

# Summer Scholars Project Proposal

**Name:**  
XXXX

**Proposed Mentor:**  
Dr. XXXX

**Proposed Project:**  
Exploring the Ideals of Female Equality in the Poetry of Horace

**Student Preparatory Course Work:**  
Golden Age Latin, at the end of which I wrote a final paper on this same topic (Fall 2006)  
Historiography (Fall 2004)  
Classical Mythology (Spring 2006)  
Golden Age of Rome (Spring 2007)

**Background:**  
Women in Augustan-era Rome were, by custom, restricted from engaging in many of the social activities in which men naturally participated. A virtuous Roman woman was simply to manage the household and raise the children for her husband, whom she was arranged to marry by her parents around the age of fourteen. She was certainly not supposed to go socializing at night, attend banquets with ample amounts of wine, or be called upon by male suitors of her own choosing. However, practice often diverged from custom, a fact which can be found in the works of that era's most gifted writers. One such writer was the poet Horace, in whose poetry can be found references to women in charge of distributing wine at parties, charming and endearing prostitutes, and even direct enemies to the nation of Rome. Contrary to the common customs, Horace's poems do not necessarily portray these women in a negative light.

**Project:**  
This summer, XXXX, a Latin major, will work under Dr. XXXX to analyze the poetry of Horace to determine the following:

1. What attributes toward women are reflected in Horace's poetry?
2. What evidence do Horace's poems give toward a general lack of adherence to these customs?
3. How would literature of this nature undermine the laws in place at this time intended to foster a sense of Roman morals?

**Methods:**  
The aim of this project will be to conduct a detailed analysis of Horace's works, finding and examining poems that include female characters or references. The content of these poems will then be compared to various traditions and precedents of Horace's time, including:

1. Roman women who were contemporaries of Horace, whom he might have known or been familiar with;

2. Women from Roman history, who would have served as examples for the model Roman woman;
3. Female characters from mythology, who would have served as both a religious and moral example for Roman women.

Making comparisons between these women and Horace's women will give a sense of Horace's beliefs about women in ancient Rome, and how his beliefs differ from those of the Roman ideal.