



CLAS-HIST 330 The Roman Empire

Course Syllabus
Fall Semester 2022

Instructor: Giampiero Bevagna

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays, 4:00 p.m. – 5:30 p.m.

Office Hours: by appointment after a class or via Zoom (see Moodle site)

Course Type: Standard Course

Lab Fee: TBA

Course Description

The course explores the political, social, economic, and cultural history of Rome and its Empire, with a special focus on the history of the early Roman Empire (the so-called Principate: from Caesar to Alexander Severus – from the first century BCE to the second century CE). The course will begin by reviewing and critiquing the story of a small village built on the Tiber's bank that managed first to unify the Italian peninsula under its military and political leadership and then to become one of the leading cities in the Mediterranean basin and eventually the capital of the Ancient World, whose dominion, at its heyday, stretched from the Hercules' Columns in the West to Mesopotamia in the East. This review will end with discussing how and why the Imperial system finally changed and gave birth to a new form of civilization, which eventually became what is considered the modern layout of Europe.

The course will include an examination of several aspects of Roman Civilization through a study of ancient evidence, both textual and material, and Rome's relationships with other contemporary peoples. We will analyse the very meaning of "Roman Culture," and the very important contribution of the Hellenistic world. The understanding of the process of Romanization of the populations dominated by the Romans will play a significant role in the course to understand how the Roman Culture spread throughout the Mediterranean to become one of the pillars of our modern culture.

With the above approach, we will be focusing on some of Rome's more characteristic features: ranging from religion to art to society and politics. In the end, the goal is to "look at the Romans through the eyes of the Romans." The fieldtrip to Rome, with her remains of ancient monuments and museums with major archaeological collections, will help students to enliven their picture of this culture and attain a richer and more complex understanding of the phenomena.

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

- *list* the major events in the history of ancient Rome;
- *analyze* both primary and secondary sources and to examine how authors of different time periods and social backgrounds present key issues;
- *summarize* the relevance of the use of material remains (archaeological record) in learning about Roman culture; and
- *synthesize* the various ways that Roman civilization influenced their culture, and, more generally, the development of world history in a coherent oral report.

Course Materials

Readings

PDFs of the readings are available on Umbra's Moodle site. Additional hand-outs will be provided in classes when needed.

Assessment

Participation	10%
Mid-term exam	20%
Quiz x 2	20%
Final Exam	20%
Oral report	30%

Grading

Letter grades for student work are based on the following percentage scale:

Letter Grade Range	Numerical Score Equivalent	Student Performance
A	93% - 100%	Exceptional
A-	90% - 92%	Excellent
B+	87% - 89%	Superior
B	83% - 86%	
B-	80% - 82%	
C+	77% - 79%	Satisfactory
C	73% - 76%	
C-	70% - 72%	
D+	67% - 69%	Low Pass
D	63% - 66%	
D-	60% - 62%	
F	59% or less	Fail (no credit)

Course Requirements

Grades are based on:

Participation (10%)

Attendance is an important part of this course. You have two "sick days," per Institute policy. As long as you are at all the other meetings, you will receive the full 10% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Written Exams (60%)

The course includes 2 quizzes (10% each), a mid-term (20%) and a final (20%) examination. Items covered on each exam include lectures and readings (on the subjects discussed after the previous exam). Testing format will be multiple choice, T/F questions, map - glossary – chronology quizzes, short answer questions and short essays. Study guides will be distributed in advance.

Oral Reports (30%)

Each student will give ONE 30-minute oral report (worth 30%) on one Roman Emperor. Students are requested to provide a bibliography 1 class before the presentation. Wikipedia and other online sources are not to be used unless I approve them first. Hand-outs and slideshows are requested. More detailed guidelines will be provided.

Course Content Disclaimer

Some ancient art shows scenes of sexual intercourse or violent images.

Additional Course Information

Class sessions will be based on students **having read** the assigned material for class, either from primary sources (what the Romans themselves wrote) or from secondary sources (what moderns have written about the Romans). Classes will be a combination of discussion and lecture, leaning more heavily to discussion when the

readings are primary sources.

