The sophomore antiquity colloquium is the first of a series of five that together constitute the core of the COL program. Our theme this semester is “knowledge and its limits.” Together, we will be reading and interpreting works of literature, history, and philosophy from 7th-century BCE Greece to 3rd-century CE Rome, as well as Jewish scripture. This period marks one of the richest phases of cultural, political, and intellectual innovation in human history. As appeals to aristocratic and religious authorities began to lose their force in this period, questions concerning what to believe, what we can know, and how we know what we know took on key significance. We will explore various approaches to these problems this semester through the study of literature, history, and philosophy. But we will also see how, in tackling such questions, these disciplines came to develop in this period into unique modes of discourse in their own right, with distinctive but compatible ways of interpreting the world around us and the human situation.

Readings

The translations overleaf are required and are available at the Wesleyan RJ Julia Bookstore on Main Street. (ISBNs for all books are provided in case you wish to purchase the entire list yourselves.) Many of these works can be bought in good second-hand condition online for an inexpensive price, but you must purchase the same translations and editions of the texts listed below so that we’re all on the same page for class discussion.
Homer, *Odyssey*, translated by Robert Fagles (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition) [9780140268867]

*Book of J*, translated by David Rosenberg (Grove Press) [9780802141910]

Thucydides, *On Justice, Power, and Human Nature: Selections from The History of the Peloponnesian War*, translated by Paul Woodruff (Hackett Publishing) [9780872201682]

Euripides, *Hippolytus*, translated by Michael Halleran (Focus Publishing) [9780802141910]

Sophocles, *The Theban Plays: Antigone, King Oidipous, and Oidipous at Colonus*, translated by Ruby Blondell (Focus Publishing) [9781585100378]

Aristophanes, *Clouds*, translated by Peter Meineck (Hackett Publishing) [9780872205161]

Plato, *Meno*, translated by G.M.A. Grube (Hackett Publishing) [9780915144242]

Livy, *The Early History of Rome*, translated by Aubrey De Selincourt (Penguin Classics) [9780140448092]

Seneca, *Phaedra*, translated by Frederick Ahl (Cornell University Press) [9780801494338]

Vergil, *The Aeneid*, translated by Sarah Ruden (Yale University Press) [9780300151411]

Epictetus, *The Handbook (The Encheiridion)*, translated by Nicholas P. White (Hackett Publishing) [9780915145690]


Plotinus, *Ennead I.6: On Beauty*, translated by Andrew Smith (Parmenides Publishing) [9781930972933]

Readings marked with “CP” on the syllabus that are not listed above will be distributed in a course packet that you should purchase separately. Note that the assigned reading for each class does not include the various introductions, notes, and glossaries that accompany each translation, but we recommend that you consult this material for a deeper understanding of the primary texts. You’ll find this material will be helpful to consider in preparing for your class presentations.

Each reading assignment must be completed before class discussion and brought to class in hard-copy form. Consider each text on its own terms, read the material critically but with an open mind, and come to class prepared to comment and raise questions of your own. Resolve to participate and do so.

**In-Class Group Activities**

On certain days, we will ask you to discuss in groups some passages that you have selected prior to coming to class. Passages should usually be more or less one paragraph long, though in some cases they might be as short as a sentence or as long as a page. You should choose a passage you think is interesting and important; it helps if the passage is also
difficult in some way, or even confusing on a first read-through. It will be a good idea for you to keep a record of these passages for all of our readings during the semester.

In-Class Presentations
Every student will deliver an in class presentation, either individually or in a group, on a topic relevant to that day's discussion. (Topics will be distributed in class ahead of time.) The goal of this exercise is to help the class better understand the author or context for the topic under discussion, but also to help you develop your skills for oral presentation.

Papers
Aside from the assigned reading, in-class presentation, and taking part in class discussion, you will be required to write three 4-5 page papers that explore in further detail an issue raised by our readings. Your discussion in each paper should be focused on specific texts and tightly argued.

We will only accept papers that are uploaded to Moodle, in the following format: “241-yourlastname-1” for the first paper, then -2 and -3 for the next two. Late papers will not be evaluated. There is no final examination for this class. Thorough written evaluations are a substitute for letter grades at the end of the semester and missing papers will be recorded in these evaluations. Your continuation in the COL major depends on your performance in these evaluations.

In order to maintain an environment conducive to study and discussion, the use of electronic communication devices (laptops, smartphones, iPads, etc.) is forbidden in class, unless granted special permission.

Disability Resources
Wesleyan is committed to ensuring that all qualified students with disabilities are afforded an equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from its programs and services. To receive accommodations, a student must have a documented disability as defined by Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the ADA Amendments Act of 2008, and provide documentation of the disability. Since accommodations may require early planning and are typically not provided retroactively, please contact Dean Patey at your earliest convenience in Disability Resources (located in North College, Room 21) or call 860-685-2332 for an appointment to discuss your needs and the process for requesting accommodations. Further information on registering with Disabilities Services can be found online at http://www.wesleyan.edu/studentaffairs/disabilities/index.html.

Schedule of Readings

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Reading 1</th>
<th>Reading 2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mon. September 4</td>
<td>Introductions; Aristotle, <em>Poetics</em> 1451a36-b11</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. September 6</td>
<td>Homer, <em>Odyssey</em>, books 1-12</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mon. September 11</td>
<td>Homer, <em>Odyssey</em>, books 13-24</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wed. September 13</td>
<td><em>Book of J</em>, chapters 1-74</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Mon. September 18:  *Book of J*, chapters 75-178  
Wed. September 20:  Sappho, selected fragments (CP)  

Wed. September 27:  *Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War*, Book III, 37-51, 81-85, Book IV, 3-48; Book V, 84-116; Book VI, 2-6, 8-26  

Mon. October 2:  Euripides, *Hippolytus*  
Wed. October 4:  Sophocles, *Oedipus at Colonus*  

Fri. October 6:  **1st PAPER DUE BEFORE 12pm (MOODLE)**  

Mon. October 9:  Aristophanes, *Clouds*  
Wed. October 11:  Plato, *Meno*  

Mon. October 16:  Plato, *Meno*, cont’d  
Wed. October 18:  Plato, *Meno*, cont’d; with chariot allegory from *Phaedrus* (CP)  

[FALL BREAK]  


[TUES. NOVEMBER 7:  **2ND PAPER DUE BEFORE 12PM (MOODLE)**]  

Wed. November 8:  Catullus, selected poems (CP)  

[THANKSGIVING BREAK]  

Mon. November 27:  Epictetus, *Enchiridion*  
Wed. November 29:  Seneca, *Phaedra*  


TBA:  **3RD PAPER DUE BEFORE 12pm (MOODLE)**