ARCADIA CENTER FOR HELLENIC, MEDITERRANEAN, AND BALKAN STUDIES

GREA GRCU 111, 211, 311[1]:
The Greek Key: Experiencing Athens as a Cultural Landscape

Credits: 2
Prerequisites: None

Course Description: The Greek Key Seminar is the 2-credit culture learning component of the larger and mandatory Language in a Cultural Landscape. This course includes community-based learning, volunteering or directed field study, and the completion of a Greek Key Project.

Rationale and Impact of Course: Greater Athens, home to nearly half of Greece's 11 million inhabitants, is a sprawling metropolis that encompasses areas as diverse as the wooded and elegant northern suburbs, the busy industrial port of Piraeus and a historic downtown which retains the imprint of the original 2,500 year old center of ancient Athens. Athens has many faces, each one reflecting some of the many historical, social and human impulses that have shaped the modern city. Through seminar discussions, guided explorations of the city, observation, reflection and other activities, the Greek Key Seminar will provide an introduction to the life of Athens. Some of the things we will examine include: How can begin to understand an environment that may be very different from those we are used to? How can we become aware of stereotypes or prejudices we may hold and how can we live in this new cultural context without applying those stereotypes and prejudices? Are there any changes or new interests that we may want to bring back with us on our return to the United States?

Learning Outcomes: Participation in the Greek Key Seminar will

- give the learner the theoretical and practical tools with which to examine another culture objectively.
- strengthen the learner's ability to observe different environments and people while interacting with them in sensitively and culturally appropriate ways.
- help the learner develop the ability to recognize assumptions and, when necessary, put them aside in order to learn about, as well as learn from, different aspects of Greek culture.
- help the learner learn to analyze his/her observations and interactions with others.
- help the learner develop the capacity to reflect on her/his observations, interactions and experiences here in the Greek community and anywhere else s/he may live.
- help the learner acquire intercultural communication skills that will allow her/him to understand other cultures, including Greek, and respect the differences those cultures have from her/his own.
- help the learner develop the ability to connect classroom learning with experiences outside the classroom.

Primary Texts:
Although some anthropological texts, short stories and irregular news items will be offered as suggested readings, there are no mandatory texts for this seminar. Depending on the nature of an individual Greek Key Project, a student may need to consult traditional library resources.

Course Requirements:

[1] Learners will be assigned a GK Seminar course number based on the course number of their modern Greek language class. Although the actual content of the GK Seminar is the same for all students, intermediate or advanced Greek language learners will be challenged to identify a Greek Key Project that will require and, thereby, enhance language learning.

- Each learner will be asked to complete a Greek Key Portfolio composed in part of weekly responses to challenges posed by the facilitator (25%). See more on the GK Portfolio below.
- Each learner must complete an individual Greek Key Project which will form part of the final exhibition of GK Projects at the end of the semester (50%). See more on the GK Project below.
- Participation in both classroom meetings and structured walks in Athens is mandatory (25%). Please see the Course Outline portion of this syllabus for information on these weekly meetings.

The Greek Key Portfolio:
As partners in The Greek Key: Language in a Cultural Landscape, learners will be challenged to engage in a variety of activities and explorations, and then reflect on these activities and explorations. The Greek Key Portfolio will be the place where learners record the experiences as well as consider their impact in a variety of ways. The Portfolio will be comprised of descriptive and narrative entries; it may also include drawings, photographs, poetry, maps, objects, etc.

The Portfolio is the place where a learner may discover, create and formulate ideas. Writing in the Portfolio helps the learner generate knowledge as well as communicate it, so rewriting of Portfolio entries is permitted and even encouraged. Each learner will *receive* near immediate feedback to all Portfolio entries. Learners can then *rethink* ideas or generate new ones and present a *revised* entry that demonstrates the achievement of performance-based assessment criteria.

The Greek Key Project:
Participants in The Greek Key Seminar will engage in a personal Greek Key Project as part of the credited academic work required during a semester in Athens. The GK Project will involve the learner independently and systematically in Greek culture and, as such, will give her/him the opportunity to meet the goals of the Greek Key. Through this involvement, the learner will interact with a large circle of acquaintances, improve her/his use of Greek outside the classroom and broaden her/his understanding of Greek culture**.**

Select Bibliography
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