

HIST 302-001: CLASSICAL ROME
SPRING 2024
TUESDAYS & THURSDAYS 3:00- 4:15 P.M.
KRUG HALL ROOM 242

INSTRUCTOR: Andrew Walker White, Ph.D.
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Office Hours: By Appointment

COURSE SCOPE AND OBJECTIVES:

The rise, glory, decline and fall of the city of Rome is the stuff of legend, not to mention a few hot Hollywood movies. From their home along the river Tiber, the citizens of Rome faced military, political and economic challenges galore. Starting out as humble subjects to Etruscan kings, they became an independent city-state, with a republican government whose stability was the envy of the world. Then, through a seemingly endless desire for conquest (in the name of ‘domestic security’), Rome’s citizens expanded their reach across the Mediterranean world and beyond. But in the process, they destroyed the very Republic they thought they were defending.

This semester, we will examine the many triumphs and failures of Rome’s citizens, and its politicians, and raise questions of our own about their millennia-long legacy. Our questions, our provisional answers and our discussions will be geared towards answering much more than the traditional “who, what, where and why?” We will also be asking ourselves at a deeper level, “what did they know?”, “what on earth were they thinking?” and, perhaps more importantly, “what does it have to do with me?”

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

A History of Rome, 4th edition, by LeGlay, Voisin, Le Bohec, Nevill, Cherry, Kyle and Manolaraki. Paperback. Wiley-Blackwell, 2009.
 ISBN 978-1-4051-8327-7 (paperback).

ARTICLES & PRIMARY SOURCES:

In addition to our chapter readings for each week, we will devote some time to academic articles and primary sources. You will find Word and PDF files for each week on our Blackboard site, under the “Our Weekly Work” tab—look for them under each week’s link.

COURSEWORK & TEACHING METHOD:

This semester we will combine regular textbook reading with lectures, discussions, as well as readings from primary sources. Take nothing at face value—we will not only question the mindset of the people we encounter we will also ask whether our own understanding of our world’s history is accurate.

Our questions, our provisional answers and our discussions will be geared towards answering more than the traditional questions. It’s not just a matter of “who, what, when, where and why?” We will also be asking ourselves at a deeper level, “*What on earth were they thinking?*” and,

perhaps more importantly, “*What does it have to do with us?*”

WRITING ASSIGNMENTS:

Here is a summary of the written work I will expect from each of you during the semester:

#1: Introductory Essay (100 points, uploaded under “Writing Assignments”): Due Monday, January 22. The best way for me to get to know you is for you to write a brief essay, 1+ pages (double-spaced) will do, about your background, and what interests you about Ancient Rome. [NOTE: I grade this assignment mainly for completion; speak freely!] Upload your essay onto Blackboard, under the “Writing Assignments” tab, as a Word or PDF file. *Be sure to look for my comments!* 100 Points—think of it as your first “A”.

#2: Brief Notes for Each Week’s Work (20 points each week, 300 pts. total, uploaded under “Our Weekly Work”): Each week I will expect you to write—briefly—about our lectures, the assigned textbook reading, as well as the articles and primary sources. [NOTE: keep it short; I grade these assignments chiefly for completion, you’re free to respond to the material as you see fit.] This is your chance to start *thinking independently* about these sources, to help you raise questions about them, and try out your ideas, your own interpretations. **For full credit, your notes must include commentary about the lecture, the textbook, and our articles and primary sources.**

Write, in complete sentences, about the following:

- For each reading—the important points, what the writer is trying to say;
 - Consider the writer’s point of view: what they know (or *think* they know), as well as when and where they are writing;
 - What is the writer’s audience, and what effect do they hope to have? To inform? To entertain? To inspire? To change hearts and minds? To set the record straight?
 - How does this source affect your understanding of the writer, their milieu, their ideas, the events they were a part of?
 - For the lecture: what points were especially interesting or concerning?
- Remember: Your Brief Notes are graded for completion.

