

Classics 487: Advanced Reading in Greek  
Women and Greek Poetry  
Spring 2010, Macalester College

Beth Severy-Hoven

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Office hours: Tuesdays 2-3, Fridays 10-11, and by appointment

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Course materials available on Moodle: <http://moodle.macalester.edu>

### Course Description

This term we will be exploring major Greek poetic texts about and by women. We'll begin by reading all of the *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*, which charts the cult of the goddesses at Eleusis and reflects aspects of women's experiences in archaic Greece. Corby Kelly and Nanette Goldman will visit to help us read sections of Athenian tragedy featuring prominent female characters. And we'll round out the semester by reading selected fragments by Sappho herself. The goals of the course are 1) to improve your confidence and skill in reading a variety of Greek poetic texts and 2) to consider in some depth the relationship of women to the surviving archaic and classical Greek poetic corpus.

### Expectations and Evaluation

Class Preparation and Participation:	25%
Midterm Exam:	20%
Presentation:	25%
Final Exam:	30%

Class will meet once a week, on Wednesdays from 3:30-5pm. Students are expected to be well prepared to translate assigned lines quickly, with questions about any problem areas at the ready. We want to be able to read 100-150 lines each week and have time to discuss secondary readings assigned for class.

The midterm and final exams will focus on materials read for the first half and second half of the course respectively, as well as sight reading. The final is scheduled for Thursday, May 6, from 4:00-6:00pm.

Presentations will be given close to the end of the semester. Each student will select a fragment, poem, scene, monologue, choral ode, or the like which we have not read together for class. You will present a polished translation of the piece as well as a scholarly analysis. The analysis need

not be your own – you may present the work of another or a set of other scholars. More information on the presentation and exams will be provided as they draw closer.

Finally, an optional sight reading session will be available on Mondays from 3:30 to 4:15pm in Old Main 003. We will begin by reading scenes of female characters in the Homeric epics and move on into whatever interests participating students. These sessions are entirely optional – how many you attend or how well you do at them will have no bearing on your grade. However, regular sight reading will greatly improve your skills in Greek.

Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. Contact the Associate Dean of Students, Lisa Landreman, at 696-6220 or llandrem@macalester.edu to make an appointment. It is important to meet early in the semester to ensure your accommodations are approved and you begin the semester successfully.

### Textbooks

These books have been ordered and are available in the Lampert Building on Snelling Avenue. Please notify the store and myself if you have difficulty obtaining any of these items:

*The Homeric Hymn to Demeter.* Julia Haig Gaisser. Bryn Mawr Commentaries/Hackett, 1980.

*The Homeric Hymn to Demeter. Translation, Commentary and Interpretive Essays.* Helene P. Foley, editor. Princeton University Press, 1994.

We will be reading the complete monograph, *Sappho's Immortal Daughters*, by Margaret Williamson (Harvard, 1995), of which you may wish to purchase a copy. Let me know if you would like the textbook center to order copies.

Additional readings will be provided through photocopies, electronically or at the reserve desk in the library. Please bring a copy of the assigned readings to class every day.

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Tentative Schedule  
(See Moodle site for full and updated information.)

Week 1, Jan. 27: Welcome and Introduction

Week 2, Feb. 3: *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

Week 3, Feb. 10: *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

Week 4, Feb. 17: *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

Week 5, Feb 24: *Homeric Hymn to Demeter*

Week 6, March 3: Sappho

**Midterm Exam**

Week 7, March 10: Sappho

Week 8, March 17: Spring Break

Week 9, March 24: Corby Kelly teaching *Antigone*

Week 10, March 31: Corby Kelly teaching *Antigone*

Week 11, April 7: Sappho and Catullus

Week 12, April 14: Nanette Goldman teaching selected tragedy

Week 13, April 21: Nanette Goldman teaching selected tragedy

Week 14: April 28: Students working on presentations

Week 15: **Student Presentations**, day and time to be determined

**Final Exam:** Thursday, May 6, from 4:00-6:00pm