



CLAS/HIST 215: Roman Civilization and Daily Life

Course Syllabus Spring Semester 2023

Instructor: Giampiero Bevagna, MA

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45

Prerequisites: None

Class Hours: Mondays and Wednesdays 5:45pm-7:15pm

Office Hours: By appointment

Course Type: Standard Course

Lab/Site-Visits Fee: USD\$295

Course Description

How did average citizens of a town in the Roman Empire live? What were their daily habits, duties and pleasures? Where did they work, how was family life organized, and, finally, what was the system of beliefs and values that guided daily life? In order to answer such questions we will follow the life of ordinary citizens in Pompeii, an ordinary city on the shores of the Mediterranean in Roman Italy during the first century CE.

Famous for being destroyed by the eruption of Mt. Vesuvius in 79 CE and uniquely preserved under feet of hardened lava, Pompeii and the neighboring towns are now one of the most important archaeological sites in the world. Since their "rediscovery" in the 1700s, these cities have yielded tons of immensely valuable archaeological material: from remains of charred food to impressive ruins of public buildings; from written graffiti on the walls to rich art collections in individual houses. With all categories of material culture, Pompeii can provide us with an insight into social, political, religious, and commercial life in the ancient Roman world.

By tracing the footsteps of these people, we will explore the streets, homes, shops and public buildings of Pompeii and neighboring cities, such as Herculaneum. Through the things they left behind, we will learn about everyday life, and ultimately death, in the context of the ancient Roman world in general. Pompeii will serve as a microcosm for studying Roman society and culture. The overarching goal is to integrate archaeological, art historical, and primary literary material into a single, coherent intellectual narrative in order to gain a complex understanding of Roman Civilization at its height.

In the end, the goal is to "look at the Romans through the eyes of the Romans."

Learning Outcomes and Assessment Measures

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

Learning Outcomes	Assessment Measures Course requirements that will be used to assess students' achievement for each learning outcome
examine both primary and secondary sources (examine how authors of different time periods and social backgrounds present key issues)	reading assignments, participation and oral presentation
illustrate and interpret the material remains (archaeological record) of the Roman culture	reading assignments, participation and oral presentation
estimate how Roman civilization influenced their culture, and, more generally, the development of world history	reading assignments, participation and oral presentation

Course Materials

Readings

All readings will be available digitally on Moodle. See “Umbra Institute Course Materials - Textbooks and Readers” handout provided in the orientation folder for more information.

Further Readings

Additional hand-outs will be provided in classes when needed.

Assessment

Attendance	10%
Quiz	15%
Mid-term exam	20%
Final Exam	25%
Oral Report	15%
Course Journal	15%

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:

Attendance (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 100% for this part of your grade. There are no make-ups offered for attendance.

Written Exams (40%)

The course includes a quiz (15%), a mid-term (20%) and a final (25%) examination. Items covered on each exam include lectures and readings. Testing format will be multiple choice, T/F questions, map and glossary quizzes, short answer questions and short essays. Study guides will be distributed in advance.

Oral Report (15%)

Each student will prepare and present a review - a quick recap - of the previous lesson. When scheduled, class sessions will begin with a five-minute summary of the main data and key ideas discussed in the previous session; that summary is presented by a student both orally and in written form. (Hand-outs are requested, ppts are welcomed.) Presentations will be assigned to each student at random.

The instructor will lead off with the first one showing students what the review should cover: the summaries must contain the most important points from the previous session.

Also, for about 10 more minutes, the same student will lead an in-class discussion, preparing questions to be addressed to the classmates in order to clarify some concepts or enhance the meaning of others. To receive full credit on this assignment, a student must correctly identify the most relevant information from a class session, summarize and prioritize this information, and deliver it confidently to the class. A prompt and a rubric with more information on the assignment will be provided in Moodle.

Course Journal (15%)

Students will need a notebook for the semester, which they will use as a personal space through which to reflect on course material and ideas. In-class assignments (e.g. summaries of assigned readings, analyses of primary sources, mental maps, reflections, predictive exercises) will be regularly scheduled and graded twice throughout the semester, i.e. before the mid-semester break (Week 6) and at the end of the course (Week 12). The two checks are worth 15% of your grade. Students will find the full prompt on Moodle for more information.

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.

During class sessions we will study important examples of Roman/Pompeian 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 in order 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 Policy

Class attendance (in person or through live connection) is mandatory. All students are allowed 2 “sick days” (i.e. unexcused absences), which do not need to be justified. It is the student’s responsibility to keep them in case of real necessity, i.e., sickness or any other unforeseen inconvenience that may prevent students from being in class. More than 2 absences will affect your final grade by 2% per absence. Excessive unexcused absences (8 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action. Three late arrivals to or early departures from class will count as an unexcused absence. It is the student’s responsibility to be aware of the number of absences or late arrivals for each course, and to ask the instructor when in doubt.

If students miss class, they are responsible for obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours. 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.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important. Missing a mandatory field trip for a course, unless for a very serious reason that is communicated to Umbra staff in a timely manner, will be considered the equivalent of two unexcused absences. As such, absence from the co-curricular field trip will lower students’ final grade in that course by 4% (the equivalent of two unexcused absences).

Additional absences relating to illness may be approved by the Director but only if a medical certification is provided. Except in the case of medical emergencies, 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.

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.

Laptop/Smartphone Policy

An ever-increasing body of research shows that open laptops and telephones in the classroom create distraction (both visual and auditory) for those using them and those around them. You can type faster than you can write, and as a result you end up processing less when you're simply typing notes. For this reason, students are asked to keep computers and phones away and use a regular notebook. There are three exceptions: 1) if you have an accommodation; 2) if you make an office hours appointment with me to discuss the use of a computer; 3) if we have an in-class tutorial about online research tools.

Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

WEEK 1

Class 1 *Introduction To The Course: The Mediterranean Basin And Italy: Geography And Peoples.*

Class 2 *The Early History Of Italy: Italy And Pompeii Before The Roman Conquest.*

Reading #1:

- a) M. Ward, F. M. Heichelheim, C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., (Prentice Hall 2016) 1-3, 7-9, 11-20, 26-27
- b) M. Beard, *SPQR. A History of Ancient Rome* (Profile Books 2015) 15-19, 54-86

WEEK 2

Class 3 *Rome: The Conquest And Organization Of Italy.*

Reading #2:

- 1) B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012) 11-23
- 2) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 66, 70-77

Class 4 *The Hellenization Of The Roman World.*

Reading #3:

- a) B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012) 24-63
- b) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 26-37

WEEK 3

Class 5 *The Crisis Of The Republic: The Social And Civil Wars. The Roman Colony Of Pompeii.*

Reading #4:

- a) B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012) 64-71
- b) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 38-43

Class 6 *Julius Caesar and Augustus: The Birth Of A New Rome.*

Reading #5:

B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012) 71-119

WEEK 4

Class 7 *The Julio-Claudians. The Flavians. Pompeii In The Roman Empire.*

Reading #6:

- a) B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012) 120-122, (123-126), 126-141
- b) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 43-52

- c) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 236-243

Class 8 **QUIZ**

Reckoning Time in Rome

Reading #7:

L. Adkins, R.A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome* (Facts On File 2004) 374-376

Documentary: *Meet the Romans with Mary Beard*

WEEK 5

Class 9 *The Roman Society.*
The Roman House. Domus & Villa.

Reading #8:

- a) M. Ward, F. M. Heichelheim, C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 6th ed., (Prentice Hall 2016) 40-48
- b) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 88-91, 156-177

Class 10 *The Roman Religion.*

Reading #9:

- a) L. Adkins, R.A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome* (Facts On File 2004) 274-280, 307-317
- b) D. Frankfurter, "Traditional Cult," in D. S. Potter, ed., *A companion to the Roman Empire* (Blackwell 2006) 547-560

WEEK 6

Class 11 **MIDTERM REVIEW**

Class 12 **MIDTERM EXAM**

SEMESTER BREAK

WEEK 7

Class 13 *Pompeii And Herculaneum: Urban Layout.*

Reading #10:

- a) P. Wilkinson, *Pompeii. An Archaeological Guide* (I.B. Tauris 2017) 64-71
- b) R. Ling, "Development of Pompeii's public landscape in the Roman period," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 119-128

Class 14 *Politics. The Forum Of Pompeii.*

Reading #11:

- a) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 188-215
- b) J. J. Dobbins, "The Forum," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 150-183

- c) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 120-133

WEEK 8

Class 15 *The Roman Baths.*

Reading #12:

- a) G. G. Fagan, "Leisure," in D. S. Potter, ed., *A Companion to the Roman Empire* (Blackwell 2006) 369-384
- b) A. O. Koloski-Ostow, "The city baths," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 224-256
- c) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 150-153

Class 16 *Religion In Pompeii. Religious Buildings and their Cult.*

Reading #13:

- a) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 276-309
- b) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 186-208

WEEK 9

Class 17 *Necropolises In Pompeii.*

Reading #14:

- a) S. Cormack, "The tombs at Pompeii," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 585-606
- b) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 92-99

Class 18 *Spectacles And Entertainments: Theatre and Gladiatorial Combats.*

Reading #15:

- a) D. S. Potter, "Spectacle," in D. S. Potter, ed., *A companion to the Roman Empire* (Blackwell 2006) 385-408
- b) C. Parslow, "Entertainment at Pompeii," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 212-223
- c) M. Beard, *Pompeii, The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010) 253-275
- d) J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (Thames & Hudson 2007) 134-148

WEEK 10

Class 19 *Meet the Romans* (documentary)

Class 20 *Meet the Romans* (documentary)

WEEK 11

Class 21 *Meet the Romans* (documentary)

Class 22 3-days FIELD TRIP

Reading #16:

1. P. Wilkinson, *Pompeii. An Archaeological Guide* (I.B. Tauris 2017) 7-20
2. J.-A. Dickmann, "Space and Social Relations in the Roman West," in B. Rawson, ed., *A companion to families in the greek and roman worlds* (Wiley-Blackwell 2011) 53-72
3. E. Moormann, "Villas surrounding Pompeii and Herculaneum," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 435-455
4. J.-A. Dickmann, "Residences In Herculaneum," in J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007) 421-434

WEEK 12

Class 23 *Life and Death. Pompeii and Herculaneum* (documentary)

Reading #17:

J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii*, (Thames & Hudson 2007) 18-34

Class 24 FINAL REVIEW

Apr. 25-28 **WEEK OF FINAL EXAMS AND SPECIAL ACADEMIC EVENTS**
The Final Exam 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)
- J. Berry, *The Complete Pompeii* (Thames & Hudson 2007)
- J. J. Dobbins, P. W. Foss, eds., *The World of Pompeii* (Routledge 2007)
- L. Adkins, R.A. Adkins, *Handbook to Life in Ancient Rome*, updated ed., (Facts On File 2004)
- M. Beard, *Pompeii. The Life of a Roman Town* (Profile Books 2010)
- 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)
- B. Rawson, ed., *A Companion to Families in the Greek and Roman Worlds* (Wiley-Blackwell 2011)
- M. Beard, *SPQR. A History of Ancient Rome* (Profile Books 2015)
- B. Campbell, *The Romans and their World. A Short Introduction* (Yale University Press 2012)
- P. Wilkinson, *Pompeii. An Archaeological Guide* (I.B. Tauris 2017)