

# ARTH 420/599: POMPEII, THE LIVING CITY

## PROFESSOR CHRISTOPHER GREGG

Mondays, 4:30-7:10 Art and Design (AB) 1005

Email: [cgregg@gmu.edu](mailto:cgregg@gmu.edu)

Office hours: Robinson B 373A, Mondays 3-4pm or by appointment

This seminar will focus on the Roman city of Pompeii by exploring the art historical and architectural remains. Buried in the volcanic residue from the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, Pompeii provides an astounding level of preservation for fresco, sculpture, and luxury artistic forms in addition to a range of structures varying from private residences to public civic buildings. From the material culture, we will attempt to reconstruct life in this small Roman town and to extrapolate outward into the broader context of Roman Imperial culture. We will also discuss the changing perception of Pompeii in modern scholarship, including recent reconsiderations of the city, its chronology and its significance. The course will be reading and writing intensive: there will be weekly writing assignments as well as a research paper. The course, in part or in whole, fulfills the Writing Intensive requirement for the Art History program.

### Text Books (required):

Joanne Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (Thames and Hudson, 2010).

Alison Cooley and M.G.L. Cooley, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook* (Routledge, 2014).

### Optional but strongly encouraged:

John Dobbins and Pedar Foss, eds. *World of Pompeii* (Routledge, 2007).

Useful websites (links available under "Information" heading on Blackboard page):

Official website of the Italian superintendency for the archaeological site of Pompeii:

[www.pompeisites.org](http://www.pompeisites.org)

Current news and information on Pompeii and related research:

[Bloggingpompeii.blogspot.com](http://Bloggingpompeii.blogspot.com)

### Course Objectives:

To acquire an in-depth knowledge of the history, architecture and society of ancient Pompeii as well as its impact on modern artistic sensibilities

To place Pompeii in the larger spectrum of Classical Art, both Greek and Roman

To integrate archaeological, art historical, and primary literary material into a single, coherent intellectual narrative

To practice essential writing, research, and analytical skills in an academic environment

### Graded Requirements:

Attendance, Preparation, Participation	15%
Weekly Synthesis Papers	35%
Research Checks	15%
Research Presentation	15%
Research Paper	20%

The grading model is as follows:  
A+ (100-97) A (96-93) A- (92-90) B+ (89-87) B (86-83) B- (82-80)  
C+ (79-77) C (76-73) C- (72-70) D (69-60) F (59 and below)

**Course Structure:**

*Readings:* Everyone should read all of the assignments—both “Core” and “Synthesis/Discussion”—before the class meetings. In order for you to be engaged in the material and prepared for a seminar style discussion, you must have read the material thoughtfully. I also suggest taking a few notes from each reading or writing down questions/concerns that you have about the material. Remember that participation is a substantial portion of your grade in the seminar: you cannot properly participate if you have not read the material. Articles, unless otherwise specified, can be found in the JSTOR database.

*Core Readings:* these provide the basic details for our discussion and are fundamental to understanding the history, society, architecture and art of Pompeii. If possible, start with these every time.

*Synthesis and Discussion:* these go into greater detail about one specific aspect or area of that day’s discussion or, alternately, place Pompeii in a larger context.

*Synthesis Papers:* Each class meeting (unless otherwise specified), you will turn in a 400-500 word, typed paper (always include word count). The paper will be based on all of the readings for that day, concentrating on but not limited to material from the *Synthesis and Discussion* assignments. The goal of the Synthesis paper is NOT to produce a summary: in this brief format, you should address one particular idea, problem or even quotation by drawing together ideas from several of the readings assigned for that day. Do not try to summarize each reading, but rather synthesize the readings into what you consider to be the “big ideas,” connections or contradictory opinions expressed in the readings. In short, the paper should be a response to the question *what have I learned once you put all of these readings together*. You do not have to refer to every reading, but you should bring in at least two or three in each of your responses. You may want to start with a quote from one of the readings or text from Cooley’s *Source book* and analyze it in relation to all the readings; alternately, you may want to choose one point touched on by each of the readings and compare the authors’ ideas on that point; other times, you may want to offer critiques on the methodology or effectiveness of the readings. There is no one single approach or format. Be thoughtful and creative. As a seminar, this class is intended to make you think independently and form your own scholarly opinions: use these papers to express your thoughts in relationship to our readings. Papers are due in class: late submissions will not be accepted. There are 9 of these due over the course of the semester: the top seven (7) grades worth up to 5% each will be added together at the end of the semester for each student, with the lowest two dropped, to determine 35% of your grade in the course.

