

Greetings, everyone, from Silver Spring, Maryland, where it continues to snow, and snow, and snow!

I'm writing to update you on the wonderful roundtable we had at the SCS in San Francisco and to let you know about the next steps in planning the leadership in the ancient world *Sunoikisis* course. I'm composing this letter in Google Docs, so hopefully you will feel free to chime in at any relevant point using the **Comments** feature at the top right.

Roundtable Summary

The roundtable pretty much followed the schedule of the pre-circulated program. Thanks to all who participated and provided feedback online. There were a ton of great ideas and just as much enthusiasm for the project. The following colleagues were in attendance:

Joel Christensen (University of Texas-San Antonio), moderator
Norman Sandridge (Howard University, Center for Hellenic Studies), moderator
Jim Capree (Hobart and William Smith Colleges)
Monessa Cummins (Grinnell College)
David DeVore (Ball State University)
John Esposito (UNC-Chapel Hill)
Sarah Ferrario (Catholic University)
Heather Gruber (Concordia College)
Ulrike Krotscheck (Evergreen State University)
Benjamin McCloskey (Kansas State University)
Mallory Monaco (Tulane University)
Kenny Morrell (Rhodes College, Center for Hellenic Studies)
Caroline Stark (Howard University)

Here were some of the general takeaways that I got from the discussion. Please feel free to share others.

1. Overall, there was a sense that ancient leadership studies is something that would be welcome on many campuses, perhaps in conjunction with business management, political science, or military studies.
2. This course is probably best thought of as a series of case studies of different problems of ancient leadership, rather than an attempt to do justice to a specific set of leaders. Obviously we will have to supply sufficient context to study any given leader, but only so much as is necessary to elucidate the problem(s) in question.

3. The problems we tackle in the course should be varied and wide-ranging, including (but not limited to) how we know things about ancient leaders, the leader's private life vs. public life, different styles of leadership in different historical/cultural contexts, gender and leadership, leadership and oratory/impression management, the emotional/psychological life of the ancient leader, ancient-modern parallels, leadership and religion, non-political leadership, wielding authority without bullying, and sources of a leader's legitimacy.
4. We brainstormed assignments including reflective journals, profiles on community leaders, roleplaying/reenacting ancient debates, critiquing modern leaders using ancient terminology and concepts, group discussion prompts.
5. There was general agreement that we wanted to challenge students "background convictions" of what they think leadership is. We want them instead to develop new perspectives and identify what they don't know about leadership going into the course. We want to emphasize close readings of the source material and stress that we are not providing students models of leaders to imitate. We want to guard especially against leaving the impression that because ancient leaders were mostly male, then modern leaders should be male (or exhibit male behavior).

A number of possible texts and source material was suggested. And there was a sense that we could develop a vocabulary for students to master as part of the outcomes for the course (maybe 100 terms???). Here is a list of the proposed content. Please feel free to add suggestions.

Xenophon's *Cyropaedia* 1.6, Cyrus' dialogue with his father, Cambyses, on proper leadership.

Odysseus and Achilles in Homer

Plato's *Hippias Minor*

Plutarch's *Life of Antony*

The Iconography of Leadership: Ara Pacis, Trajan's Column, coins of Augustus

Thucydides' Melian Dialogue, Mytilenean Debate

Iliad One

Thucydides, Book Four

Xenophon's *Agesilaus*

Plutarch's *Alcibiades*

Homer's *Odyssey* 9-12

Sophocles' *Oedipus Tyrannus*

Euripides' *Iphigeneia at Aulis*

Aeschylus' *Oresteia*

Ambrose

Athenaeus

Plato's *Apology* (the "leadership" of Socrates)

Pliny's *Letters*

Cato *De Agricultura*

Xenophon's *Oeconomicus*

Livy, Books 1 and 21

Suetonius

We could also consider, for Roman works, Sallust (either the Jugurthine War or Conspiracy of Catiline), Tacitus' *Agricola*, or Ammianus Marcellinus;

Also, would we want to have a common bibliography for modern sources/theories? One of the issues I am working on is what modern books and/or articles to include. Norman has an excellent bibliography via his syllabus, but would we all have in common a set of articles on leadership in addition to the ancient sources?