Sometimes, I will provide open-ended discussion questions before the class meeting. I hope the entire class will prepare answers to the discussion questions and be ready to discuss their answers during class. It is therefore important for everyone to consider the readings carefully, to put some thought into the questions, and to prepare preliminary answers before coming to class.

During class sessions we will study important examples of Roman monuments and pieces of art. These examples will help students to understand and visualize better the fundamental aspects of Roman history and culture. Students are expected to pay great attention to these examples to be able to interpret images of Roman civilization and provide an informed, detailed discussion. Lectures will include material beyond the course readings for which students will be held responsible in the midterm and final exams. Therefore, it is critical for students to take notes, and class attendance is required.

Attendance & Lateness Policy

Class attendance (in person) is mandatory. Students are allowed two “sick days,” which do not need to be justified. However, it is considered common courtesy to inform the instructor of your absence when possible. It is the students’ responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity (sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class). Each additional absence—even for another illness—will lower the students’ grade by half a letter grade (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B). Missing a co-curricular field trip also lowers a student’s final grade by half a letter grade. It is the policy of the Institute that any student who has eight or more absences automatically fails the class.

If a student misses a class, it is ultimately their responsibility to find out what has been missed. Ideally, they should find out what they missed from a classmate. Any work missed in class because of an excused absence may be made up within one week of the return to the class. Any work missed that was a quiz or other test must be made up outside of class time and will, in the interest of intellectual honesty, be a slightly different test than the one given in class.

Except in the case of medical emergencies with a doctor’s certificate and approved by the Director, absences are not accepted when tests are scheduled; tests cannot be made up. Furthermore, scheduled times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, oral presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason. Even if more sections of the same class are activated, students may only take exams during the scheduled times and dates for the section they are enrolled in.

Consistent lateness (or leaving class early) is a sign of disorganization and lack of respect both for your instructor and for your fellow students. Umbra instructors are empowered to count three late arrivals as the equivalent of an absence.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance in class. Missing a mandatory field trip, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to the professor and Umbra Academic Director in a timely manner, will lower students’ final grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B).

Academic Integrity

All forms of **cheating** (i.e., copying during exam either from a fellow student or making unauthorized use of notes) and **plagiarism** (i.e., presenting the ideas or words of another person for academic evaluation without acknowledging the source) will be handled according to the Institute Academic Policy, which can be found in the Umbra Institute Academic Policies and Conduct Guidelines.

Classroom Policy

Students are expected to follow the policy of the Institute and demonstrate the appropriate **respect** for the historical premises that the school occupies. Please note that **cell phones** must be turned off before the beginning of each class. **Computers and other electronic devices** cannot be used during class lectures and discussions unless there has been a specific academic accommodation.

NB

As for all policies, exceptions can be made by the Director for students with special accommodations or in case of medical emergencies, etc.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Meeting 1 *Introduction To The Course: defining the Roman Empire. The Roman World: Geography and Chronology.*

Meeting 2 *The Sources of Roman History. The Legend of Rome.*

Reading #1:

G. Shipley - J. Vanderspoel - D. Mattingly - L. Foxhall, (Eds.), *The Cambridge Dictionary of Classical Civilization*, Cambridge University Press, 2008, pp. 568-69; 762-63.

L. Adkins – R. A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in ancient Rome*, Oxford UP, 2004, pp. 110-15.

WEEK 2

Meeting 1 *The Roman Republic. The Roman Forum.*

Reading #2

P. J. Aicher, *Rome Alive*, vol. I, Bolchazy-Carducci Publ., 2004, pp. 72-75, 86-89, 122-125.

Meeting 2 *The Roman Army and the Triumphal Parade.*

Reading #3

L. Adkins – R. A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in ancient Rome*, Oxford UP, 2004, pp.52-71, 94-95.

WEEK 3

Meeting 1 *The Conquest of the Mediterranean.*

Reading #4

M. Beard, *Classical World: The Epic History of Greece and Rome*, Penguin, 2006, pp. 229-240.

Meeting 2 *The Roman Imperialism. The Consequences of the Conquest.*

Reading #5

S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome. A military and political History*, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 93-99.

H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome 133 BC to AD 68*, Routledge, 2010, pp. 1-10.