*Discussion Leaders:* Each member of the class will be responsible for an oral presentation on an article under the “Synthesis and Discussion” readings. Undergraduates will present one article while graduate students will present two readings. For the article that you are presenting, you need to be prepared to provide a concise summary of the article: do not try to repeat everything, rather boil it down to the most significant features. The summary should run 5-10 minutes. This will be followed by class discussion, lead jointly by the presenter and myself. The presenter should come prepared with four or five points that will act as springboards for discussion: a quote, a connection with another reading/idea, a problem of methodology, etc.

### *Research Paper*

There is a list of paper topics at the end of the syllabus. I suggest that you look at a number of these (most are in one or more of the textbooks) and see what seems most interesting.

Choosing a topic: at our **February 9<sup>th</sup>** class meeting, you will need to hand in your top **three** (3) preferences for paper topics, ranked in terms of desirability. I will do my best to accommodate everyone's preferences.

Preliminary Bibliography and Research Questions: a typed, properly formatted preliminary bibliography is due in class on **March 1<sup>st</sup>**. This should include a minimum of five sources (7 for graduate students in the class), not including the textbooks for the class. One primary Latin or Greek source should be included (translated texts are fine, but always specify the translator as well as the ancient author). There should be no more than two web-based resources in this initial bibliography. On the whole, I strongly advise caution when consulting web-based sources for scholarly information (images are a different matter). *Wikipedia* is **NOT** a scholarly source!! Make certain that you evaluate the academic integrity of your on-line sources; for the most part, .edu extensions are trustworthy, but do not take even that at face value.

It is very important from a scholarly perspective that you include primary (ancient) sources, even if only in translation. For this seminar, your textbook, *Pompeii and Herculaneum: A Sourcebook*, will be invaluable for primary sources. There are also a number of translations of ancient texts available, including the Loeb Classical Library series available in Library and arranged, for the most part, according to author. There are also web-based translations: the Perseus site ([www.perseus.tufts.edu](http://www.perseus.tufts.edu)) is one of the most reliable. Do be aware that older translations are common so a translation done in the last 20-30 years is preferable.

For this seminar, you will be required to use the bibliographic and footnote format employed by the leading journal of classical archaeology, *The American Journal of Archaeology* (AJA). The format information can be found online at <http://www.ajaonline.org/submissions/references>

The bibliographical forms can be seen by clicking on "Sample References..." There are different forms for books, journal articles, etc. Spend some time getting familiar with these.

You will use this same resource for the format of your footnotes in the draft and final paper. These formats can be found at the same link as above.

The Research Questions should reflect the various lines of inquiry that you are exploring. They will vary from topic to topic, and some may be quite basic. But, the goal is to develop a specific, original idea within your topic, so be thoughtful about the questions you ask since they will help formulate your argument.

In the draft of the paper, you will have developed these Research Questions into a thesis. The thesis may be more than one sentence: it should articulate the problem that you are working on in the paper. This is not a topic sentence which simply states the area of material being investigated. A thesis should introduce the reader to your particular approach to the material. For instance:

*Topic:* Eumachia Building

*Research Questions:* Why is the Eumachia Building constructed? Why does the patroness choose this site and form of building? How does the ornamentation of the building communicate with viewers? What messages does Eumachia want to present and why?

*Thesis:* In this paper, I will argue that the architectural form of the Eumachia Building, complemented by its sculptural details, is an attempt to introduce influence from the capital city of Rome into this small town by borrowing motifs and symbols from imperial buildings such as the Forum of Augustus.

Paper: The paper itself will be due around exam week, specific time to be announced later. The paper must be 7-10 pages (10-15 for graduate students) and have at least 7 bibliographical

sources. No more than three of those sources should be web-based. At least one reference must be an ancient source, quotation, graffito or inscription. At least a part of your paper should link its topic to material discussed in the seminar. Clarity of argument, structure, grammatical and syntactical issues will all be factored into the final grade of the paper along with the quality of research. Proofreading errors will be detrimental to the grade. Further details on the paper will be given out as the semester progresses. A draft of the first 3-5 pages will be due on **March 13<sup>th</sup>**.

Research Presentation: the last several weeks of our meetings this semester will be devoted to oral and visual presentations of your research. You will need to provide both a PowerPoint presentation and a handout that outlines your topic and research approach as well as visual illustrations of the topic. These presentations will run approximately 10-12 minutes each with another 5 minutes for questions and discussion: I will set the order once topics have been selected. This should be both a general introduction to your subject matter and a specific discussion of the thesis that you have developed in your paper. I will provide a handout detailing expectations later in the semester.

#### *Weekly Reading Quizzes*

It is my preference **not** to have weekly quizzes. If, however, I find that the class is not reading the assignments with adequate attention to detail and memory, I will institute brief weekly quizzes. They will be counted in the participation category of the grades. I will not announce the beginning of quizzes.

