



ARCH 325: Archaeology in Central Italy: The Etruscan and Roman Heritage

Course Syllabus Summer Session 2026

Instructors: Prof. Giampiero Bevagna, Prof. Pedar Foss, Prof. Rebecca Schindler

Credits: 3

Contact Hours: 45+

Prerequisites: None

Class Hours: Please see week-by-week schedule below

Office Hours: by appointment

Course Type: Standard Course

Lab Fee: USD\$110

Course Description

This course studies the archaeology of the peoples inhabiting central Italy before and after the Roman conquest. Our study will focus on Etruscan culture—a major civilization shaping the history of Tuscany and Umbria—and on the process of Romanization that made all of Italy part of a wider Roman World.

The course takes place in Castiglione del Lago, a medieval town on the shores of Lake Trasimeno in Umbria, forty kilometers from the regional capital of Perugia. The Trasimeno district has always been significant in the context of central Italy for its strategic and economic value. It has important evidence of Etruscan and Roman occupation, but much remains to be rediscovered and studied. Our goal is to ascertain a broader picture of the territory and its peoples, from antiquity to more recent times. Introductory lectures will provide insight into the historical and cultural phenomena of the region, and field trips to historic sites and museums will offer first-hand engagement with the material traces of ancient Etruscan and Roman cultures.

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
Understand the geological, geomorphological and environmental history of the study area.	Class participation; exam
Have a strong foundation in central Italian ancient history (specifically Etruscan, Umbrian and Roman).	Class and field-trip participation; exam
Be proficient in the local history and archaeology of the Lake Trasimeno district	Blog post; fieldtrip participation
Identify, analyze, and explain objects and monuments in archaeological sites and museums.	Blog post; object drawing and description

Course Materials

Readings

- Course reader. All reading materials will be made available in digital format on Google Drive. See “Course Readers for Archaeology Courses” handout provided in the orientation folder for more information.

Assessment

- Class and Field Trip Participation 30%
- Midterm Exam 25%
- Object Drawing and Description 20%
- Team Topic 25% (17% team presentation, 8% individual 1-p. reflection)

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 active engagement and effort, attentiveness to context and details, and care and thoughtfulness in execution of the assignments. Students are asked to demonstrate their motivation by adopting a serious, cooperative, and productive attitude to the instructor and to fellow students. Not respecting the schedule or behaving improperly may lead to a lowering of students' final grade.

• *Class and Field-trip Participation (30%)*

'C' range: The student meets basic requirements, and is on-time for class appointments. This student is usually prepared, pays attention and participates once in a while, but not regularly. This student's contributions relate to the texts and the lectures and the museum or site displays and they offer a few insightful ideas, but do not facilitate discussion. Failure to fulfill satisfactorily any of these criteria results in a grade *below* a 'C'.

'B' range: This student participates consistently in discussion and questions. This student is well prepared, pays attention, and contributes regularly by sharing thoughts and questions that show insight and a familiarity with the material. This student refers to the materials discussed in lecture or on site or in a museum, and shows interest in other students' contributions.

'A' range: This student is fully engaged and highly motivated. This student is well prepared, having read the assigned texts, and has thought carefully about the texts' or objects' relation to issues raised in class, on-site, or at a museum. This student's ideas and questions are substantive (either constructive or critical); they stimulate group discussions. This student listens and responds to the contributions of the instructors and other students.

• *Midterm Exam (25%)*

The exam is closed book and closed notes. It consists of 6 essay questions, of which students answer 4. The exam focuses on in-class lectures, the reading materials presented during the course, and knowledge gained on fieldtrips. It takes approximately 90 minutes to complete. Except in the case of a certified, serious illness or other emergency, it will not be rescheduled. There are no make-up assignments for a missed exam. Exams are evaluated on the basis of specificity, detail, accuracy, knowledge, logic, insight, and clarity.

Note: this exam is scheduled for June 14 [the same day as the ARFW350 exam]

• *Object Drawing and Description (20%)*

At the archaeological museum in Cortona, each student picks an object. Using a single sheet of A4 paper, the student on side A: 1) draws the object in as much detail as possible, and labels points of interest with descriptive explanation or questions below, and on side B): writes a prose description of the object, considering a) material; b) manufacture; c) form; d) style; e) decoration; f) iconography or symbolism. This assignment is evaluated on the basis of visual and written attention to detail, care, thoughtfulness, and the ability to craft questions that are specific, not banal. Students must do the drawing and writing in person at the museum (not from a photo).

