

## ANCH 0102-920: Ancient Rome

\*Preliminary Syllabus, Subject to Change

Summer Session II

June 29-August 4, 2023

MTWR 2:40-4:15 PM  
PM

Instructor: Kyle West

Email: kywe@sas.upenn.edu

Office Hours: F 1:00-3:00



### **Course Description:**

If the ability to capture the imagination of future generations is one measure of a culture's success, then Rome is among the most successful societies in history. In politics, from the Byzantine and Holy Roman Empires of the Middle Ages, to the Tsars (Russian for "Caesars") of nineteenth-century Russia, to Fascist Italy (named for the *fasces*, bundles of sticks that symbolized the authority of Roman magistrates,) states have, for better or worse, claimed to be the direct heirs of the Roman Empire's political authority. Meanwhile the American Founders used Rome as a key model of republican government, and how such a government could fail. The Napoleonic Code, a major influence on the legal systems of countries around the world, was based directly on the code of Roman law. And if we turn to popular culture, everything from architecture to video games to movies like *Spartacus* and *Gladiator* points to an enduring fascination with Rome. Clearly, the influence of this ancient society is still profoundly felt in the modern world.

In the beginning, however, Rome was only a small village in a backwater part of Europe. How did the Romans grow from this point to become one of the archetypes of world empire? What institutions, ideas, people, and events contributed to this phenomenal success? And what vulnerabilities in Roman society led to major upheavals and disasters: civil wars and the

transition from Republic to Empire? Famous revolts like those of Spartacus or Boudicca? The abandonment of ancient religion in favor of a new faith, Christianity? These are a sampling of the questions we will explore in this course.

## **Course Objectives:**

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

-Understand how historians craft answers to questions based on critical analysis of both ancient sources and prior scholarship, and begin to participate in this process. This will be measured especially by your participation in class discussions, response to an analytical essay question on the midterm exam, and your annotated bibliography and final paper (more on all four items below.)

-Outline major events and trace major themes in Roman history, especially the growth and development of the Empire and internal political and social developments of the Republic and Principate. Measured especially by the exam and weekly quizzes.

-Improve analytical research, writing, and communication skills broadly applicable across liberal arts disciplines and helpful for absorbing, reworking, and presenting complex ideas. Measured especially by final paper and class discussion.

## **Grade Breakdown**

Content Quizzes: 20% (5% each, lowest quiz score of 5 dropped.)

Midterm Exam: 20%

Annotated Bibliography: 20% (5% for each source approved, see below, "Assignment Details.")

Final Paper: 20%

Participation: 20%

## **Assignment Details**

**Content Quizzes:** These function as an accountability mechanism for the daily readings, and to make sure that you are tracking successfully with the factual content of the course. They will consist of multiple-choice questions and term identifications, timed and submitted through Canvas. I will ask you, if at all possible, to leave cameras on in Zoom during quizzes. They will always take place on Thursdays, and your lowest of the five total quiz scores will be dropped.

**Midterm Exam:** An essay exam designed to test your ability to analyze sources, form and articulate conclusions based on the course material so far. You will be given a 24-hour window to complete and submit this exam to Canvas, which will take the place of our Monday, July 19<sup>th</sup>

class meeting. The prompts will not be circulated ahead of time, but you will be given a choice between two options.

**Annotated Bibliography:** This is meant to give you a taste of modern scholarly debates around Roman history, and also to make the creation of your final paper under a tight time-limit easier. On Canvas, I will post a list of recommended paper topics, with the names of a few well-respected scholars on these topics whom you may want to look into, and examples of their work. N.b., (*nota bene*, Latin for “pay close attention”), I will also make a point of occasionally mentioning some of these scholars, their books and/or articles in lectures and discussions. Think of these as potential jumping-off points for your own research, though you are not required to use the sources listed. By close of day on Tuesday, July 6<sup>th</sup>, you will notify me of no more than two topic selections that interest you. I will follow up with each student to determine final selection. It is possible to choose something not on the list, but you will need to converse with me by email to ask for permission no later than the end of the day on Monday July 5<sup>th</sup>, (i.e., a day before the choice deadline.)

