, doing crossword puzzles, sleeping or engaging in other personal diversions during class are all disruptive. In class, put your laptops and phones away (and the latter on silent); e-readers are permitted to discuss the readings. Please be respectful of the opinions of others. If you disagree with an opinion voiced by another student, carefully word your response to reflect your disagreement with the opinion rather than as an attack on the individual.

4. Late work Essays submitted after the deadline will be deducted a full grade for each 24 hour period they are late.

Weekly Schedule

NB - this is a provisional syllabus only. The schedule and assignments may change at any time, but you will be given notice.

Part I: Ancient and Modern Theories

Week 1: Introduction and background

Jan. 22: Introduction to the class and the syllabus

Reading assignment: N/A

Jan. 24: Constructions of race and ethnicity in ancient and modern times

Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Introduction (pp. xiii-xix); Gruen, Introduction (pp. 1-5); D. McCoskey 2012, pp. 1-5 (Moodle); M. Omi and H. Winant 1994, pp. 53-76 (Moodle).

Week 2: Early theories of human difference

Jan. 29: Homer and Hesiod

Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Ch. 1 (pp. 3-13); C. Dougherty 2001, pp. 1-13 and 122-142 (Moodle).

Jan. 31: Genealogies and origins
Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Ch. 2 (pp. 15-34); Gruen, Ch. 9 (pp. 223-252).

**Week 3: Environmental theories**

Feb. 5: Environmental theories

Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Ch. 3 (pp. 35-42); D. McCoskey 2012, pp. 35-49 (Moodle); L. Walsh 2018, “What a Difference an ἤ Makes: Hippocrates, Racism, and the Translation of Greco-Roman Thought” (Moodle).

Feb. 7: Environmental determinism

Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Ch. 3 (pp. 42-51); R.F. Kennedy 2016, pp. 9-28 (Moodle); J. Purdy 2015, pp. 1-8 (Moodle).

**Week 4: Genetic and cultural theories**

Feb. 12: Genetic theories

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 4 (pp. 53-64); D.J. Galton 1998, pp. 263-267 (Moodle); J. Roy 2014, pp. 241-255 (Moodle).

Feb. 14: Custom or cultural theories

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 5 (pp. 65-80); D. McCoskey 2012, pp. 49-68 (Moodle).

**Essay 1 due Friday, Feb. 15th, at 5 pm**

**PART II: The Peoples of the Ancient World**

**Week 5: The Inhabited World**

Feb. 19: The inhabited world

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 6 (pp. 83-109), with special focus on nos. 3, 8, 11, 17; P. Janni 2014, pp. 21-42 (Moodle).

Feb. 21: Othered identities

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 6, with special focus on nos. 10, 12, 13; C.B. Patterson 2009, 153-178; P. Hunt 2017, pp. 31-40, up to “For now, let’s turn to the Roman slave supply” (the remaining pages, 40-48, are here for reference only).

**Week 6: Africa - Egypt**
Feb. 26: Egyptians in Greek historiography (Herodotus)

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 7 (pp. 111-120); Gruen, Ch. 3 (pp. 76-90).

Feb. 28: Greeks as Egyptologists

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 7, nos. 2-4 (pp. 120-127); F. Hartog 2002, pp. 211-228 (Moodle).

**Essay 2 due by Friday, Mar. 1st, at 5 pm**

Week 7: Africa – Egypt and North Africa (Libya, Carthage and Numidia)

Mar. 5: Egypt and Rome

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 7, nos. 6-8 and 10; D.E.E. Kleiner 2005, pp. 163-178 (Moodle).

Mar. 7: Carthage in Roman historiography

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 8, nos. 3, 5, 7 and 8; Gruen, Ch. 4 (pp. 115-140).

Week 8: Spring Break (no class)

Week 9: Africa – Ethiopia and beyond

Mar. 19: Greeks and Ethiopians

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 9, nos. 2, 3, 5, 7-9 and 11; Gruen, Ch. 8 (pp. 197-211).

Mar. 21: Africans in Greek and Roman art

Reading assignments: Gruen, Ch. 8 (pp. 211-220); D. McCoskey 2012, pp. 132-143 (Moodle). View the images in F. Snowden Jr. 1976, pp. 133-245 (Moodle) and choose one that piques your interest. Read what Snowden has to say about that image (if anything; you can find references to specific figures in the margins of the text) and come to class prepared to discuss your observations and reactions to that image. If particular individuals are depicted on your object, make sure to look up who they are.

**Essay 3, first draft, due by Friday, Mar. 22nd, at 5 pm**

Tutorials to discuss this draft to be held next week

Week 10: Asia - Persia, Media, Babylon and Parthia

Mar. 26: Persians in the ancient sources (Aeschylus and Herodotus)
Reading assignment: Kennedy et al., Ch. 10, nos. 1-6 (pp. 203-226); Gruen, Ch. 1 (pp. 9-39).

Mar. 28: Persians in art

Reading assignments: Gruen, Ch. 1 (pp. 40-52); M. Miller 2005, pp. 109-123 (Moodle).

**Tutorials to discuss first draft of third essay**

Week 11: Asia – Judea and the Jewish Diaspora

Apr. 2: Romans and Jews

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al. Ch. 11, no. 12 (pp. 253-256); A. Feldherr 2009 (Moodle).

Apr. 4: Rethinking Tacitus

Reading assignments: Gruen, Ch. 7 (pp. 179-196).

**Essay 3, final draft due Friday, Apr. 5th, at 5 pm**

Week 12: Europe – Gaul, Germany and Britain

Apr. 9: Gauls in Roman Historiography (Julius Caesar and Livy)

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 15, nos. 3-7 (pp. 345-62); Gruen, Ch. 5 (pp. 141-158).

Apr. 11: Germans in Roman Historiography (Tacitus)

Reading assignments: Kennedy et al., Ch. 15, nos. 15-17 (pp. 365-81); Gruen, Ch. 6 (pp. 159-178).

Week 13: Greeks and Romans

Apr. 16: Cultural Anxiety

Reading assignments: Selections from Cicero and Plutarch (on Moodle)

Apr. 18: The whole story?


**Essay 4, first draft, due Friday, Apr. 19th, at 5 pm**

Tutorials to discuss this draft will be held the following week

Week 14: Cleopatra – Greek or Egyptian?
Apr. 23: How Greek was Cleopatra?


Apr. 25: How Egyptian was Cleopatra?

Reading Assignment: Selections from Vergil and Horace (Moodle).

**Tutorials to discuss first draft of fourth essay**

Week 15: Classics and Critical Race Theory

Apr. 30: What role did skin color play in the construction of racial difference?

Reading assignment: Kennedy et al. Ch. 9, nos. 8-14 (pp. 193-201); S.P. Haley 2009, pp. 27-49 (Moodle).

May 2: TBD

Reading assignment: TBD

**Final draft of fourth essay due Friday, May 17 at NOON**