• *Team Topic (25%: 17% team presentation; 8% individual reflection)*

Teams of two students will prepare a short (10-min., ca. 1000-word) oral presentation on a *specific* object, site, or issue relevant to Etruscan-Roman culture in central Italy. Teams will present their topic on the afternoon of 27 June at the Residence, splitting the presentation duties. Students can share (in the TRAP What'sApp group chat) 4-5 images with everyone during their presentation. Students must form their teams and clear their topics with the professors by 17 June, just prior to mid-term exams. The presentation is worth 17% of the course grade; each student then turns in a 1-page reflection about their contribution to the presentation that is worth 8%.

General Guidelines:

- The topic should connect to what you have studied on the program. In other words, contextualize your post within the historical, material, and cultural periods of our course.
 - *Research genuine scholarly sources* (don't just trust the Internet); use this Research Guide: <https://classicsworld.wordpress.com/2024/01/05/research-tools/>
 - *Cite sources properly* in a bibliography on your final image. (Chicago Author-Date style: http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide/citation-guide-2.html).
- Be as specific as you can. Avoid generalities, grand statements, and broad claims. *Never* say: 'throughout history...'
- Clear and discuss your topic with Prof. Schindler and/or Foss well beforehand.

'C' range: The presentation is completed on the assigned date and fulfills basic requirements: it discusses a specific topic clearly, refers to some relevant evidence, and explains why the topic matters. It has a bibliography with scholarly sources. Any post falls *below* a 'C' if it lacks one or more of these features.

'B' range: This presentation is clear and coherent, with appropriate evidence to support its points. The presentation shows strong comprehension of the material, manifests critical thinking about the issues raised, and offers some creativity in style or approach. It is well written and carefully proofread. Scholarly sources are recent, relevant, and properly cited.

'A' range: This presentation is outstanding in form and content. The topic is clear and insightful; it is original, or it creatively expands on others' ideas. Supporting evidence is carefully chosen and deftly handled. The presentation is not only coherent, but also complex and nuanced. Scholarly sources are recent, relevant, and properly cited.

The instructors reserve the right to adapt the course requirements due to changes in the field conditions and/or the number of students enrolled in the course.

Additional Course Information

The exact schedule of classroom lectures and fieldwork days may change, depending on fieldwork necessities such as weather, governmental decisions, etc. Students should be flexible; changes will happen.

Attendance Policy

Class attendance and field participation is **mandatory**. For medical or other serious emergencies please contact the faculty and Umbra staff as soon as possible; emergencies are considered excused absences. However, for this course there are no "free" absences. Each unexcused absence will lower the students' grade by one grade level (i.e., a final grade of a B+ would be lowered to a B). If students miss class, they are responsible for informing the professor, obtaining class notes from other students and/or for meeting the professor during office hours.

Excessive unexcused absences (3 or more) may result in a failing grade or disciplinary action.

Furthermore, times and dates indicated for exams, quizzes, presentations, and any other graded assignments cannot be changed for any reason.

Presence during mandatory field trips is especially important for student performance. Missing a mandatory field

trip, unless for a 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 and project occupy. Please note that **cell phones** must be turned off before the beginning of each class.

ARCH 325: Schedule of Topics, Readings, and Assignments

(Please, also refer to the master calendar for all lectures and activities related to the Umbra Summer Archaeological Program)

WEEK 1

Thur., May 28 16:00-17:30	Academic Orientation in Castiglione del Lago with Umbra Staff classroom ('aula')
Fri., May 29 8:30-10:00	3: Geographies & Peoples of Italy a) S. Stoddart, "Etruscan Italy: Physical Geography and Environment," in S. Bell and A. A. Carpino, eds., <i>A Companion to the Etruscans</i> (Wiley Blackwell 2016) 43-54. b) R. Scopacasa, "Ethnicity," in G.D. Farney and G. Bradley, eds, <i>The Peoples of Ancient Italy</i> (De Gruyter 2018) 105-26.
10:30-11:45	4: Etruscans a) J.M. Turfa, "The Etruscans," in G.D. Farney and G. Bradley, eds, <i>The Peoples of Ancient Italy</i> (De Gruyter 2018) 637-62.
Sat., May 30 all day, departure TBA	11. Field Trip, Cortona (train and car shuttle) Museo dell'Accademia Etrusca e della Città di Cortona (MAEC) Object Drawing & Description assignment
Wed, Jun 4 16:00-17:15	6: Roman Conquest a) G. Bradley and J. Hall, "The Roman Conquest of Italy," in G.D. Farney and G. Bradley, eds, <i>The Peoples of Ancient Italy</i> (De Gruyter 2018) 191-210.
Fri., Jun 5 all day, departure ca. 7:15	Field Trip, Perugia & the Ipogeo dei Volumni (Etruscan tomb) (train, minimetro, bus)

