PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any school regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CODES
DR101E: level 1 on campus;
DR201E: level 2 on campus;
DR101F: level 1 distance learning;
DR201F: level 2 distance learning.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM
Dr Sam Newington
Office: KCG17, King’s College
Telephone Number: 01224 272274
Email: s.newington@abdn.ac.uk
Office hours: flexible by appointment
**Discipline Administration:**

Mrs Lisa Evans  
50-52 College Bounds  
Room CB001  
01224 273986  
divrs@abdn.ac.uk

Students are asked to make themselves familiar with the information on key institutional policies which been made available within MyAberdeen (https://abdn.blackboard.com/bbcswebdav/institution/Policies). These policies are relevant to all students and will be useful to you throughout your studies. They contain important information and address issues such as what to do if you are absent, how to raise an appeal or a complaint and how seriously the University takes your feedback.

These institutional policies should be read in conjunction with this course guide, in which School specific policies are detailed. Further information can be found on the University's Infohub webpage or by visiting the Infohub.

**TIMETABLE**

On-campus Students (DR101E and DR201E) can view their university timetable at http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php

Distance learning students (DR101F and DR201F) have classes on Thursdays at 7pm-8pm in teaching weeks 1-5 and 7-9 (University weeks 7-11 and 13-15).
COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course will explore ancient Greek attitudes towards death and dying and explore the various ways in which it meant to be dead in Ancient Greece. This course will be interdisciplinary in approach, looking at: performative texts (ancient Greek plays and epics), visual culture (monuments, sacred sites), philosophy and science (Presocratic, Plato and Epicurus).

LEARNING AIMS AND INTENDED OUTCOMES

COURSE AIMS

The course will take a firm thematic approach exploring: poetic death and the heroic, locales of the departed and cosmic death and the promise of revival.

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

A. Knowledge and Understanding

• To have a firm appreciation of the ancient Greek attitudes towards death by drawing upon a range of primary materials.

B. Discipline-specific Skills

• To be able to resource relevant topic base material and articulate a critical response.

C. Transferable Skills

• To encourage informed, independent thinking.

LECTURE/SEMINAR PROGRAMME AND READING

I. What it means to be dead: Introduction

Week 1 - The aims of this week include the following:

• Course orientation: what this course will cover in terms of chronology and discipline areas
• Subject orientation: orientation on some of the core concepts such as: death, dying, bereavement, notions of the soul, corporality, hereafter and reincarnation.
- Assessment requirements: there is scope within this course to select topic areas for each assignment.

II. What it means to be dead: Epic death

Week 2 – Homeric death: Iliad. Core areas of focus will be as follows:
- Collective dead and the hereafter
- Individual death and the hero
- Women, death and warfare

Seminar preparation: Read Homer’s Iliad (books 1, 6, 16, 22 and 24) and consider the following questions:
- What does it mean to be dead in Homer’s Iliad.
- In what ways is a heroic death viewed ‘kalos agathos’
- To what extent is the Iliad reaffirming the significance of heroic death in warfare?
- What role do women play in articulating death in the Iliad?

Week 3 - Homeric Locale: Odyssey. Core areas of focus will be as follows:
- Locale of the dead
- Metamorphosis and renewal: repeated death
- Transcending boundaries: katabasis

Seminar preparation: Read Homer’s Odyssey (books 10 and 11) and consider the following questions:
- Where does one gone at death?
- How does one get to the locale of death?
- What is the Homeric view of the underworld?
- Is there punishment in the underworld?

Week 4 - Looking at the archaeology of death. The core areas of focus will be as follows:
- Minoan burial rites and rituals
- Mycenaean burial sites
- Archaic and Classical burial monuments
- Sacrificial rituals

Seminar preparation: Select a primary source uploaded to myaberdeen and provide an analysis the following:
To what extent does this source provide insight into ancient Greek attitudes towards death, the dying and the dead?

III. **What it means to be dead: Tragic death**

**Week 5** - Sophocles’ *Antigone* and Euripides *Medea*. The core areas of focus will be as follows:
- Erotic death
- Gender and dying
- State versus individual: collective and individual death
- Generative inversions: infanticide and negation of generative necessity
- Where to go and how to get there.

Seminar preparation: Read Sophocles’ *Antigone* and Seamus Heaney’s *Burial at Thebes*, as well as Aristophanes’ *Frogs* and consider the following questions:
- To what extent does Antigone explore the cultural tensions between death/ dying?
- To what extent may Sophocles’ text compare with Homeric attitudes towards death, dying and bereavement?
- In what ways can the texts provide cultural insights into gender, citizenship and warfare?
- How to get to the underworld

**Week 6** - Cultural affirmation of life looking at the following aspects:
- Ancient Greek symposium
- Affirmation of the cultural body
- Lyric and Elegy as social charters for the living

Seminar preparation: There is no formal seminar this week, but an opportunity to prepare and resource for the forthcoming assignment.

