



**ABOVE:** At the Temple of Aphaia on the spectacular island of Aegina, once a rival of Athens itself. Aphaia was the great Earth Mother and her temple here is one of the last major Archaic temples ever built, and also one of the finest—you will see it in every art history textbook. This is our small pilot group for last summer, who came to test out the program; and the young lady on the right is our delightful and knowledgeable (also completely bilingual) professor of Archaeology and Art History from the Athens Centre, who accompanied us on all excursions, both in and out of Athens, to guide us through everything from the architectural principles of the temples to the correct method of hailing a cab (you do NOT do it the same as in the USA—that’s the equivalent of giving the taxi driver a deadly curse!) As I’ve said elsewhere, this Study Abroad program will give you an experience much, much deeper and richer than anything available to a tourist.

# COURSES

After the common reading in the first week (which is a background part of all three courses—see details under “Classes and Excursions”), we’ll separate into the three classes, as listed below, to focus on different aspects of your ongoing encounter with Greece. In fact, these courses are all designed specifically to *enhance* the depth and enjoyment of your Greek experience, well beyond what a tourist could hope to perceive and understand. Personally, I have been a tourist, and I have also been on Study Abroad, and Study Abroad is much, much better. You get to see, appreciate, and understand what you’re seeing, as well as to enjoy the camaraderie with your classmates and even to live in a genuinely Greek, non-tourist neighborhood. This is nothing like being a tourist at all and that’s why Study Abroad is just about the best travel experience it is possible to have!

All these classes are 3 full university credit hours, so it is possible that some work may have to be turned in via snail-mail or email after the conclusion of the courses in Greece. Each course will involve about twenty contact hours with the professor in the classroom, as well as another thirty or more contact hours outside the classroom on the excursions with both the JU professor and the Professor of Archaeology and Art History from the Athens Centre (and I am not talking about “oh-look-at-that” bus chat; these excursions will include actual classes at the various sites, as well as individual assignments and attention to each student on site). Some special classes, such as orientation to modern Greek culture and language, will be taught by qualified professional instructors from the Athens Centre.

In any event, you may select up to six credit hours from the following courses (i.e. two of the three). Please do note that the first course, English 316, is required of all program participants as the best background for your whole Greek experience. In fact, all the excursions but one are mainly part of this essential course. **Along with English 316, you may select one other course, depending on your own interest.** (It is *possible* to take all three, but only under very special circumstances and only with the instructor’s permission; and do be advised that this heavy nine-hour course load would limit your free

time in Greece.) You should register for these courses on-line through Jacksonville University's website, but you can also change your mind and switch a course after your arrival in Greece if needed.

## **English (ENGL) 316. Ancient Greece in Myth and Drama** **(also available as ENGL 316-Honors)**

**This course is required of all program participants as a general background for understanding Greece, its literature, art, and architecture (all excursions are parts of this essential course). This course will include 20 classroom contact hours, as well as another 30 contact hours on excursions out of the classroom.**

After the common reading, we will continue the study of the Greek creation of literature, philosophy, and drama while working through some of the famous works that form the basis of all Western literature and thought! Remember that the Greeks invented the epic, drama, and philosophy, among other things, and with some brief readings from Homer's *Iliad*, describing the Trojan War, the grandest achievement of the Mycenaean Age—and the most tragic. Then we'll jump a few centuries to the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC Athens, with Aeschylus's *The Persians*, the *oldest* play in existence in the entire world which and is full of splendid, dark poetry and is full of splendid, dark poetry entrance of the Ghost of the Emperor Darius rising from his grave. Then we'll also study Euripides' *The Bacchae*, in which the God of Theatre and Wine, Dionysios himself, is a major character; in addition, Euripides' *The Bacchae* psychology, madness, and violence are on full display (Sigmund Freud loved this play!). And finally, we'll work on enacting scenes and songs from Aristophanes' lovely, over-the-top comedy, *The Frogs*; it's very physical, very funny, sometimes genuinely slapstick. It also shamelessly spoofs both Aeschylus and Euripides in a "drama" contest in Hades and even features (again) the very God of Theatre, Dionysios, this time as a campy, poetry-loving lowlife who tries to get to the Underworld by pretending to be the mighty hero, Hercules—you'll love it! We'll also take a very brief look at Plato's *Symposium*, and Socrates' life and importance, as seen in his own statements at the trial that resulted in his death. On excursions, we'll not only see the Theatre of Dionysios, where all these plays were first performed, but we'll also visit the ancient market place, called the Agora, where Socrates and Plato actually walked and taught. And by the way, the inset photo above is of the amazingly intact theatre at Epidavros, which we will visit and where *those who would like to* will be able to sing a Greek chorus and/or a do a scene or two from class, both to have fun and to test the amazing acoustics (again, no one is required to do these public performances, but I think you'll enjoy it if you try it).