#3: Required Discussion Forums, 1 for Each of our 15 Units (90 points, 6 points/week: I will create required, but informal, discussion forums for each Unit in this course—the online equivalent of the time during in-class lecture when I write a question on the board, and you break into groups to talk things over. I will divide the class into several groups, and will regularly post questions for your smaller circle to discuss. Remember—this is designed for just you and your classmates. I just need to see you talking together about the material, no need to get things “right.” This is also a great place to post observations that don’t make it into your Brief Notes. 6 points per week, 90 pts. total.

#’s 4 & 5: Mid-Term & End-of-Semester Essays (3-5 pages, 150 points each, 300 points total; upload under “Writing Assignments”): Because I’m not a fan of traditional exams (and because every time I write, I keep my sources handy), I will give you two opportunities—at the mid-point and the end of our semester—to write a series of brief essays that compare, contrast and critique the primary sources we are reading. I will give you a menu of possible topics to choose from – you will write about what interests or concerns you the most. *Make sure your answers are based on specific citations from our readings*, and use these essays to think further about what we are reading, and what those readings say about the culture of the Medieval world

and its relevance to current events. For each of the Mid-Term and Final essays, I will expect you to look up at least one peer-reviewed source from the JSTOR database (available online through GMU's library site) to complement the primary sources you are examining. *Mid-Term Essays are due March 11, End-of-Semester Essays are due May 1.*

#6: Research Paper: (10-15 Pages, Double-Spaced, Uploaded on Blackboard; Submitted under "Writing Assignments"). Within the first few weeks, by Friday, February 10, you will submit your idea for a research topic related to Ancient Rome—the topic will be entirely up to you. You will then go to GMU's online databases, identify relevant articles/books, and by mid-semester, March 10, I expect you submit an Annotated Bibliography with at least five (5) academic articles (nothing from ".com, .org" sites) on your topic. You will then read the articles and try to get a sense of the ongoing conversation about the topic you have chosen. Then offer your own insights – what do these scholars seem to get right? Do they agree or disagree with each other? Where do you stand on the questions raised by their work? Is there anything they missed, anything that needs to be considered more deeply?

Your Research Paper will occur in Three (3) stages:

- ✓ First, you will submit your Research Topic. Try to keep your research question narrow, and I'll advise you if I think it's too broad. Due Monday, February 5. 20 points.
- ✓ Second, you will submit your Annotated Bibliography—telling me which articles you will read, and why you chose them. Due Monday, March 4. 20 points.
- ✓ Third, you will submit your Final Research Paper, no later than Monday, April 15 (160 points).

The resulting paper should consist of: Title page, followed by 10-15 pages of text, followed by a separate bibliography page. Footnotes/in-text citations are required, using the citation method of your choice.

HONOR CODE:

A reminder about George Mason's Honor Code: you can't copy and paste anyone else's work and call it your own. Quotations and paraphrases are OK but must be in quotation marks and come with citations to tell me where the quote comes from.

GRADING ELEMENTS:

<u>Task or Assignment</u>	<u>Point Value</u>
Introductory Essay:	100
Brief Notes	300 (20/Week)
Required Discussion Forum	90 (6/Week)
Mid-Term Essays	150
Final Essays	150
Research Paper	200 (20 + 20 + 160)
Total:	990 Points

GRADING SCALE:

90-100%	A	Outstanding
	A+	97 – 100 (960--990 points)
	A	93-96.9 (920-959 points)
	A-	90-92.9 (891-919 points)
80-89%	B	Above Average
	B+	87-89.9 (861-890 points)
	B	83-86.9 (821-860 points)
	B-	80-82.9 (792-820 points)
70-79%	C	Average
	C+	77-79.9 (762-791 points)
	C	73-76.9 (722-761 points)
	C-	70-72.9 (693-721 points)
60-69%	D	Below Average (594-692 points)
59%-Below	F	Failure (no credit for the course) (593 points & Below)

HIST 302-001 – OUR WEEKLY SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE:

