CLAS 250-500: Greek & Roman Civilization

ARCC 207  TR 11:10-12:25

Professor: Justin Lake
Office: Academic 330A
Hours: Thursday 10:00-11:00 and by appointment
Phone: 979-845-2124 (department)
e-mail: justinlake@tamu.edu

Course Description and Objectives: The purpose of this course is to introduce students to the civilizations of Classical Antiquity by examining major political, social, and intellectual developments in the history of Ancient Greece and Rome. The scope of the course will be broad, beginning with the Minoan and Mycenaean cultures of Bronze-Age Greece and extending to the dissolution of the Roman Empire in the 5th century AD and the survival of classical culture in the Middle Ages and the Renaissance. Although the course will proceed in roughly chronological order, it is not intended primarily as a history survey. Instead, we will focus on major cultural and intellectual developments (e.g., the invention of the Greek alphabet and the ramifications of literacy, the Christianization of the Roman Empire), important historical moments (e.g., the Roman Revolution of the 1st century BC) and historical questions of continuing interest (e.g., why did rationalist philosophy first appear in 6th-century BC Greece? What were the causes and means of Rome’s rapid expansion during the later Republic? In what sense did the Roman Empire fall?). Students will also be introduced to some of the methodological challenges of studying classical antiquity. Finally, we will examine the role that Greek and Roman civilization have played in the history of Western culture and education, and we will consider the relevance of the Classics in the 21st century.

Learning Outcomes: Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1) Explain the different methods and techniques used by scholars of the ancient world and discuss how they complement one another (e.g., textual criticism, papyrology, epigraphy, literary criticism, archaeology, anthropology).

2) Discuss the influence of Ancient Greek and Roman culture on medieval, early modern, and modern society (e.g., the importance of Greek rationalism as the foundation for the Western philosophical tradition, Hippocratic medicine and Greek science, Greek and Roman forms of political organization).

3) Discuss how the beliefs of the Ancient Greeks and Romans differed widely from our own on a variety of important topics (e.g., slavery, the best form of government, the role of women in society) and explain why these beliefs were so widely accepted.

Core Objectives:

Critical Thinking Skills: This course enhances critical thinking skills by requiring students to analyze and interpret ancient sources from a variety of genres and secondary literature that represents different types of scholarly methodology.

Communication Skills: This course enhances communications skills by requiring students to summarize and explain readings in class discussions and to express themselves on written examinations. The political iconography of the Ancient Greeks and Romans and their use of spectacle and other forms of visual communication will also be closely considered.

Personal Responsibility: This course enhances personal responsibility by asking students to consider their own beliefs and normative assumptions in light of the very different belief systems of the Greeks and
Romans, thereby prompting personal reflection and growth.

**Social Responsibility:** This course enhances social responsibility by asking students to consider the views of the Ancient Greeks and Romans on a number of vexing issues (e.g., gender, ethnicity, war, the relationship between individual and society, social welfare) and to explain why some of these views are seen as foundational to our own while others have come to be considered abhorrent.

**Prerequisite:** None

**Required Texts:**


**Grading:** Your grade will be calculated according to the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and Participation</th>
<th>10%</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Second exam</td>
<td>25%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
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* Please note that there will be no opportunity for extra credit.

**Grading Scale:** A = 100-90  B = 89-80  C = 79-70  D = 69-60  F = below 60

**Attendance and Preparation:** Regular attendance is a prerequisite for success in this class. Questions on the exams will be drawn from both the lectures and from the readings, so it is imperative that you read the assigned material thoroughly. Classes will be a mix of lecture and discussions. Your participation grade will be based on the quality, not the quantity, of your remarks in class and the level of preparedness you demonstrate over the semester. To receive an A in this category, the student must consistently demonstrate a thorough knowledge and mastery of the assigned reading when called upon, but it is not necessary to speak in each and every class.