After the choice deadline, by 11:59:59 **every Saturday between July 10<sup>th</sup> and July 31<sup>st</sup>**, you will be responsible for submitting to Canvas at least **one annotated bibliographical source** for your paper topic. (I know, Saturday. But when you’re not scrambling to research your paper in the last three days of class, trust me you’ll feel good about it.) These can be articles in scholarly journals, book chapters, (You can use different chapters from the same book as separate sources. However, I would ask that you not use more than two chapters from the same volume separately), relevant articles in scholarly encyclopedias, or webpages maintained by scholarly sources (Good Examples: Brill’s New Pauly Encyclopedia, anything included in Oxford Bibliographies Online, virtual exhibits on the Penn Museum website. Bad Examples: Wikipedia, steveloveshistory.blogspot.com. The library’s Classical Studies Resources page, linked in the “Getting Started” module on Canvas, will be an excellent place to find material.) This will make for a total of **four minimum sources for the complete bibliography**, which will then serve as the bibliography of your final paper. Each entry should be in a recognizable and consistent bibliographical style (e.g., MLA, APA, Chicago,) and the annotation should consist of a 2-3 sentence summary of the source’s content, and a 2-3 sentence summary of why the source is useful to your paper as a whole. (I will provide an example or two in class.) I will either approve or ask you to revise each week’s submission, which will enable me to follow the progress of your research and offer feedback. N.b. that a fantastic source of information and support for this assignment is Rebecca Stuhr, our Classical Studies librarian, who can be reached by email here: [stuhreb@pobox.upenn.edu](mailto:stuhreb@pobox.upenn.edu).

**Final Paper:** 6-8 pages, double-spaced, 12-point Times New Roman font, testing analytical and communication skills that form the basis of how historians do their work. The culmination of the research project outlined under “Annotated Bibliography.”

**Participation:** Class discussion is a crucial part of our course, generating insight into and strengthening understanding of the material. As such, this category measures both willingness to contribute to discussion and the overall quality/thoughtfulness of contributions. I recognize, however, that not everyone is equally comfortable talking out loud in a classroom setting. I will post Canvas discussion threads for each class meeting, and if you have any questions or observations regarding the readings, lecture content etc., that will be an excellent place to raise them. You may also respond to classmates' questions or comments on the threads. Such posts are not required, but will be treated as equivalent to in-class comments toward an excellent participation score. Evaluating participation is inevitably somewhat subjective, but I am not seeking to use this as a "gotcha" so much as an incentive to involve all of us in the rewarding intellectual work of "doing history" together. Good faith effort on your part will be generously rewarded.

## Course Policies

**Zoom Etiquette:** As far as possible, please keep your video on for our class discussion and (especially,) quiz periods, although I am aware that technical difficulties sometimes prevent this. Feel free to make use of the chat to add questions or comments at any time, since various ways to add to the discussion are one of a handful of upsides to a post-Zoom world. **I also strongly encourage you, using either the chat or speaking up out loud, to ask questions and seek clarification during my lectures.** The smaller size of a summer course means that this portion can be more conversational than in a traditional lecture course. Asking for clarification or elaboration also helps me make sure that the class as a whole is following the material.

**Contacting the Instructor (Yours Truly):** I will be holding a Friday afternoon Zoom session (1-3 EDT) as my open office hours. I encourage you to stop by with questions or concerns about any aspects of the course. In addition you have my email ([kywe@sas.upenn.edu](mailto:kywe@sas.upenn.edu)), which I will do my utmost to respond to promptly, especially on key dates for exams and assignments. (Be aware, however, that sending a message outside the window 8 AM to 6 PM EDT will likely result in a slower response.) Also, if for whatever reason my regular office hours do not work for you, but you would still like to meet "live," inform me by email and we can set up an appointment. I would ask that everyone observe one additional restriction: I will not answer email on Sundays.

