

OLYMPIC QUEST – JANUARY 2022

Examining the Ancient and Modern Olympiads of Greece & Italy

INSTRUCTORS

Aaron Banks – abanks@gac.edu & Bonnie Reimann – breimann@gac.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Olympism is a philosophy of life that promotes balance amongst the mind, body, and spirit by blending sport with culture and education. Olympism seeks to create a way of life based upon the joy of effort, the educational value of good example, social responsibility, and respect for universal fundamental ethical principles. To that end, Olympic Quest considers how sport, leisure, and the Olympic Games (both ancient and modern) may inform the participant of societal and cultural themes and differences. Through daily fieldwork, excursions, interaction with guest speakers and guides, reflective journaling practices, course readings, participation in popular sports and leisure activities, and instructor and student-led presentations, participants will have the unique opportunity to examine the intersection of sport and leisure within European society.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

Olympic Quest seeks to immerse students in experiences that promote the philosophy of *Olympism* by blending sport with culture and education. To successfully meet the student learning outcome, this course will address the following objectives:

1. Students will engage with local cultural centers, visit local sites and participate in cultural and sport activities in order to better understand past Olympics and their host countries.
2. Students will compare and contrast past Olympics with current Olympics by researching, preparing, and presenting information on a topic related to the past Olympics held within the countries that we visit.
3. Students will consider their personal response to their cultural investigations by keeping a journal, reflecting daily on these three, **and other** course specific questions:
 - a. What did I experience today that seemed different from my own culture and lifestyle? How so?
 - b. What were my reactions regarding today's experience/s and why do I think I feel this way?
 - c. How does today's experience provide me with ways to understand the country or culture and its participation in leisure, sport, and/or the Olympic Games.
4. Students will read one book from the list provided (related to the Olympics or the countries/cultures we will visit) and participate in a 'book talk' with their peers during the time abroad, sharing their insights from the text.
5. Students will engage in on-site discussions several times a week, sharing information from their journals and debriefing their intercultural experiences.
6. Students will summarize their experience through a photo journal, preparing three photos from each country we visit and explaining in writing how the photos reflect what they learned.
7. Students will develop their digital skills by serving as the Social Media Guru for at least one day of the trip, providing an online summary of the day's learning experiences via a group blog of Facebook site.

A TYPICAL DAY...

- Sample daily schedule in a metropolitan setting might look something like this:
 - 6:30-7:30 a.m. – Continental breakfast at hotel
 - 7:30-7:45 a.m. – Board motor coach and leave hotel for site visit
 - 8:00-11:45 a.m. – Visit and explore cultural site or sporting venue, led by hired guide.
 - 11:45-1:00 p.m. – Lunch on location
 - 1:00-4:45 p.m. – City orientation (walking) led by guide. Introduction to famous landmarks and sites of interest we may wish to explore on our own when free time is given.
 - 4:45-5:00 p.m. – Return to hotel via motor coach
 - 5:00-6:30 p.m. – Free time to rest, read, journal, reflect, prepare for class, or explore area around hotel.
 - 6:30-7:30 p.m. – Supper at hotel or local restaurant
 - 7:30-9:00 p.m. – Class at hotel
 - 9:00-12:00 a.m. - Free time to be used as desired

DAILY ITINERARY – (current Dates are January 3 – 26, 2022)

*The proposed schedule is tentative and likely to change depending on various factors.

Day 1: Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Date: Monday, January 3

Location: Flight from MSP for Athens, Greece

Day 2-3: Athens, Greece

Activities: Welcome to Athens; commonly considered the “cradle of civilization”! Upon arrival, enjoy a panoramic city tour and visit to the Acropolis and its’ new museum. Familiarize yourself with Athenian history and culture by exploring multiple museums (Athens Trilogy of Culture), begin to understand the Olympic movement by visiting Panhellenic sports stadia (Panathenaic and Olympic), and enjoy free time to explore the city.

Day 4: Delphi, Greece

Activities: The ancient Greeks considered Delphi to be the center of the world and the Greek Oracle resided on these grounds. Many influential and political decisions were taken after consultation with the Oracle in the classical world. Today you will enjoy a guided walking tour through the sanctuary and museum of this famous archaeological site. You will also be explore the ancient track of one of the four Panhellenic Games sites.

Day 5-6: Olympia, Greece

Activities: Visit the Corinthian Canal before a stop at the Mycenae archaeological museum According to legend, Mycenae was the royal seat of the ill-fated House of Atreus. Explore the remains of the glorious city, including the Lion’s Gate, the Palace, and the tomb of Agamemnon. Upon arrival to Olympia, walk the sacred grounds and museum of the site of the ancient Olympic Games. Free time to explore the city.

Day 7-8: Epidaurus, Greece

Activities: Visit the Castle of Palamidi and stroll the ancient seaside town of Nafplio before journeying onward to Epidaurus. Epidaurus is the mythological birthplace of Asclepius, the Greek god of healing. Tour the Sanctuary of Asclepius and the ancient theatre of Epidaurus. Enjoy free time to explore the city.

Day 9: Athens, Greece

Activities: Enjoy a full free day in Athens!

Day 10-12: Venice, Italy

Activities: Experience the breathtaking city daringly built on the water. Enjoy both water and walking guided tours, Gondola rides, the Grand Canal, the ornate Basilica di San Marco, a mask making workshop, and other cultural events unique to this city.

Day 13-14: Cortina d'Ampezzo, Italy

Activities: Site of the 1956 and upcoming 2026 Winter Olympic Games, enjoy a two-night retreat in the southern Alps (Dolomite mountain range). Visit past and future Olympic sites, ski the paths of champions (alpine or Nordic), or simply stroll the village streets and shops!

Day 15-17: Florence, Italy

Activities: Florence is a city renowned for art and fashion; while it educates the mind, it stirs the soul! Orient yourself with a guided walking tour of the city, explore its famous squares (Santa Croce), bridges (Ponte Vecchio), cathedrals (Piazza del Duomo), and art museums (Uffizi Gallery and Galleria del Accademia). Enjoy a full free day in Florence!

Day 18-19: Rome, Italy

Activities: As we journey through the Tuscan landscape to Rome, enjoy a reprieve at the Tenuta Torciano Vineyard for a private wine and olive tour/tasting event. Upon arrival to Rome, marvel at the sites during a panoramic city tour, stroll through the Colosseum, the Roman Forum, and the 1960 Olympic Stadium!

Day 20: Pompeii, Italy

Activities: Enjoy a guided tour of Pompeii today! A city that was frozen in time by the ashes of Mount Vesuvius in 79 AD. Spend the day exploring the Roman streets, the well-preserved homes, temples, shops, cafes, and amphitheaters.

Day 21-23: Rome, Italy

Activities: Visit the heart of Catholicism by touring Vatican City (Sistine Chapel, St. Peter's Square, St. Peter's Basilica, Vatican Museums) with the possibility of attending a Sunday mass. Explore Stadio dei Marmi and Foro Italico to continue your Olympic education and to learn more about the importance of soccer within Roman culture. As we near the end of our trip, enjoy two full free days to explore this magnificent city.

Day 24: Minneapolis, Minnesota, USA

Date: Monday, January 26

Location: Flight from Rome for MSP