#### *Attendance and Participation:*

A seminar requires your attendance and your verbal participation at **every** meeting. Medical or other legitimately documented absences will be excused. All others will negatively affect your Participation grade (15% of your grade). Anyone missing more than three classes will receive a failing grade for the class.

#### **Weekly Schedule:**

**Note that the weekly schedule is subject to change based on the pace of the class and other factors (such as weather cancellations), so the syllabus may be updated at various times during the term. The most current version will always be available on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to keep up with revisions to the schedule.**

#### **January**

##### **26<sup>th</sup> Introduction and Orientation to Pompeii and its Environs**

Berry pp. 6-15 (pay particular attention to the maps and plans)

Cooley, *Pompeii*, map p. 12, Chapters 1 and 2 (pdf on Blackboard under Course Content tab)

Cooley, *Sourcebook, Introduction* and Chapter 3 (Intro, C 1, 6-15, 17)

*\*Bring Sourcebook to class*

Meyer Reinhold, "American Visitors to Pompeii, Herculaneum, and Paestum in the Nineteenth Century" in *Journal of Aesthetic Education*, Vol. 19, No. 1, Special Issue: Paestum and Classical Culture: Past and Present (Spring, 1985), pp. 115-128 (unless specified, journal articles are available through JSTOR).

"Neglected ruins of Pompeii declared a 'disgrace to Italy,'" *The Guardian* (link available on Blackboard under Course Content)

*No synthesis paper is due for our first class meeting.*

#### **February**

##### **2<sup>nd</sup> Our Evolving Understanding of Pompeii's Chronology**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 120-133  
Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 6 (Intro, F 1-20, 45, 62, 88, 90, 100)  
Cooley, *Pompeii*, Chapter 7

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

John Dobbins, "The Forum and its dependencies," in *World of Pompeii*  
(text or Blackboard pdf)  
G. Rolandi, A. Paone, M. Di Lascio, G. Stefani, "The 79 AD eruption of Somma:  
The relationship between the date of the eruption and the southeast  
tephra dispersion," *The Journal of Volcanology and Geothermal  
Research*. [pdf on Blackboard]  
*Focus on the results of the study and the incorporation of the scientific  
data with more traditional archaeological and literary sources.*

First synthesis paper is due this day, based on these readings. Unless otherwise specified in the syllabus, a synthesis paper is due at all subsequent meetings based on the readings for that day.

**9<sup>th</sup> Urban Development of Pompeii**  
**Top three topics for research paper due in class**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 64-85.  
Roger Ling, "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City," *Greece and Rome*  
37 (1990): 204-214.

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

Poehler, Eric E. 2006. The circulation of traffic in Pompeii's Regio VI. *Journal of Roman Archaeology* 19: 53-74. [pdf Blackboard]  
Focus on the introduction, discussion and conclusions sections (the methodology section is a bit dense, but look over it to get a sense of his approach).  
Jeremy Hartnett, "Si quis sic siderit: Streetside Benches and Urban Society in Pompeii," in *American Journal of Archaeology* 112 (2008): 91-119.

**16<sup>th</sup> Entertainment Venues**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 134-149; 106-111; 230-233

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 4 (Intro, D 1-20, 27, 34-38, 45-50, 58-62, 66-69,  
98-102)  
Ray Laurence, "Moral Zoning" pdf from *Pompeii: Space and Society* (Blackboard)  
John DeFelice, "Inns and taverns," in *World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

**23<sup>rd</sup> The Baths and Water Supply**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 150-153  
Trevor Hodge, "In Vitruvium Pompeianum: Urban Water Distribution  
Reappraised," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 100, No. 2  
(Apr., 1996), pp. 261-276

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

- Garrett G. Fagan, "The Genesis of the Roman Public Bath: Recent Approaches and Future Directions," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 105, No. 3 (Jul., 2001), pp. 403-426 (*Focus on the Pompeian and Campanian material*)
- Roy Bowen Ward, "Women in Roman Baths" *The Harvard Theological Review*, Vol. 85, No. 2 (Apr., 1992), pp. 125-147

**March**

**1<sup>st</sup> Religion in Pompeii**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 186-206

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

- Keith Hopkins, "World Full of Gods (Time Travel in Pagan Pompeii, The Roman Context of Christianity)" from *World Full of Gods: The Strange Triumph of Christianity* (2001) [pdf Blackboard].
- Cooley, *Sourcebook*, Chapter 5 (Intro, E 1-8, 15-20, 38-39, 51-57, 68-81)

**For this weekly writing assignment, comment on Hopkin's methodology/approach: consider questions of tone, effectiveness, use of the source material, accuracy, etc.**

**Preliminary Bibliography and Research topics due in class (typed, hard copy, properly formatted)**

**8<sup>th</sup> NO CLASS: Spring Break**

**16<sup>th</sup> Commerce in Pompeii**

*Core Reading:* Berry 216-229

- Cooley, *Sourcebook* Chapter 8 (Intro, H 5-11, 15, 18-23, 31-34)
- Cooley, *Pompeii*, Chapter 6