**Attendance:** This policy, unfortunately, requires me to balance the demands of a highly condensed course with the realities of a still-ongoing pandemic. Each class day in Summer Session is roughly equivalent to a week's worth of instruction in a traditional semester, making absences costly and difficult to compensate for in terms of content missed. At the same time I am aware of our current moment's special vulnerability to emergency situations. Any student may miss two (2) class sessions without penalty, so long as they contact me to coordinate make-up work. Each subsequent absence, unless due to a health or personal emergency verifiable with a

doctor's note or letter from a university dean, will result in the student being docked a full letter grade.

**Academic Integrity:** All students must abide by the university's Code of Academic Integrity, which can be found here: <https://catalog.upenn.edu/pennbook/code-of-academic-integrity/> Failure to do so constitutes theft of someone else's work, devalues their contribution to our shared intellectual enterprise, and short-circuits your learning process. There are, nevertheless, situations where the appropriate lines around this topic become more difficult to discern. If you are unsure whether something relating to an assignment constitutes plagiarism, **please** consult myself and/or Rebecca Stuhr **before** submitting the final version to me.

Any student caught engaging in cheating or plagiarism will automatically fail the course. Further disciplinary action with the university will be pursued as well.

## **Class Texts**

We will be working mainly with primary source texts from the Roman period, which will be provided for you via the Canvas Module for each week. However, I recommend the following textbook as an optional supplement:

- M.T. Boatwright - D.J. Gargola – N. Lenski – R.J.A. Talbert, *The Romans. From Village to Empire*, 2nd ed. 2012.

Despite some overlap, the book will provide additional context and perspectives I may not have time to address in lectures and should be helpful for quiz and exam review.





## Course Schedule

N.b., “Reading the Course Schedule”: I have divided each day’s content into two rough halves; “Discussion” and “Lecture” The “Lecture” portion of each class will involve introducing new information, while the “Discussion” portion will be based on examining the “Homework” readings as a group. The readings for each day will be directly related to **the next class discussion**, providing essential background information and primary sources that we will analyze together. So, for example, I am not assuming any prior knowledge for our first discussion, “Why Study the Romans,” but the “Homework” Livy reading listed for that day will be critical to our next discussion, “Myths of Early Rome.” [For the optional textbook readings, see “Class Texts” above.]

Thursday, July 1

**Discussion:** Why Study the Romans?

**Lecture:** The Regal Period

**Homework:** Livy Book 1, Preface-1.16 (Romulus), 1.56-60, Book 2.1 (Tarquin and the Fall of the Monarchy) Syllabus Review

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 1

Monday, July 5

Independence Day Observed (No Class, Hope You're Enjoying a BBQ of Some Description)

Tuesday, July 6

**Discussion:** Myths of Early Rome/Syllabus Review and Questions

**Lecture:** Republican Institutions and the Conquest of Italy

**Homework:** Polybius *Histories* Book 6.3-18

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 2

**Top 2 Paper Topics Chosen by Today**

Wednesday, July 7

**Discussion:** Polybius' Roman Constitution

**Lecture:** Conquest Concluded, Confrontation with Carthage

**Homework:** Vergil *Aeneid* 1 & 4 (excerpts) Polybius 3 (excerpts) Livy, Books 21-30 (excerpts)

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 3A (through Punic Wars)

Thursday, July 8

**Content Quiz #1** (Will Include Syllabus Question(s))

**Discussion:** Memories of a Rival

**Lecture:** A Mediterranean Empire

**Homework:** Plutarch, *Life of Cato*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 3B

**Saturday July 10, 11:59:59- First Source due, Annotated Bibliography**

Monday, July 12

**Discussion:** “Friends and Allies of the Roman People?”

**Lecture:** The Social World of the Republic

**Homework:** Terence, *Adelphoe*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 4A (through “Scipio Aemelianus”)

Tuesday, July 13

**Discussion:** Status and Social Life in Republican Rome: Women, Slaves, Greeks, Senators, Censors, Fathers and Sons

**Lecture:** The Gracchi

**Homework:** Plutarch, *Life of Tiberius Gracchus* Sallust *War with Jugurtha* (Introduction)

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 4B-5A (through “Changes in the Roman Army”)

