

AAP 377 – Athens and the Classical Greek World

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General Information

This is a new module in which elements of a traditional lecture-based delivery and essay-based assessment are combined with various kinds of IBL tasks. Two sessions are devoted entirely to IBL exercises with smaller IBL tasks also taking place throughout the module. AAP 377 provides a good example for staff who wish to introduce substantial but relatively discrete elements of IBL teaching and learning within a module.

IBL sessions

- In Week 4, students are asked to work with material previously covered concerning Athenian ‘radical’ democracy in two parts: a group task constructing a modern democracy on the Athenian model, and a discussion based on core readings. In the first part of the session students are divided into small groups (3-4 people) and presented with a scenario that asks them to restructure the University into a democracy, using Classical Athens as a model. The groups are provided with basic information about how the University is currently structured and given some key questions to ask (i.e. who are your citizens?) but otherwise left to work on the problem as a group. The groups then feedback to each other, and explain the merits and difficulties of their respective models. The second part of the session expands the group discussion into a consideration of inclusion, exclusion and participation in democracy (ancient and modern). In future, this aspect of the session will be supported up by a WebCT discussion board that encourages students to engage with the issues presented in the core readings before attending the session. This session addresses two key CILASS objectives:
 - *Collaborative enquiry* which fosters a broad range of intellectual and transferable skills such as cooperation, verbal and critical skills.
 - *Information literacy* which is stressed in the second part of this exercise insofar as students must evaluate and compare information, deploying skills such as source criticism, an awareness of rhetorical devices in academic writing and so on.
- In Week 10, the students will be asked to work in small groups (2-3 people) and, using the CILASS laptops, research a topic relating to the afterlife of Classical Athens in the early modern and modern periods. Each group will be given a directed question to research and a list of specific resource types they must consider (newspaper articles, book reviews, web sites). They then develop an annotated resource list for the topic and prepare and present short presentations of their findings, building upon the presentation skills they develop in the midterm assessment.
 - This exercise further develops student’s collaborative and presentational skills, as well as requiring students to carry out a *fully independent inquiry*.
 - *Information literacy* is again developed as students must decide which on-line resources they consider credible enough to use.

Small IBL tasks

- In the remaining sessions, which are primarily lecture-based, students are asked to engage in a series of small (i.e. 15 minute) individual and group tasks. These tasks are primarily designed to encourage source criticism and stimulate debate and discussion around the topics presented in the lectures. *They are problem-based, collaborative and encourage consideration of relatively open-ended questions which, to some extent, mirror ‘real-life’ research problems.* They include:
 - Small group discussions of textual sources. Different accounts of the same event or monument are distributed to groups; each group reads and discusses one source. As a class, they then discuss the similarities and differences between them and explore possible reasons for variation.
 - Comparison of archaeological evidence and ancient sources. Small groups discuss the information to be gleaned from an archaeological plan and an ancient description of a monument; as a class, they discuss the ways in which this information can be woven together to create a reconstruction of the monument.
 - Discussion of a larger thematic issue, based on individual and small group consideration of small quotes taken from core readings. Individuals consider their own quotes, then pair up with someone with a complementary quote, then feed back to a larger group. Main themes, ideas and questions are then discussed as a class.