We'll begin with Homer's *Iliad*, describing the Trojan War, the grandest achievement of the Mycenaean Age—and the most hundred years to the "Golden Age" of Aeschylus's *The Persians*, the *oldest* (really); it describes the Greek ushered in that Athenian Golden Age, leading up to the stunning and spooky Emperor Darius rising from his grave. Then we'll also study Euripides' *The Bacchae*, in which the God of Theatre and Wine, Dionysios himself, is a major well known forays into deviant are on full display (Sigmund Freud

## **International Studies (IS) 305: Greece** **(also available as IS 305 Honors)**

or

## **English 414. Athens Today! Modern Greek Culture, History, and Literature** **(also available as ENGL 414-Honors)**

**NOTE: This course is available as either IS 305 or ENGL 414; these are not *different* courses but simply a cross-listing of the same course, since the subject matter of modern Greek culture, history, and literature is common to both disciplines. Sign up for either the IS or the ENGL designation as you need for your own degree program at your home institution. If desired, you can also make this decision after you arrive in Greece and talk to me about which designation would be best for your own major and school. This course will include 20 contact hours in the classroom as well as 30 or more contact hours out of the classroom on excursions.**

Modern Greece has a history, culture, and literature at least as passionate, romantic, and tragic as Ancient Greece, and we will take a brief survey of the most important events of that modern history in this course. The Roman Empire, which died in the West in the 5<sup>th</sup> century AD, lived on for a *thousand years in Greece* known as the Byzantine Empire (the inset photo below is one of the many fine Byzantine churches in central Athens). Byzantium and Greece then endured four hundred years of foreign domination under the Ottoman Turks. The wars for Greek independence culminated in the 1827 with its capital at Nafplio (a perfectly beautiful small seaside city course—see photos). Then the newly founded modern Greek state moved the capital to Athens, and the fine Neoclassical architecture of that era is still splendidly in evidence in scattered grand buildings from the Parliament Building to the Athens Centre itself, which is housed in just 19<sup>th</sup> c. past. Various historical tragedies continued to trouble Greece, exchanges of the 1920s and the Nazi invasion and occupation during WWII (I'm writing a novel about that horrific but fascinating period); but the state continued on steadily growing through the last two centuries and achieved two significant triumphs of global fame with the founding of the modern Olympic games in Athens in 1896, along with the quite recent hosting of the modern Olympic Games in 2004, which you probably saw on TV yourself. Interestingly, the Athens Centre is about two blocks from the *ancient* athletic stadium which was refurbished for the 1896 games, was used again in 2004, and where you can still run laps if you want to keep in shape while you're in Athens with us next summer (see photo below).