Wednesday, July 14

**Discussion:** Motives of and Reactions to the Gracchi Brothers

**Lecture:** Marius and Sulla

**Homework:** Plutarch, *Life of Marius*, *Life of Sulla*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 5B-6A (through “Verdicts on Sulla’s Program”)

Thursday, July 15

**Content Quiz #2**

**Discussion:** Review, Summation, and Deep Breaths (And a Bit of Sulla and Marius)

**Homework:** Midterm Review

**Saturday July 17-Second Source Due**

Monday, July 19

**No Class Meeting. Midterm Essays Due to Canvas at 11:59:59 PM**



Tuesday, July 20

**Discussion:** Midterm Debrief

**Lecture:** The Legacy of the Civil Wars: The Late Republic

**Homework:** Cicero, *First Catilinarian*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 6B-7A (through “Partnership of Pompey, Crassus, and Caesar”)

Wednesday, July 21

**Discussion:** The Career of Cicero: Principle and Compromise in Late Republican Politics

**Lecture:** End of the Republic

**Homework:** Suetonius, *Life of the Divine Julius*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 7B

Thursday, July 22

**Content Quiz #3**

**Discussion:** Was the End of the Republic Inevitable?

**Lecture:** The Rise and Reign of Augustus

**Homework:** *Res Gestae Divi Augusti*, Horace *Odes* 1.37, Vergil *Aeneid* 1 and 6 (excerpts), Tacitus *Annals* 1.1-5

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 8

**Saturday July 24- 3<sup>rd</sup> Source Due**

Monday, July 26

**Discussion:** Persuasion and the Principate

**Lecture:** The Julio-Claudians

**Homework:** Suetonius, *Life of Nero*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 9A (through “Nero”)

Tuesday, July 27

**Discussion:** Good Emperors, Bad Emperors

**Lecture:** “Year of the Four Emperors” and the Rise of the Flavians

**Homework:** Josephus, *Jewish War* (excerpts)

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 9B-10A (through “Titus”)

Wednesday, July 28

**Discussion:** Dynasty: What It Means, and How to Build One

**Lecture:** Social and Cultural Life in the Early Empire

**Homework:** Petronius, *Dinner with Trimalchio* Pliny, *Letters* 6.16, 6.20

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 10B

Thursday, July 29

**Content Quiz #4**

**Discussion:** Spectacle, Satire, and the Imperial System

**Lecture:** Fall of the Flavians, Rise of the Antonines

**Homework:** Tacitus, *Agricola*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 10B

**Saturday July 31- Final Source Due, Bibliography Complete**

Monday, August 2

**Discussion:** “Romanization” and the Provinces

**Lecture:** Growth, Change, Stagnation?: The Later Antonines to the Severans

**Homework:** Aelius Aristides, *In Praise of Rome* (excerpts), “Constitutio Antoniniana”

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 11

Tuesday, August 3

**Discussion:** “The Five Good Emperors?”: Thinking about Periodization

**Lecture:** Social and Religious Changes: The Rise of Christianity

**Homework:** *The Passion of Perpetua and Felicity*

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 11

Wednesday, August 4

**Discussion:** Persecution: When Are Religious and Social Change Threatening?

**Lecture:** The Third Century Crisis

**Homework:** Final Papers

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 12A (through “Aurelian”)

Thursday, August 5

**Content Quiz #5**

**Discussion:** Review, Decompression, and Looking Ahead

**Homework:** Final Papers

**Optional:** Boatwright et al., Ch. 13

Friday, August 6

**Final Papers Due to Canvas 11:59:59 PM**

