



## JOHN CABOT UNIVERSITY

COURSE CODE: "CL/HS 231-1"  
 COURSE NAME: "Introduction to the History of Ancient Rome"  
 SEMESTER & YEAR: Spring 2022

## SYLLABUS

**INSTRUCTOR:** Massimo Betello  
**EMAIL:** mbetello@johncabot.edu  
**HOURS:** TTH 4:30 PM 5:45 PM  
**TOTAL NO. OF CONTACT HOURS:** 45  
**CREDITS:** 3  
**PREREQUISITES:**  
**OFFICE HOURS:** Mondays 6:30- 7:30 PM on Microsoft Teams

## COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys the history of ancient Rome and Italy, focusing on the origins and metamorphoses of Rome from its archaic foundations as an Italic-Latinate kingship to an imperial city. The course examines the establishment, expansion, and conflicts of the Republican period; the political and cultural revolution of the Augustan "Principate"; the innovations of the High Empire; and the transition into Late Antiquity. Course materials include the writings of ancient authors in translation (these may include Polybius, Sallust, Cicero, Livy, Augustus, Suetonius, and/or Tacitus) as well as modern historians and archaeologists, along with considerations of Roman art, architecture, and archaeology.

## SUMMARY OF COURSE CONTENT:

This course is designed to allow students to reach a solid knowledge of the main phases of ancient Roman history, with a special focus on the political and constitutional changes of the Roman state and the reasons for such changes. The class discussions and lectures intend to lead students to comprehend the inner working, the strengths, and the shortcomings of the Roman polity, helped by the analysis of selected passages from Roman historians and by a study of the most significant Roman monuments, coins, sculptures, and epigraphs.

The course mainly aims at:

- \* presenting the students with a well-structured overview of the history of ancient Italy and Rome from the foundation of the city to the end of the Western Roman Empire;
- \* discussing the significance of selected archeological, epigraphical, numismatic and literary sources of Roman history;
- \* illustrating the geography of Europe and the Mediterranean basin;
- \* developing an interest in Roman history and civilization that will help to better appreciate the city of Rome and may possibly guide towards future reading, research, studies;
- \* showing some of the living effects of Roman civilization.

## LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Taking this course will allow students to:

- \* identify the main phases, facts, characters and geographical locations of Roman History
- \* compare and contrast the functions and powers of the political institutions of the Roman state
- \* illustrate how Roman historians were influenced in their creation of Roman history
- \* explain the relevance of some of most important Roman monuments and artworks
- \* give examples of how archaeology has enhanced our understanding of the Roman past
- \* demonstrate how Roman society and politics were interconnected, and how changes on one created reactions on the other
- \* evaluate and prioritize the evidence to be used in the analysis of an historical topic
- \* create a coherent discourse in the analysis of an historical topic
- \* critically evaluate the stereotyped notions surrounding ancient Rome
- \* integrate Roman political tactics into modern history

## TEXTBOOK:

Book Title	Author	Publisher	ISBN number	Library Call Number	Comments
A Brief History of the Romans (2nd edition – 2013)	Boatwright, Mary Taliaferro, Daniel J Gargola, Noel Emmanuel Lenski, and Richard J. A Talbert	Oxford University Press, 2013 (2nd edition)	9780190076795 (ebook ISBN)		Purchase ONLY through Perusall (see link on Moodle)
The Historians of Ancient Rome. An anthology of the major writings	Mellor Ronald	Routledge, 2012 (3rd edition)	9780415527163	EBOOK available from JCU library	EBOOK available from JCU library

