CLASS 340 Classical Civilization

Spring 2005

M 7:00-9:40 PM (AH-4176)
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Office Hours: M W 3:30-4:45 PM, T R 2:00-3:15 PM, or by appointment

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COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is an introductory survey of the civilization of the ancient Greeks and Romans from the Bronze Age to the Fall of Rome. Although it is structured chronologically, it is not a history course per se, but rather uses history as a springboard to encounter key works of literature, philosophy, and art. Many of the customs, institutions, and art forms we take for granted today originated in ancient Greece and Rome. Thus, our focus will be both on classical civilization as a cultural entity in its own right as well as on the numerous ways in which it has influenced, and indeed shaped, the modern world.

OBJECTIVES

By the end of this course you will have a greater appreciation for the profound social, political, and artistic contributions made by the Greeks and Romans and how they fit into the overall scheme of western civilization.

CLASS FORMAT/INSTRUCTIONAL METHODS

I will adopt a lecture/discussion format in this course. I urge you to participate in class discussion and to visit me during my office hours to pursue whatever topics you are most enthusiastic about but which we may not have enough time to cover as extensively as you would like during class. I will derive exam questions from material covered in 1) readings, 2) lectures/discussions, and 3) a combination of the two. Therefore, you are likely to encounter questions about information that appears exclusively in either 1) or 2) above--and not always in both. Also, keep in mind that I will incorporate slides--of paintings, sculptures, architecture, etc.—and literary passages--from poems, plays, historical and philosophical works, etc.—into our lecture/discussions, and you will be responsible for them as well. But above all, I want you to think and engage with the material.

TEXTBOOKS

Required:


Recommended:


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**GRADING POLICY**

Your final grade for the course will be determined by 1) attendance and participation (10%), 2) one 8-10 page research paper (20%), 3) a midterm exam (35%), and 4) a non-cumulative final exam (35%).

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**ATTENDANCE AND PARTICIPATION**

Attendance and participation are essential for success in this course in two primary ways: 1) they comprise 10% of your final grade, and 2) your exams will test your knowledge of both what we cover in class and of what you read, and they do not always coincide. So attend class regularly!

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**READINGS**

Be sure to read each week's assignment before class. For example, when you come to class on February 28, you should have already read—and be able to engage in discussion about—Chapters 15 and 16 of Freeman's *Egypt, Greece and Rome*. Do not wait until we have discussed the material in class to read the assignment. That way, what we discuss in class will consolidate the information you have already acquired through your readings—a more effective way of learning than to listen in class to topics you are unfamiliar with and to try to pick up the pieces later in your reading. Also keep in mind that when I assign chapters from Freeman, you should also read the Interludes appended to certain chapters (14, 16, 19, 22, 23, and 26), which we will try to incorporate into our discussions. Freeman's book is not easy. His prose is dense (packed with information) and requires you to read it carefully and perhaps more slowly than you are used to (hence the relatively short reading assignments). His approach is to think through the issues and to consider scholarship devoted to them rather than merely to state general facts about them. I could have assigned one of the many surveys of classical civilization that require nothing more from you than rote memorization. But I want more from you in this course than what you could easily get on your own by reading the Oxford Classical Dictionary. And so should you, by the way.

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**EXAMINATIONS**

The two exams in this course (make-ups require a letter from a dean or a physician) will consist of short answer and essay type questions, based upon subjects covered and visual information encountered in class lectures/discussions and readings.

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**PAPERS**

You are also responsible for one 8-10 page research paper (due 4/25—no late papers accepted) on a pre-approved topic pertaining to classical civilization. You will be expected to consult and

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http://www.classicist.com/classical%20civilization.html 1/18/2005
utilize research that others have done on your topic and to cite your sources appropriately. Do not merely report your research, however, but use it to contextualize your own arguments. If you are doing your paper, for example, on the collapse of Mycenaean civilization, you may want to compare the various interpretations offered by archaeologists and then present your own views, which may or may not coincide with theirs. You will be graded, not on how many facts you manage to fit into 8-10 pages, but on how well you utilize your sources and defend your thesis. You will also be graded, however, on technical matters such as formatting (use typewriter or printer; white, 8 1/2 x 11" paper; include a separate title page, endnotes, and a bibliography), grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc., so be sure to craft a clear, well-organized paper and to proofread it carefully before handing it in. Please e-mail me your topic at brett@brettrobbins.com by 3/21. If you need help choosing a topic, feel free to visit me during my office hours.

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**SCHEDULE OF LECTURE/DISCUSSSION TOPICS AND READINGS**

**WEEK 1** (January 24) Introduction to the Course; Introduction to Ancient Greek Geography, History, Literature, and Art.

**WEEK 2** (January 31); Approaching the Classical World; The Setting for Mediterranean Civilization; The Early Greeks, 2000-700 BC (Part I); Reading: Freeman Chapters 1, 7, and 8 (up to "Homer").

**WEEK 3** (February 7) The Early Greeks, 2000-700 BC (Part II); In-Class Viewing: "In Search of the Trojan War" (segment); The Greeks in a Wider World, 800-600 BC; Hoplites and Tyrants: The Emergence of the City-State; Reading: Freeman Chapters 8 (beginning with "Homer"), 9, and 10.

**WEEK 4** (February 14) Cultural Change in the Archaic Age; The Persian Wars; Archaic and Classical Free-Standing Statues; Reading: Freeman Chapters 11 and 12; Woodford Chapter 1.

**WEEK 5** (February 21) Everyday Life in Classical Greece; Religion in the Greek World; Archaic and Classical Temples and their Decoration; Reading: Freeman Chapters 13 and 14; Woodford Chapter 2.

**WEEK 6** (February 28) Athens: Democracy and Empire; From Aeschylus to Aristotle; Reading: Freeman Chapters 15 and 16.

**WEEK 7** (March 7) The Struggle for Power, 431-338 BC; Archaic and Classical Painting and Painted Pottery; Reading: Freeman Chapter 17; Woodford Chapter 3.

**WEEK 8** (March 14) Alexander of Macedon and the Expansion of the Greek World; Viewing: "In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great" (segment); The Hellenistic World; Fourth Century and Hellenistic Sculpture; Reading: Freeman Chapters 18 and 19; Woodford Chapter 4.

**WEEK 9** (March 21) Midterm Exam (7:00-8:15); Introduction to Roman geography, history, literature, and art (8:25-9:40).

March 28-April 1: No classes (Spring Break)

**WEEK 10** (April 4) The Etruscans and Early Rome; Rome Becomes a Mediterranean Power; Reading: Freeman Chapters 20 and 21.

**WEEK 11** (April 11) From the Gracchi to Caesar, 133-55 BC; The Fall of the Roman Republic, 55-31 BC; Reading: Freeman Chapters 22 and 23.

**WEEK 12** (April 18) Augustus and the Founding of Empire; Consolidating the Empire, AD 14-138; Roman Statues; Reading: Freeman Chapters 24 and 25; Woodford Chapter 7.
WEEK 13 (April 25) Administering and Defending the Empire; Social and Economic Life in the Empire; Roman Painting; Reading: Freeman Chapters 26 and 27; Woodford Chapter 8; Paper due before class.

WEEK 14 (May 2) Transformations: The Roman Empire, 138-313; The Foundations of Christianity; Roman Architecture; Reading: Freeman Chapters 28 and 29; Woodford Chapter 9.

WEEK 15 (May 9): The Empire in the Fourth Century; The Creation of a New Europe, 395-600; World Leaders; Reading: Freeman Chapters 30 and 31; Woodford Chapter 10.

May 16: Final Exam (7:00-9:00 PM in AH-4176)
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