CLAS 3340: Gender and Sexuality in the Classical World – Female Authors and Authorship

Term: Spring 2019
Meeting Times: 11am-12:20pm, TT,
Instructor: Dr. Caroline Bishop
Fulfills: Language Philosophy and Culture Requirement (College of Arts and Sciences CORE/General Education), Multicultural Requirement (University)

In this iteration of Gender & Sexuality in the Classical World, we will look at the role that gender and sexuality played in ancient attitudes towards female authors. We will read most of the surviving works by Greek and Roman female authors and, using both modern scholarship and ancient commentary, seek to understand the phenomenon of female authorship in the context of Greek and Roman society. We will also examine how Greek and Roman men portrayed the female voice and consider how to reconcile their discussions about women and their configuration of a silent, passive female body with the fact of female authorship in antiquity. Throughout the class, we will also consider women’s writing from a modern theoretical standpoint, and ask ourselves if there is a common thread that differentiates women’s writing from its male counterpart.