Next Steps

I. developing the course material

Thanks to the brilliant and timely help of John Esposito, we are reviewing an online platform that will allow anyone to suggest content and assignments for the course (say, in one week or ten-hour chunks) and then tag this suggestion with reasons why this content would be important to the study of ancient leadership. So, for example, if someone proposed *Iliad* One, he/she could tag it with things like "king vs. warrior conflict," or "implements of leadership/scepter" or "leadership and honor" or "leadership and public vs. private life." We could then compile a long list of the various tags, note where some tags are similar, and begin comparing the suggestions to each other. As soon as we have a platform ready, we will share an example of how this might go and invite everyone to post their suggestions online.

II. organization

Once we have suggestions for content, I believe it will be fairly clear, collectively, what we expect the goals of the course to be. It will then be necessary to decide on the order in which we want to present the content (chronologically? geographically? thematically?). Probably the best mechanism for doing this will be a Google hangout (or multiple hangouts) for anyone who would like to participate in this process.

Unless anyone has objections, I would like to propose that we set a **deadline for developing the syllabus by May 31, 2016** (a Tuesday). That way anyone who is teaching the course may spend the summer reviewing the materials and thinking about how they would like to handle the class

sessions in their home institutions. We can also use this time to decide who will lead the weekly synchronous sessions and how they will go.

The *Sunoikisis* syllabus for courses in translation typically has around 12 weeks of common material, allowing for flexibility of schedules and for instructors to introduce the course to their students as they see fit.

III. interinstitutional collaboration

A cornerstone of the *Sunoikisis* experience is the opportunity for students and faculty to come together once a week in a synchronous online session via Google hangouts. In addition to this collaborative platform we will be exploring a number of others. For example, I have been playing around with a Leadership Survey on SurveyGizmo (please feel free to [give it a try!](#)). We might include such surveys on a weekly basis, to assess student assumptions about ancient leadership or their interest in the subject. For example, one goal of the course might be to encourage students to think more about their own leadership qualities. Surveys might be a way of measuring whether we're doing this. Additionally, we are exploring platforms that would allow students to annotate the passages they are reading and share their insights with each other. If you have any ideas for questions you would like to tackle, even at the level of crowd-sourced research, please let us know.

IV. UT-SA Workshop on whether studying the ancient world actually trains you to be a leader.

This March 4-5 Joel will be hosting a workshop at UT-San Antonio on the relationship between the study of the ancient world and leadership training. A number of you have already expressed an interest in attending, and Joel or I would be happy to follow up with anyone else who would like to join us. There will likely be additional time to discuss the ancient leadership syllabus.

Please stay tuned and thank you all again for your enthusiasm for this project! Feel free to reach out to Joel or myself with any questions or ideas you have. We're happy to loop anyone into this conversation that you suggest :-).

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February 2, 2016

Greetings all,

I'm appending here with her permission some comments I received gratefully from Megan Drinkwater, both about possible content for the course and the question of how to achieve the right balance of Greek and Roman material:

“[T]he proposed content is *very* Greek-heavy. In some ways this is to be expected, I suppose, but there may be some missed opportunities.

“Just to toss in some completely un-researched and therefore possibly terrible ideas on the Roman side:

“there may be a fair amount in the letters of Cicero and/or Seneca we could consider, whether theoretical or commentary on actual leaders.

“Cornelius Nepos (especially if we wanted to get away from Eurocentric content with Hannibal) might be good.

“Ditto for Sallust on the *Bellum Jugurthinum*; an added bonus here would be representations of class in the leadership structure vis-a-vis Marius.

“Caesar may have a lot to say, whether directly or obliquely, on military leadership.

“The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity gives some insight into early Christian leadership (and women's roles therein).

“A lot of the choosing will come down to the themes the group ends up wanting to focus on. I will also add that I love the idea of the iconography of leadership, but that there must be some good Greek examples, too.

“This all leads me to another question: on the first time through, would you want to focus on either Greece *or* Rome? I'm teaching gender for the second time this semester and find myself once again in the position where I am doing justice to neither Greece nor Rome by what I feel is an "obligation" to do both.”