WEEK 4

Meeting 1 **Quiz #1**

Meeting 2 *Pompey the Great and Caesar.*

Reading #6

S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome. A military and political History*, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 130-158.

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People* 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 213-16.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Enhanced Edition, Wadsworth, 2010, pp.47-59.

WEEK 5

Meeting 1 *Julius Caesar: Working on the Primary Sources*

Reading #7
Suetonius, *The Life of Julius Caesar*

Meeting 2 *Octavian: The End of the Republic.*

Reading #8
M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 217-30.

WEEK 6

Meeting 1 *Octavian: The End of The Republic.*

Meeting 2 **MIDTERM EXAM**

SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 7

Meeting 1 *Augustus And The Principate.*

Reading #9
M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People* 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 250-78.

Meeting 2 *Augustus: The Birth Of A New Rome.*

Reading #10
N. H. Ramage – A. Ramage, *Roman Art*, Prentice Hall, 2005, pp. 101-108, 111-122.

WEEK 8

Meeting 1 *The Julio-Claudians: Tiberius And Caius.*

Reading #11
M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 294-96.
S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome. A Military and political History*, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 192-199.

Meeting 2 *The Julio-Claudians: Claudius And Nero.*

Reading #12
S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome. A Military and political History*, Cambridge UP, 2004, pp. 199-209.

WEEK 9

Meeting 1

The Flavians. The Palatine Hill.

Reading #13

M. T. Boatwright - D. J. Gargola - N. Lenski - R. JA Talbert, *The Romans: From Village to Empire*, Oxford UP, 2004, pp. 353-364.

Josephus, *The Jewish War*, 7, 3-6.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Enhanced Edition, Wadsworth, 2010, pp. 126-137.

Meeting 2

The "Five Good Emperors". Nerva And Trajan. The Imperial Fora.

Reading #14

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 327-30.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Wadsworth, 2010, pp. 153-169.

A. Claridge, *Rome. Oxford Archaeological Guide*, Oxford UP, 1998, pp. 146-157.

WEEK 10

Meeting 1

QUIZ #2

Spectacles And Entertainments: The Coliseum And The Circus Maximus.

Reading #15

L. Adkins – R. A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in ancient Rome*, Oxford UP, 2004, pp. 386-89.

P. Connolly, *The Ancient City*, Oxford UP, 1998, pp. 176-181 + 190-217.

Meeting 2

Emperor Hadrian

Reading #16

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 331-36.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Wadsworth, 2010, pp. 171-185.

Overnight Field Trip To Rome

WEEK 11

Meeting 1

The Antonines.

Reading #17

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 336-42.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Wadsworth, 2010, pp. 191-192, 199-201.

Meeting 2

The Severans.

Reading #18

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 367-81.

F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* Wadsworth, 2010, pp. 231-234, 238-245.

WEEK 12

Meeting 1

Culture, Society, and Economy in the First Two Centuries A.D.

Reading #19

M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People* 6th ed., Prentice Hall, 2016, pp. 343-66.

Meeting 2

Final review

WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS AND SPECIAL ACADEMIC EVENTS

The Final Exam and Special Academic Events Calendar will be provided later in the semester.

Bibliography

- C. S. Mackay, *Ancient Rome. A military and political History*, (Cambridge UP 2004)
- D. S. Potter, ed., *A companion to the Roman Empire* (Blackwell 2006)
- M. Le Glay – J. L. Voisin – Y. Le Bohec, *A History of Rome* 3rd ed., (Blackwell 2005)
- L. Adkins - R.A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome* (Oxford UP 2004)
- M. T. Boatwright - D. J. Gargola - N. Lenski, *A Brief History of the Romans* (Oxford UP 2013)
- M. Ward - F. M. Heichelheim - C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People* 6th ed., (Prentice Hall 2016)
- N. H. Ramage – A. Ramage, *Roman Art*, 5th ed., (Prentice Hall 2009)
- A. Claridge, *Rome. Oxford Archaeological Guide*, (Oxford UP 1998)
- F. S. Kleiner, *A History of Roman Art* (Wadsworth 2010)
- P. Connolly, *The Ancient City*, (Oxford UP 1998)
- H. H. Scullard, *From the Gracchi to Nero: A History of Rome 133 BC to AD 68* (Routledge 2010)