WEEK 2

Sat., Jun 6 depart ca. 8:30	9, 12: Field Trip, Trasimeno and Isola Maggiore (bike, ferry) a) Battle of Trasimeno: N. Fields, <i>Lake Trasimene 217 BC</i> (Osprey 2017), 5-18, 48-84. b) Trasimeno Enviro. History: L. Gasperini et al., "Late Glacial and Holocene environmental variability, Lago Trasimeno, Italy," <i>Quaternary International</i> 622 (2022) 21-35.
Wed, Jun 10 all day, departure TBA	10: Orvieto (train, car) a) S. Stopponi, "Orvieto, Campo della Fiera - Fanum Voltumnae," in J.M. Turfa, ed., <i>The Etruscan World</i> (Routledge 2013) 632-54.

WEEK 3

Sat., Jun 13 all day, departure TBA	13: Field Trip, Etruscans and Romans in Arezzo (train) a) A. Van Oyen, "The Roman Empire and transformations in craft production," in J. Tanner and A. Gardner, eds, <i>Materialising the Roman Empire</i> (UC London 2024) 181-203.
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Wed., Jun 17 16:00-18:00	Afternoon: study for mid-term exams [profs. available for consultation]; <u>Team Topic choice</u>
Thur., Jun 18 9:00	<u>Mid-term exam [ARCH 325]</u>

WEEK 4

Fri.-Sun, Jun 19-21	<u>3-day weekend for personal exploration</u>
Mon.-Fri., Jun 22-26	<i>[ARCH 350] fieldwork/finds/museum work</i>

WEEK 5

Mon.-Fri, Jun 29-Jul 3	<i>[ARCH 350] fieldwork/finds/museum work</i>
Wed., Jul 1	6:30-12:00 <i>[ARCH 350] fieldwork/finds/museum work</i> 16:30: <u>Team Topic Presentations (10-min. each) at the Residence</u>

WEEK 6

Mon., Jul 6	<i>[ARCH 350] fieldwork/finds/museum work</i>
Tues., Jul 7	<i>[ARCH 350] morning: fieldwork/finds/museum work; do Field Notebooks and US Sheets</i> <u>Afternoon: Press Conference</u>
Wed., Jul 8	<i>[ARCH 350] Half day of finds and data processing: 7:00 – 12:30</i> Afternoon: packing <i>Farewell Group Dinner</i>
Thur., Jul 9	<i>Early morning bus departure for Rome (FCO) Airport</i>

Additional Bibliography

- A. Tchernia, *The Romans and Trade* (Oxford UP 2016)
- C. Kelly, *The Roman Empire. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP 2006)
- C. Ross, *Umbria* (Volumnia 2014)
- C. Smith, *The Etruscans. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP 2014)
- D. Gwynn, *The Roman Republic. A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford UP 2012)
- H. Swain, *An Introduction to Museum Archaeology* (Cambridge 2007)
- J. Haynes, *Handbook of Mediterranean Roman Pottery*
- J. Macintosh Turfa, ed., *The Etruscan World* (Routledge 2013)
- M. Ward – F. M. Heichelheim – C. A. Yeo, *A History of the Roman People*. 4th ed., (Prentice Hall 2003)
- R. Ulrich - C. Quenemoen, edd, *A Companion to Roman Architecture* (Wiley-Blackwell 2013)
- S. Bell - A. A. Carpino, edd., *A Companion to the Etruscans* (Wiley Blackwell 2016)
- S. Haynes, *Etruscan Civilization: A Cultural History* (Getty Publications 2005)
- T. J. Cornell, *The Beginnings of Rome* (Routledge 1995)