Description of the course

The course proposes an analysis of Seneca's prose works with a particular emphasis on the relation between writing and philosophical thought. The first section of the term will be devoted to study of tenets of the Stoic school with a specific focus on the more eclectic approach of Roman Stoicism. In the second part Seneca's philosophical production will be extensively analyzed. Each work will be read in English in its entirety, yet the students will be responsible for the knowledge of extensive Latin excerpts. Fundamental questions such as chronology, main targeted themes and stylistic features will be regularly addressed. Each month an entire section will be devoted to the discussion of a major scholarly contribution previously assigned. The midterm and final exams will consist of both translations into English of passages read in class, and of a short essay on a major Senecan theme. The term paper will be designed as a commentary of a portion of a short dialogue. Each student will be responsible for a certain number of paragraphs. With the entirety of the papers revised and assembled, a commentary of a whole given short dialogue will be produced to be eventually published on-line.

Lecture 1
The tenets of Stoicism - logic

Lecture 2
The tenets of Stoicism - physics

Lecture 3
The tenets of Stoicism - ethics

Lecture 4
Roman Stoicism

Lecture 5

Lecture 6
*De providentia*

Lecture 7
*De constantia*

Lecture 8
*De ira, De clementia*
Lecture 9
Discussion of

Lecture 10
*De vita beata, De Otio*

Lecture 11
*De brevitate vitae*

Lecture 12
*Consolatio ad Marciam, Consolatio ad Helviam matrem*

Lecture 13
*Consolatio ad Polybiunm*

Lecture 14
**MIDTERM EXAM**

Lecture 15
Discussion of

Lecture 16
*De beneficiis I*

Lecture 17
*De beneficiis II*

Lecture 18
*Naturales Quaestiones I*

Lecture 19
*Naturales Quaestiones II*

Lecture 20
*Naturales Quaestiones III*

Lecture 21
Discussion of

Lecture 22
*Epistulae Morales I*

Lecture 23
*Epistulae Morales II*

Lecture 24
Discussion of

Lecture 25
*Epistulae Morales III*

Lecture 26
*Epistulae Morales IV - TERM PAPER*
Required texts


Course requirements

Attendance:
regular participation and prompt attendance are required. If a student misses more than two classes without an excuse or is consistently unprepared for class, his/her grade will be significantly affected.

Written work:
A term paper (no credit will be given for work handed in late without reasonable cause). There will be one mid-terms and one final exam.

Grades Final grades will be weighted as follows:

- Attendance and participation 10%
- Midterm 30%
- Term paper 30%
- Final exam 30%

Exam dates (subject to revision only by the instructor)

- Mid-term 1: Lecture 14
- Term paper: Lecture 26
- Final exam: TBD

N.B. This course will not meet during reading week.