

# CLASSICS 490: SENIOR SEMINAR

FALL 2011, MACALESTER COLLEGE  
PROFESSOR BETH SEVERY-HOVEN

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## COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Senior Seminar in Classics caps the experience of being a Classics major at Macalester College. Students in all three tracks (Archaeology, Civilization, and Languages) join together to explore the history of the discipline and its relationship to their own histories and future plans. Students learn about, draft and critique documents useful for their next steps, including CVs, resumes, personal statements and job application cover letters, along with discussing selected readings in a seminar setting. Seniors participate in and help provide information sessions for younger and potential majors on study away, internships and graduate school. Each student also works with an advisor from the department to develop and execute a major piece of work in their chosen field. Seminar participants share ideas, resources and support for these independent projects, and present their work at a departmental colloquium at the end of the term. Majors who have completed the Senior Seminar have thus performed substantive independent work and can articulate the place of their Classics major within their personal and professional development.

## GOALS, EXPECTATIONS AND EVALUATION

Readings, assignments and activities have been organized with the goal that students:

- develop their skills in oral communication, including participation in and leadership of group discussion, public speaking in the form of a formal presentation of their research, and interviews;
- develop their skills in written communication, including complex and formal disciplinary writing as well as personal statements and cover letters;
- become familiar with the classical tradition and how historical trends have shaped the discipline and department of Classics; and
- prepare for their next steps in and after college.

The portion of the final grade deriving from the seminar part of the course will include preparing for and participating actively in discussion as well as completing written assignments and other activities. We will use writing in part as a method to think and learn about the course

material. For example, to help you read more carefully and prepare to participate in class discussion, ten informal response papers are required over the course of the semester (5 for common readings, 5 for presentations by other students). These 1-2 page musings on the day's reading – potentially including a summary, comments, critique, concerns, comparison to other readings, answers to the discussion questions or proposals for new questions – must be submitted *before* discussion for credit. Other writing assignments will grow from professional development, including exploratory writing and working drafts of a resume, job application cover letter, and similar materials. **No late work will be accepted** -- so turn in written assignments even when you are unable to attend class.

The remainder of your final grade will arise from work on your independent project. For example, you will each have the opportunity to present to the seminar what you are working on for your capstone. Most will assign reading for the rest of the class and lead a discussion on your observations and ideas within your selected topic – please provide the materials you would like students to read to me at least four days before your presentation. Others may present drafts of translations or other written work in progress. The capstone will be graded both as a formal presentation at the Colloquium and as a final written final paper.

Seminar Preparation and Participation: 25%  
Assignments and Activities: 10%  
Work-in-Progress Capstone Presentation: 10%  
Colloquium Presentation: 20%  
Capstone Paper: 35%

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Associate Dean of Students, Lisa Landreman, at 696-6220 to make an appointment. Additional information regarding the accommodations process for students with disabilities can be found at: [www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices](http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices). It is important to meet early in the semester to ensure your accommodations are approved to ensure you begin the semester successfully.

#### READINGS AND TEXTBOOKS

No books are required for this course; readings for seminars are provided via the course Moodle site. We will make extended use of the following books, however, and you may wish to invest in a complete copy:

- Sharon Waxman, *Loot: The Battle over the Stolen Treasures of the Ancient World* (Times Books, 2008)
- Margaret Malamud, *Ancient Rome and Modern America* (Wiley-Blackwell, 2009)
- Darrel Anthony Luzzo and Lisa Ellen Severy, *Making Career Decisions that Count. A Practical Guide*, 3rd edition (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009)