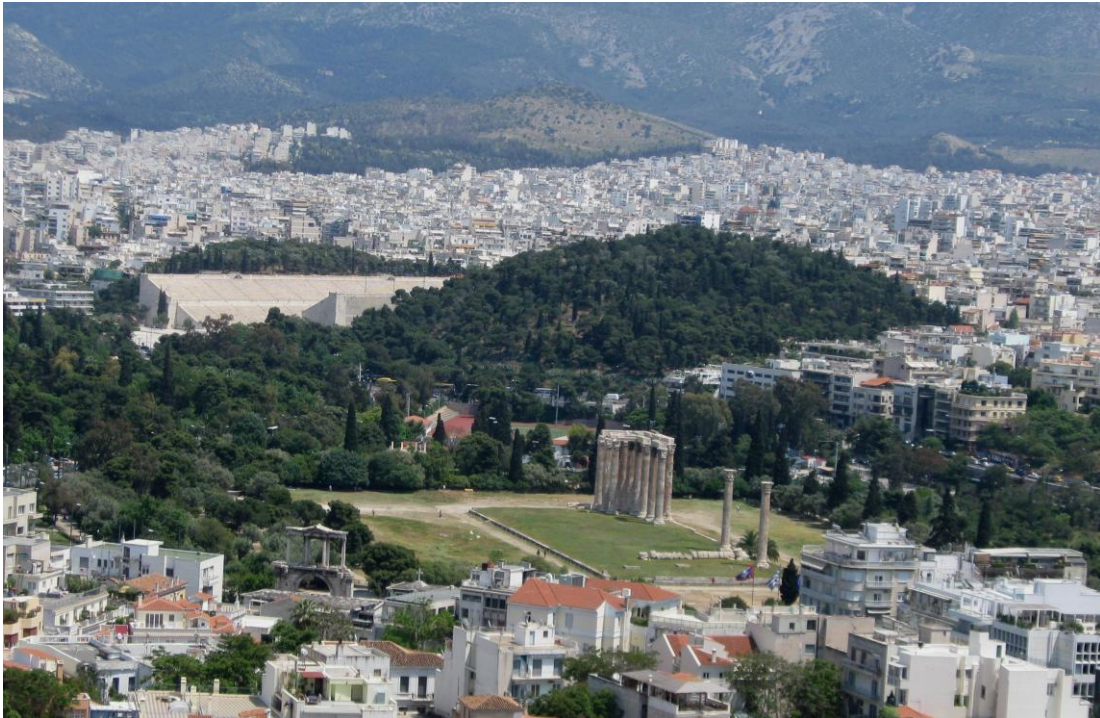
While we outline modern Greek history, we will also focus on various forms of fiction and fact about contemporary Greece, including more chapters of *Eurydice Street*, probably a modern novel such as *Zorba the Greek*, definitely some attention to world-famed poets, such as Cavafy and Elytis, as well as practical works such as the *Rough* and *Lonely Planet* guides to Athens and Greece, all of which will provide a good background in every aspect of modern Greece from history, customs, architecture, neighborhoods, and cuisine to night spots, transportation, beaches, shopping, and even dogs (hey—dogs are important!), not to mention how to avoid giving the shocking Curse of the Open Palm or receiving the even more dreaded Evil Eye! However, more typical assignments in this class will include researching particular Athenian neighborhoods, archaeological sites, and/or other Greek cities in class, then *visiting* them in person to see what's actually there in that neighborhood, city, or site—what it looks like, who lives there, what the houses are like, what the street life is like, what the cafes and shops are like, and so forth. And please note that the Athens Centre has a dandy library with many copies of various guide books, histories, and other works on Greece to help you with this research.

## **English 306. Creative Travel Writing**

**This course is also available as 306-Honors and is approved for Jacksonville University WI [Writing Intensive] designation (see JU catalog); it fulfills the Gordon Rule [6000 words] for such courses and so should also transfer to other institutions as a Writing Intensive course of the appropriate designation at your own school. This course includes 20 classroom contact hours, as well as another 30 or more contact hours on excursions out of the classroom.**

After the common reading, we'll mainly work through easy, user-friendly activities to help you *see* more and *experience* more in Greece through the act of writing, and thus to *re-create* in writing any and all of your best Greek experiences (and you'll have *lots* of them!). As a student in this class, you will keep a detailed private journal for yourself, and then you'll work separately with the instructor, as well as together with the class to help you use the material in your journal to craft more polished stories and travel sketches, which you will create from your own best experiences, whether those experiences include, say, eating fresh grilled octopus at a seaside marina (it's delicious—really—but you can also order many *other* yummy things if you're squeamish), or climbing scenic Mount Lycavettos, a small mountain right in the middle of Athens, for a truly spectacular sunset, or finding the perfect gift for that special someone at a funky sidewalk shop (or fine jewelry store) or playing a pick-up game of soccer in the broad pedestrian walkway around the Acropolis or lazing at the seaside...or...whatever! And I'll tell you right now that both this journal and your written travel stories will become your favorite souvenirs of your trip to Greece—guaranteed! This class includes no further readings after the Common Reading (see above), but will require a *considerable amount of time daily* in observing, taking notes, and writing up your experiences in Greece. Through this class, you will discover that these activities—taking careful notes and writing things down *while* you are experiencing them—all function much like our other

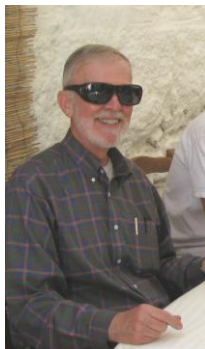
activities, such as drawing physical objects or enacting scenes from plays and epics—these activities force you to really look, hear, and observe what’s there with much greater depth and understanding than is available to your average tourist. I think this class will actually change your whole attitude to travel as you discover the natural high of *experiencing* things in a totally new and better way through writing.