## REQUIRED RESERVED READING:

NONE

## RECOMMENDED RESERVED READING:

NONE

## GRADING POLICY

## -ASSESSMENT METHODS:

Assignment	Guidelines	Weight
Readings and comments	Students are asked to do the assigned readings and watch the assigned videos on Perusall before coming to class. Readings and videos posted on Perusall are part of this assessment method and must be accessed from Moodle through Perusall links. Perusall.com is the online platform where the readings are to be done, and no other ways are accepted for these assignments. Perusall will calculate a grade based on A) the amount of time spent doing active reading; B) if the readings are done on time; C) comments posted about the readings; D) the quality of such comments.	5
2 tests	Dates TBA. These short tests (20 minutes) are intended to foster a regular study of the subject and get the students ready for the exams. Most questions will test factual knowledge (events, date, people etc.), but some questions may be about concepts. Format: short answers, multiple choices, true-false, identifications, map questions etc.	20 (10% each)
Midterm exam	Date TBA. The topics tested will be those of the first half of the semester. It will be made up by two parts: • one testing the student's factual knowledge (events, date, people etc) using identifications, multiple choices, true-false, etc.; • the other testing the student's understanding and knowledge of the concepts explained using open questions, essays, etc. More specific details will be given during the semester.	25
Final exam	Date TBA The topics tested will be those of the second half of the semester. The format will follow that of the midterm exam. More specific details will be given during the semester. Please, do not make travel plans until the dates of the final exams will be released.	30
One project	The project can take the shape of either a group presentation or a paper. You can either present or write about an aspect of Roman culture and society (no art), or assume the persona of an ancient person living in Roman times. A group can also cook and present a couple of ancient Roman foods. Each presentation-group needs to be of either 3 or 4 students. Project proposals need to be emailed to the professor by the beginning of the 5th class; failure to do so will result in a zero for this whole portion of your final grade. Proposals need to describe both the subject and the format of the project (paper or presentation) with a list of group members). A list of suggestions is available on Moodle. The guidelines are as follow: A) the project needs to be relevant to the field of Roman history, B) the project needs to be original (using the same project for more than one class is considered cheating), C) the project needs to be approved by the professor before starting to work on it, D) the project can follow one of the following two formats: a group presentation, or an exploratory paper. Students are welcome to suggest topics they may be interested in. Each presenter will be given 5 minutes, so presentations will be allowed at most 20 minutes. If a student chooses to write a paper, a first draft needs to be emailed to the professor by the end of Week 06. The late submission policy applies only to papers, not to presentations. More detailed guidelines are available on moodle and are integral part of the syllabus.	10
Classroom participation	Participation to class discussion will be evaluated at every class.	5
Forum Discussion	Every couple of weeks or so, the professor will post between two and three questions on the Moodle forum of the week. In order to answers to these questions, the students will be assigned readings.	5

## -ASSESSMENT CRITERIA:

AWork of this quality directly addresses the question or problem raised and provides a coherent argument displaying an extensive knowledge of relevant information or content. This type of work demonstrates the ability to critically evaluate concepts and theory and has an element of novelty and originality. There is clear evidence of a significant amount of reading beyond that required for the course A 94 – 100; A- 90 - 93.99;  
 BThis is highly competent level of performance and directly addresses the question or problem raised. There is a demonstration of some ability to critically evaluate theory and concepts and relate them to practice. Discussions reflect the student's own arguments and are not simply a repetition of standard lecture and reference material. The work does not suffer from any major errors or omissions and provides evidence of reading beyond the required assignments. B+ 87 - 89.99; B 84 - 86.99; B- 80 – 83.99;  
 CThis is an acceptable level of performance and provides answers that are clear but limited, reflecting the information offered in the lectures and reference readings. C+ 77 – 79.99; C 74 - 76.99; C- 70 – 73.99;  
 DThis level of performance demonstrates that the student lacks a coherent grasp of the material. Important information is omitted and irrelevant points included. In effect, the student has barely done enough to persuade the instructor that s/he should not fail. D+ 67 - 69.99; D 60 – 66.99;  
 FThis work fails to show any knowledge or understanding of the issues raised in the question. Most of the material in the answer is irrelevant. F 59.99 >0;

## -ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS:

Attendance will be taken at every class.

Up to 4 absences are allowed in this course without consequences. More than 4 absences regardless of the reason (that is, missing more than 15% of the course) will have you fail the course.

No justification for any absence is allowed in this course: 4 absences are enough to cover any event.

Only extended medical emergencies are justified absences. No other reason count as a justified absence: finger-print appointments, sickness, trips, etc. are not justified.

As from the university catalog:

## Attendance Policy

Specific requirements for attendance in any given course, except as described below, are the prerogative of the instructor and will be stated in the course syllabus distributed by the instructor at the beginning of the term.

The Dean's Office may grant exemptions from specific attendance policies in the case of a chronic medical condition or other serious problem. Students seeking such an exemption must ask a Dean as soon as they are aware of a situation impeding their required attendance. Students who cannot meet the attendance requirements for a particular class may be advised to withdraw from it.

Absences from major examinations require a Dean's Office excuse, insofar as the student may seek to take a make-up exam. The Dean's Office will only excuse such absences when they are caused by serious impediments, such as a student's own illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which the student is attending the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. Absences due to other meaningful conflicts, such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel difficulties, student misunderstandings or personal convenience, will not be excused. Students seeking such an excuse must notify their instructor, or the Dean's Office, as soon as possible, and no later than the beginning of the exam.

Absences from class due to the observance of a **religious holiday** will normally be excused. Individual students who will have to miss class to observe a religious holiday must notify their instructors by the end of the Add/Drop period (during the first week of classes). Students missing a class for this reason also must make prior arrangements with their instructor to make up any work.

#### Exams - Absences and Makeups

Instructors may, at their discretion, give makeups on quizzes or other less important graded work to students absent without an official excuse. However, because make-up exams require new exams to be prepared, written and proctored at times outside the regular class period, major examinations (midterms, finals) may only be re-administered with approval from the Dean's Office.

A student absent from a class meeting in which a **major examination** has been scheduled, who wishes to make-up that exam, must ask the Dean's Office for an official excuse. Such absence will be excused **only** if the student:

1. has notified the Dean's Office or his or her instructor of his or her inability to attend **before the beginning of the class meeting in which the examination was scheduled**;
2. subsequently presents to the Dean's Office with documented evidence of a **serious difficulty** preventing attendance.