**Week 7** - Cultural inclusion of the dead and assertion of the living. The main areas of focus will be as follows:
- Anthesteria – Festival of the death
- Death, ghosts and erotic revelry
- The hunter / hunted and the hunted/ hunter.
Seminar preparation: Read Euripides’ *Alcestis* and consider the following:

- To what extent does this text provide insights into ancient Greek attitudes towards death, dying, kinship, citizenship and bereavement.

IV. **What it means to be dead: Mysteries of death**

**Week 8 - Eleusinian Mysteries.** The main areas of focus will be as follows:

- Generative renewal
- Punishment and salvation
- Collective experience

Seminar preparation: Read the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter* and consider the following questions:

- To what extent does the *Hymn* provide insights into ancient Greek attitudes towards death and the hereafter?
- To what extent does the archaeological evidence offer insights into the Eleusinian Mysteries?

**Week 9 - Dionysiac Mystery Religion.** The main considerations will be as follows:

- To what extent do mystery religions offer an alternative view towards living and dying
- Sin, punishment and salvation
- Dying and resurrection

Seminar preparation: Read Euripides’ *Bacchae* and consider the following questions:

- What are the theological points raised by Euripides?
- To what extent does the salvation narrative compare with other religious traditions?

**Week 10 - Orphic Religion.** The core areas of focus will be as follows:

- Death and romance – erotic death
- Cosmic harmony and the universal notion of death
- Death and the hereafter – a relocated locale.

Seminar preparation: there will be no formal seminar this week, but an opportunity to prepare for the forthcoming assignment.

V. **What it means to be dead: A philosophical round up**
Week 11 - This week there will be a brief look at philosophical notions of death drawing upon Empedocles, Plato and Epicurus. The core topics for focus will be as follows:

- Notion of the psyche
- Immortality
- Universal necessity

Seminar preparation: Provide a brief overview of the core learnings of this module.

OPTIONAL READING

Epic death

Burian, P., ‘Supplication hero cult in Sophocles’ Ajax’, GRBS 13 (1972), pp.149-156
Burkert, W., Creation of the Sacred (Harvard: Harvard University Press, 1996)
Davies, M., ‘Sisyphus and the invention of religion’, BICS 36 (1989), pp.16-32
Nagy, G., ‘On the death of Sarpedon’ unpublished
Segal, C., Young, D.C. et al., The theme of mutilation of the corpse in the Iliad (Leiden: Brill, 1971)
Vermeule, E., *Aspects of death in early Greek art and poetry* (California: University of California, 1979)


### Tragic death


Davies, M., ‘Sisyphus and the invention of religion’, *BICS* 36 (1989), pp.16-32


Jacoby, F., ‘Genesia: A forgotten festival of the dead’, *CQ* (1944), pp.65-75


Morris, I., *Death ritual and social structure in classical antiquity* (Cambridge, CUP, 1996)

Seaford, R., *Reciprocity and ritual, Homer and tragedy in the developing city state* (Oxford: OUP, 1995)


### Mysteries of death


Kamblylis, A., *Die Dichterweiche und ihre Symbolik: Untersuchungen zur Hesiodos, Kallimachos, Properz und Ennius* (Heidelberg: C. Winter, 1965)


West, M.L., ‘Hesiod’s Titans’, *JHS* 105 (1985) 174-175


**Philosophical death**


Rohde, E., *Psyche: The cult of the souls and the belief in immortality among the ancient Greeks*, (Chicago: Ares Publisher, 1987)
**ASSESSMENT**

Level 1: One essay of 1500 words (50%) and one essay of 1500 words (50%)
Level 2: One essay of 2250 words (50%) and one essay of 2250 words (50%)

Essay 1: Due Week 7 - 26th October 2018 at 3pm
Essay 2: Due Week 11 – 23rd November 2018 at 3pm

**PLEASE NOTE:** In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will normally be provided within three working weeks (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to **MyAberdeen- Organisations-Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates.** The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

**SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS**

Submit a .doc or .docx and include the word count.

Submit by the due date, no hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the course coordinator through **MyAberdeen**.

In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student id number listed in the filename, i.e. 599999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.

When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 599999999 DRXXXX Essay 1.
Please note: failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.

Please note: Safeassign text matching software will be used, however the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right to also submit material to TurnitinUK when deemed necessary.

RESIT INFORMATION
One 2 hour online examination (100%)

Access to the resit which is provisional on:
- All submitted coursework having been submitted and graded at CGS E3 or higher.
- Student having a valid Class Certificate. Students with C7’s are not eligible for resits

Past exam papers can be viewed at [http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/](http://www.abdn.ac.uk/library/learning-and-teaching/for-students/exam-papers/)