

☞ NEW COURSE ☞ ☞ NEW COURSE ☞ ☞ NEW COURSE ☞

**CLA 331-001**  
***GENDER and SEXUALITY***  
***in GREECE and ROME***

**FALL 2005**

**TR 9:30-10:45AM FB B8**

**Prof. J. FRANCIS (jafran1@uky.edu)**

**COUNTS TOWARD USP AND COLLEGE HUMANITIES  
REQUIREMENTS**

This course examines how gender, sexuality, and the social institutions and patterns connected with these operated in ancient Greece and Rome. With regard to gender and sexuality, the ancient world differs dramatically in its definitions, attitudes, and outlooks from our own, yet at the same time it is also the forerunner and a "distant mirror" to our own culture and time. In this world we can both discern the roots of many of our own beliefs, values, and habits of thought, and at the same time witness some of our most of our most treasured ideas and assumptions being contradicted. Essential to the course is the concept of the social construction of gender and sexuality, i.e., that far from being set in biological concrete, different societies have understood, organized, deployed, and exploited gender and sexuality in radically different ways. Hence one important theme throughout the course will be examining the differences and relative merits of "essentialist" (i.e., aspects of sexuality are physiological or psychological constants) vs. "constructionist" views on such topics as sexual orientation, both in terms of historical study and their ramifications for present-day understandings. In this way, classical antiquity can serve as a basis for both understanding and critiquing our own society, and it is a fundamental aim of this course to engage as much as possible the student's own thought, criticism, judgment, and experience in actively constructing knowledge from the ancient sources and scholarly interpretive frameworks.

*Course requirements include midterm, final, and a research paper.  
There is an attendance policy.*