**Absences:** You will be permitted two (2) unexcused absences without penalty. For each additional unexcused absence, 2 points will be deducted from your final grade, up to a total of 10 points. Please see [http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm](http://student-rules.tamu.edu/rule7.htm) for current policy on university-excused absences. In accordance with University Student Rule 7.1.6.1, for illness- or injury-related absences of fewer than three days a note from a health care professional confirming date and time of visit will be required in order to count the absence as university-excused; for absences of three days or more, the note must also contain the medical professional’s confirmation that absence from class was necessary. In the case of an absence you are responsible for completing any missed work and obtaining notes from your fellow students. In the case of an excused absence you are encouraged to come to office hours if you have questions about assigned work. In the case of absences on exam days, a make-up will only be allowed if there is a university-excused absence. If you are absent from an exam due to illness, e-mail me as soon as possible and bring the required documentation to the next class. You will be expected to make up the exam in a timely manner. No exceptions will be made, and no make-ups will be allowed for unexcused absences.
Academic Integrity: “An Aggie does not lie, cheat, or steal, or tolerate those who do.” You are expected to be aware of the Aggie Honor Code and the Honor Council Rules and Procedures, stated at http://www.tamu.edu/aggiehonor.

Disabilities: The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal anti-discrimination statute providing comprehensive civil rights protection for persons with disabilities. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides for reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring an accommodation, please contact the Department of Student Life, Services for Students with Disabilities, B-118 Cain Hall (845-1637).

E-Mail etiquette: In order to maintain a courteous and professional relationship, the instructor and students are both expected to abide by certain rules when communicating by e-mail. You can expect me to respond to your e-mails within 24 hours, usually sooner. If more than 24 hours have elapsed, please feel free to send me a reminder. Students are expected to address all correspondence with a proper salutation (e.g., ‘Dear Professor Lake,’ or ‘Howdy Professor Lake’) and closing (e.g., ‘Sincerely/Best/Best Regards/Cordially, John/Jane Student’).

SCHEDULE (Subject to Change)

WEEK 1

(1) T August 28: The Classical World: Definition, Sources, and Methods

(2) Th August 30: Greece from the Bronze Age to the Dark Age [Sansone, pp. 1-28]

WEEK 2

(3) T September 4: Homer and the Epic Tradition [Sansone, pp. 49-66; Iliad book 1 at http://classics.mit.edu/Homer/iliad.1.i.html]

(4) Th September 5: The Birth of Rationalism [Sansone, pp. 105-122; Hippocrates, On the Sacred Disease (available on E-learning)]

WEEK 3

(5) T September 11: The City-State in Ancient Greece [Sansone, pp. 123-144]

(6) Th September 13: The Age of Pericles [Sansone, pp. 145-188]

WEEK 4

(7) T September 18: Socrates and Plato [Plato, Euthyphro at: http://classics.mit.edu/Plato/euthyphro.html]

(8) Th September 20: Greek Tragedy [Sophocles, Philoctetes at: http://classics.mit.edu/Sophocles/philoct.html]

WEEK 5
T September 25: Exam # 1

(9) Th September 27: Greek Medicine [The Nature of Man (available on E-learning)]

WEEK 6

(10) T October 2: The Calendar [Feeney, Caesar's Calendar, pp. 7-42: available as an electronic resource on LibCat]

(11) Th October 4: Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Era [Sansone, pp. 209-250]

WEEK 7


(13) Th October 11: The Crisis of the Republic [Kamm, pp. 28-46]

WEEK 8

(14) T October 16: The Roman Empire [Kamm, pp. 46-73]


WEEK 9


Th October 25 Exam # 2

WEEK 10

(17) T October 30: Engineering the Empire [Kamm, pp. 135-146]

(18) Th November 1: Ruling the Empire [To be announced]

WEEK 11

( ) T November 6: Class Cancelled


WEEK 12


WEEK 13


T November 22: THANKSGIVING

WEEK 14

(23) T November 27: The Crisis of the Empire [Kamm, pp. 181-206]


http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/perpetua.asp


FINAL EXAM: Friday, December 7, 3-5 PM