**Above: To show you how close everything is in central Athens, here’s a photo I took standing on the edge of the Acropolis looking down over the Temple of Zeus in the open field (don’t be fooled because the temple looks like a toy down there—those columns are as big around as railroad boxcars). Beyond the temple is Metz, the neighborhood around and on the green hill, where the Athens Centre and our apartments are located. The large white structure cut into the left side of the hill is the so-called Marble Stadium. It was the original stadium of ancient Athens, built in the 4<sup>th</sup> century BC, where the Panathenaic Games were held, but restored completely with gleaming white marble just like the ancient original for the creation of the Modern Olympic Games in 1896. It was also spruced up again just recently (along with the rest of Athens) for the Olympic Games of 2004—you probably saw it then. It’s open to the public and you can usually run around the track on the top to keep in shape or just to enjoy the view.**

## AND THE PROFESSOR

Hi, as I said at the beginning, I’m Dr. Dick Gibson, and I’m pleased to be your mentor, instructor, and guide on this wonderful JU Study Abroad program. I’m originally from DeLand, Florida, went to Stetson University there and got my Ph.D. in Shakespeare at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I spent some years in Atlanta, Georgia, and have been happily teaching very active English classes at Jacksonville University for twenty years now. I have written a book on speaking and acting Shakespeare, which will be published next year, and combat novel of Greek freedom Greece in WWII, full of burning cities, escapes, heroes, traitors, and all that



I’ve also been heavily involved with to teach Shakespeare in England at a never been abroad at all, but I went, Abroad *changed my life*—and it will Shakespeare in this JU program in years ago, I was disturbed to discover Greece, so I researched the possibilities and was very lucky to find the superb Athens Centre—the ideal host institution. Last summer, I took a small pilot program of just four students (the guys in the photos) with me to test the program, the excursions, the facilities, the accommodations, and even the classes; and

I’m currently writing a big, passionate fighters during the Nazi occupation of dynamited bridges, firing squads, prison good stuff.

Study Abroad since 2004 when JU asked me wonderful new program in England. I had and I assure you emphatically that Study change yours too! I continue to teach England every summer, but a couple of that we had no Study Abroad program in

we had the *best time!* Everything exceeded my expectations, and the staff at the Athens Centre took care of us in every way and provided a much broader and deeper educational experience than I could have provided alone. It was all well beyond my greatest hopes for the program, and I look forward with great fondness to seeing all those wonderful folks and wonderful places again. And I know you too will feel the same if you come with us this summer.

And by the way, I need to tell you that when I went to Greece the first time to set up this program two years ago, I had never traveled in a foreign-language country before and never traveled by myself at all, and frankly, I was kind of scared. But I had an absolutely *ball*—it was great fun! You'll have an even better time because you'll have your friends along with you, and of course I mean all those new friends you'll meet who come with us for this exciting Study Abroad program (of course you can bring an old friend or two along too). You'll be amazed at what a great and fine feeling of camaraderie our little band will develop experiencing a foreign country together (we'll even learn a little Greek too, enough at least to say "excuse me," "hello," "how much is that," and other essential phrases). But don't worry about the language barrier; most Athenians speak excellent English, so it's never a problem to ask directions or just to meet these very friendly people. It's also a very safe city. In fact, street crime is almost unknown in Athens, and hospitality to strangers is something very near to a religious obligation to Greeks. And you feel that welcoming attitude—you really do.



But I don't want you to think your Greek Study Abroad is only about ancient ruins, old wars, and tragic literature, so I'll leave you with this shot of the guys frolicking in the surf at the spectacular beach on the island of Aegina last summer. You can too! And no, I didn't use a filter—the water, the mountains, and the sky really are that blue. Greece is gorgeous!

So come with me next summer for the time of your life!  
Dick