WEEK & DATES	TOPICS	READINGS & MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS:
Week 1: 1/16 & 1/18/24	Italy Before Rome & The Formation of Rome: from Romulus to the Tarquins	Chapters 1 & 2 & Primary Sources
Week 2: 1/23 – 1/25/24	The Young Republic (5 th & 4 th Centuries BCE) & The Growth of the Republic	Chapters 3 & 4 & Primary Sources
Week 3: 1/30 – 2/1/24	Consequences of Conquest: the 2 nd Century BCE	Ch. 5 & Primary Sources <u>RESEARCH PAPER:</u> <u>CHOOSE TOPIC</u>
Week 4: 2/6 – 2/8/24	The Late Republic: The 1 st Century BCE	Chapter Pts. 6.1 & 6.2 & Primary Sources
Week 5: 2/13 – 2/15/24	The Roman World	Chapters 6.3 & 7 & Primary Sources
Week 6: 2/20 – 2/22/24	Augustus: The Birth of the Imperial Regime, 29 BCE – 14 CE	Chapter 8 & Primary Sources
Week 7: 2/27 – 2/29/24	The Julio-Claudians: The System Under Stress, 14 – 68 CE	Chapter 9 & Primary Sources <u>RESEARCH PAPER:</u> <u>ANNOTATED BIB DUE</u>
Week 8: 3/5 – 3/7/24	!! SPRING BREAK—NO LECTURES !!	<u>MID-TERM ESSAYS DUE</u> <u>MARCH 11</u>
Week 9: 3/12 – 3/14/24	The Flavians: Consolidating the Imperial Order, 68 - 96 CE	Chapter 10 & Primary Sources
Week 10: 3/19 – 3/21/24	The Antonine Empire, 96-192 CE Part 1	Chapter Pts. 11.1-3 & Primary Sources
Week 11: 3/26 – 3/28/24	The Antonine Empire, 96-192 CE Part 2	Chapter Pts. 11.4-7 & Primary Sources
Week 12: 4/2 – 4/4/24	The African and Syrian Emperors 193-235 CE & Equilibrium: 235 CE	Chapters 12 & 13 & Primary Sources
Week 13: 4/9 – 4/11/24	A Disintegrating Order: 235-284 CE & A Different Order: 284-361 CE <u>RESEARCH PAPER DUE APRIL 15</u>	Chapters 14 & 15 & Primary Sources
Week 14: 4/16 – 4/18/24	Different Institutions: Reorganization & A Different Socio-Economic World: Recovery & State Control	Chapters 16 & 17 & Primary Sources
Week 15: 4/23 – 4/25/24	Between Paganism and Christianity & The End of the Roman World?	Chapters 18 & 19 & Primary Sources
Week 16:	<u>END-OF-SEMESTER ESSAYS DUE</u> <u>MAY 1</u>	

HONOR CODE:

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

LEARNING DISABILITIES:

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodation, please see me and contact the office of Disability Services (DS) at 703-993-2474, or online at: <https://ds.gmu.edu/>. *All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.* Students must inform the instructor at the beginning of the semester, and DS will make arrangements for the specific accommodations you need.

A STATEMENT ON ANTI-RACISM:

As a member of the Department of History and Art History, I will always work to create an educational environment that is committed to anti-racism and inclusive standards of excellence. An anti-racist approach to higher education acknowledges the often-subtle ways that individual, interpersonal, institutional, and structural expressions of racism contribute to inequality and injustice, against Black individuals, indigenous people, and other people of color—in our classrooms, on our campuses, and in our communities.

Although we are online this semester, I want this to be a place where we can still break bread together, and work in the spirit of mutual respect and openness to new ideas, new experiences. I believe that the work of anti-racism, of creating a truly civil society, starts with each of us. I sincerely hope that together, we will build a body of knowledge which will empower all of us to take actions rooted in principles of equity, inclusion, and justice that we will carry with us throughout our lives.