A **serious difficulty** entitling a student to make-up a missed exam includes a student's own illness, hospitalization or death in the immediate family (in which the student is attending the funeral) or other situations of similar gravity. Missed exams owing to other meaningful conflicts, such as job interviews, family celebrations, travel plans or difficulties, student misunderstandings, alarm clock failure, or personal convenience, will not be excused."

#### ACADEMIC HONESTY

As stated in the university catalog, any student who commits an act of academic dishonesty will receive a failing grade on the work in which the dishonesty occurred. In addition, acts of academic dishonesty, irrespective of the weight of the assignment, may result in the student receiving a failing grade in the course. Instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Dean of Academic Affairs. A student who is reported twice for academic dishonesty is subject to summary dismissal from the University. In such a case, the Academic Council will then make a recommendation to the President, who will make the final decision.

#### STUDENTS WITH LEARNING OR OTHER DISABILITIES

John Cabot University does not discriminate on the basis of disability or handicap. Students with approved accommodations must inform their professors at the beginning of the term. Please see the website for the complete policy.

#### SCHEDULE

Week 01	<p><b>Introduction to the course:</b> syllabus, assessments, logistics, textbooks.</p> <p><b>What are we going to deal with in this class? Roman History:</b> What is history? How to write history. Cyclical vs Unpredictable nature of History. A quick general outlook to all Roman History.</p> <p><b>How do we know what we know? Our main sources:</b> ancient historians, archaeology, epigraphy, numismatics.</p> <p><b>At the beginning it was just Early Italy (Latins, Etruscans, Greeks in Italy).</b></p>	
Week 02	<p><b>Mythical and archaeological origins of the city of Rome.</b></p> <p><b>Monarchy and the 7 mythical kings.</b></p> <p><b>The deposition of the last king and the Early Republic.</b></p> <p><b>The Struggle of the Orders</b></p>	
Week 03	<p><b>Conquest of Veii, and the sack of Rome in the fourth century</b></p> <p><b>Roman political institutions in the fourth century</b></p> <p><b>The conquest of Italy (Samnite-Latin wars, and wars with the Greeks of Italy)</b></p>	
Week 04	<p><b>How Rome dealt with her newly conquered Mediterranean empire.</b></p> <p><b>A new way of doing politics: the assassination of the Gracchi.</b></p>	
Week 05	<p><b>External forces attack the Republic: the war with Numidia, and the menace of the German populations Cimbri and Teutones</b></p> <p><b>The first of a series of civil wars: the clash between the generals Marius and Sulla.</b></p> <p><b>The end of Sulla, the beginning of Pompey.</b></p> <p><b>Slave revolts, pirate wars, Catiline's attempted revolution.</b></p>	
Week 06	<p><b>The penultimate chapter in the history of the Roman Republic: the first Triumvirate and another civil war.</b></p> <p><b>Gaius Iulius Caesar: his rising, assassination and his dream of a new order for Rome.</b></p>	
	<b>SUNDAY</b>	<b>DEADLINE: BY THIS SUNDAY SUBMIT THE FIRST DRAFT OF YOUR PAPER BY EMAIL TO THE PROFESSOR (Sunday of week 06)</b>
Week 07	<p><b>Octavian Augustus: the establishment of new order within the hollowed out Republican institutions.</b></p>	
Week 08	<p><b>Octavian Augustus: the establishment of new order within the hollowed out Republican institutions (continued).</b></p> <p><b>The Julio-Claudian Emperors: Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius and Nero.</b></p>	
Week 09	<p><b>The end of the Julio-Claudia dynasty</b></p> <p><b>The secret of the empire</b></p> <p><b>The Imperial Cult</b></p>	
Week 10	<p><b>The Flavian Emperors</b></p> <p><b>The Age of the Adopted Emperors (the five good emperors): a new golden age for humanity?</b></p>	

Week 11	<p>The Age of the Adopted Emperors (the five good emperors): a new golden age for humanity? (continued)</p> <p>The Severan Emperors</p> <p>Caracalla and the granting of citizenship to all the free inhabitants of the Empire.</p> <p>Christianity and the Romans</p>	
	SUNDAY	<u>DEADLINE: BY TODAY (SUNDAY), SUBMISSION FOR ALL THE PAPER PROJECTS.</u>
Week 12	<p>The Soldier emperors: Aurelian, a case study</p> <p>The Tetrarchy: Diocletian</p>	
Week 13	<p>Constantine: the first Christian Emperor</p> <p>The fall of the Roman Empire: part one</p>	
Week 14	<p>The fall of the Roman Empire: part two</p> <p>Review</p>	
Week 15	<p>FINAL EXAM</p> <p>TBA</p>	<p>FINAL EXAM</p> <p>TBA</p> <p><u>Do not make travel plan for this week</u></p>