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

- Robert I. Curtis, "A Personalized Floor Mosaic from Pompeii," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 88, No. 4 (Oct., 1984), pp. 557-566
- Walter O. Moeller, "The Male Weavers at Pompeii," *Technology and Culture*, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Oct., 1969), pp. 561-566
- Wilhelmina F. Jashemski, "The Garden of Hercules at Pompeii" (II.viii.6): The Discovery of a Commercial Flower Garden," *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 83, No. 4 (Oct., 1979), pp. 403-411

**23<sup>rd</sup> Houses**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 154-161

*Synthesis and Discussion:*

- Andrew Wallace-Hadrill, excerpts from *Pompeii: Houses and Society* (pdf Blackboard)
- Rebecca Benefiel, "Dialogues of Ancient Graffiti in the House of Maius Castricius in Pompeii," *American Journal of Archaeology* 114 (2010): 59-89.

**30<sup>th</sup> Houses**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 162-185

### *Synthesis and Discussion*

Volker Michael Strocka, "Domestic Decoration: Painting and the "Four Styles," in *World of Pompeii*, pp. 302-322.

Rick Jones and Damian Robinson, "Water, wealth, and social status at Pompeii: The House of the Vestals in the First Century," *American Journal of Archaeology* 109 (2005): 695-710.

Ruth Westgate, "*Pavimenta atque emblemata vermiculata*: Regional Styles in Hellenistic Mosaic and the First Mosaics at Pompeii, *American Journal of Archaeology*, Vol. 104, No. 2 (Apr., 2000), pp. 255-275

### **April**

#### **6<sup>th</sup> Identity at Pompeii**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 88-91; 102-105; 112-119

*Sourcebook*, F 89 (M. Holconius Rufus) and H 51

Petronius, *Satyricon* sections 38-50 and 70-72 ("Banquet" and "Tomb of Trimalchio")

### *Synthesis and Discussion:*

Michele George, "The lives of slaves," in *The World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

Katherine Welch, "Pompeian men and women in portrait sculpture," in *The World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

Mary Beard, "Pompeii skeletons reveal secrets of Roman family life," BBC News (link on Blackboard)

#### **13<sup>th</sup> Tombs at Pompeii**

*Core Reading:* Berry pp. 92-101

Sarah Cormack, "The tombs at Pompeii," in *World of Pompeii* (Blackboard pdf)

### *Synthesis and Discussion:*

Cooley, *Sourcebook* Chapter 7 (Intro, G 4-12, 15, 24, 27, 30, 48-58, 66-69)

Wilhelmina F. Jashemski, "Tomb Gardens at Pompeii," *The Classical Journal*, Vol. 66, No. 2 (Dec., 1970 - Jan., 1971), pp. 97-115.

**Draft of the first 3-5 pages of your paper is due by midnight as a digital submission by email. The draft should include a fully articulated thesis, appropriate footnotes, and a current bibliography. Please send it as a Word document rather than a pdf.**  
**No synthesis paper due this week.**

**20<sup>th</sup> Student Research Presentations**

**27<sup>th</sup> Student Research Presentations**

### **May**

**4<sup>th</sup> Student Research Presentations**

**Note: If necessary, we will have a required class meeting during our exam period (Monday, May 5<sup>th</sup>) in order to complete student research presentations.**

**Paper Topics:**

Decorative Silverware from Pompeii/Herculaneum

Mosaics from Pompeii/Herculaneum

Decorative sculpture (not portraiture) from Pompeii/Herculaneum

Bakeries in Pompeii

Lararia in Pompeian and Herculanean houses/domestic religion

The Garden and House of Loreius Tiburtinus/Octavius Quartio (different names, same house)

House of the Vettii (particularly the interpretation of its wall-paintings)

House of the Large Fountain and House of the Small Fountain

Villa of the Mysteries painted frieze

Herculaneum:

House of *Opus craticium*, House of the Samnite, and House of the Wooden Partition (I think that there is too little on any one of these houses alone, but together a strong paper could be constructed, especially if you are interested in different levels of social hierarchy)

House of Neptune and Amphitrite

House of the Stags (with, perhaps, the House of Telephus)

Suburban Baths

The Villa of the Papyri

The "Basilica"

The Curia

The Palaestra and its surrounding structures

The Villa Regina at Boscoreale

The Villa "of Poppea" at Oplontis

The Villas at Stabiae

Topic on the reception/rediscovery of Pompeii or Herculaneum

If there is another topic, not listed here, that you are interested in pursuing, please discuss it with me. All topics, however, must be approved, so do not change at the last minute without consulting me.