

HUMANITIES 2 SYLLABUS

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Office: Humanities and Social Sciences 4073
Office Hours: Tuesday 8:30-10

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

Revelle Humanities II looks at the cultural development of Europe and the Mediterranean from the Roman Empire until the Middle Ages. This is a very long period of time in which one sees not only the rise and fall of an empire that spanned the Mediterranean but the emergence of Christianity, the religion that will dominate Western culture for centuries to come.

The class will attempt to unify this long period by looking at one particular type of literature. We will consider biography as it developed across this period. Authors in the ancient and medieval worlds distinguished between writing a biography of a person and writing a history of the time in which a person lived. In this class, we will focus upon the lives of ancient and medieval men as they were presented by ancient and medieval authors. The lives of all of these people are notable and distinct. The texts describing them, however, were written by authors who share similar ideas about the characteristics that separated an exceptional individual from ordinary people.

This course will use ancient biographies to reconstruct the lives of prominent people who lived in this period. At the same time, we will use these texts to understand the views of the people who wrote ancient biographies. We will see the issues that concerned them, the actions that they thought important, and the conduct that they found to be despicable. The lectures will include some discussion of the techniques of the ancient and medieval biographer, but most of the assigned reading will be comprised of biographical texts from the Roman, Byzantine, and medieval worlds.

OUTLINE:

The course is divided into four sections. The first looks at Roman political biography and the ways in which biographies were used to both attack and support political personalities. In the second section of the course, we will consider religious biographies written in the Roman Empire and how the biographical form was transformed to describe a holy man. The third section of the class looks at the Christian Roman Empire and how Christian authors living in it adapted Roman biographical literature. The final section of the course looks at Western medieval and Byzantine adaptations of these Roman and Christian Roman models.

EXPECTATIONS:

Regular attendance in class and section as well as completion of the assigned reading are all required. Participation will count for 15% of your final grade and will be determined by your TA (who may employ quizzes, attendance records, or other methods to determine it). Students are expected to do extensive reading of ancient and medieval sources (in translation). Students will write three 5-page papers throughout the quarter. Each of these will be worth 20% of your final grade. The final exam in the class will count for 25% of your grade.

MATERIALS:

Students are required to purchase the following books:

New Oxford Annotated Bible (New Revised Standard Version)

Plutarch, *Lives, Volume VII*, (Harvard University Press), ISBN 9780674991101.

Two Lives of Charlemagne, (Penguin, 2008), ISBN-13: 978-0140455052

All other readings will be made available either online either through TED or from outside links.

DUE DATES:

Please note the following dates:

April 21 (First paper due)

May 12 (Second paper due)

May 26 (Third paper due)

June 8, 11:30-2:30 (Final Exam)

(These dates have been italicized on the syllabus for easy reference.)

Papers must be turned in through *turnitin.com* and in *hardcopy* by the end of class on the day they are due. No papers, drafts, or outlines submitted to the professor or graders by email will be accepted. Late papers will be penalized 5% for the first day, 10% for each subsequent day. After 3 days (non-class days included), the grade will be recorded as a zero. Extensions on papers and make-up examination requests will be granted only in the most extreme circumstances and then only with appropriate documentation that clearly explains their necessity.

ACADEMIC DISHONESTY:

“Plagiarism—A student must not adopt or reproduce ideas, words, or statements of another person without appropriate acknowledgment. A student must give credit to the originality of others and acknowledge an indebtedness whenever he or she does any of the following:

a. Quotes another person's actual words, either oral or written;

b. Paraphrases another person's words, either oral or written;

c. Uses another person's idea, opinion, or theory; or

d. Borrows facts, statistics, or other illustrative material, unless the information is common knowledge.”

(quoted from Code of Student Rights, Responsibilities, and Conduct, Part III, Student Misconduct, Academic Misconduct)

This is the grossest of academic dishonesty. Plagiarism will earn the student an automatic failing grade in the course. Helping another student to plagiarize is just as bad as plagiarizing. All such cases will be forwarded to the appropriate administrators for disciplinary action.

READING SCHEDULE**SECTION I: ROMAN BIOGRAPHY**

Week 1 (March 31 and April 2)

Class 1: **Introduction**Class 2: **Framing a Life's Journey**

Readings:

Vergil, *Aeneid*, Books 1-4, see link at:<http://classics.mit.edu/Virgil/aeneid.html>

Week 2 (April 7 and 9)

Class 3 and 4: **Plutarch's Alexander**

Readings:

Plutarch, *Life of Alexander the Great*, in Plutarch, *Lives*, Vol. 7.

Week 3 (April 14 and 16)

Class 5 and 6: **Plutarch's Caesar**

Readings:

Plutarch, *Life of Julius Caesar*, in Plutarch, *Lives*, Vol. 7.

Week 4 (April 21 and 23)

*April 21***FIRST PAPER DUE**Class 7 and 8: **Suetonius's Good and Bad Emperors**

Readings:

Suetonius, *Lives of Augustus, Caligula, and Domitian* see link at:<http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Suetonius/12Caesars/home.html>**SECTION II: ROMAN RELIGIOUS BIOGRAPHY**

Week 5 (April 28 and 30)

Class 9: **The Pagan Holy Man**

Readings:

Lucian, *Alexander the False Prophet* (TED)Class 10: **Early Christianity**

Readings:

Letter to the Galatians (in the *New Revised Standard Version* of the New Testament)

Week 6 (May 5 and 7)

Class 11 and 12: Jesus and the Structure of Roman Religious Biography

Reading:

Gospel of Matthew 1-28 (in the *New Revised Standard Version* of the New Testament)

SECTION III: CHRISTIAN ROMAN BIOGRAPHY

Week 7 (May 12 and 14)

*May 12****SECOND PAPER DUE*****Class 13 and 14: The Christian Empire**

Readings:

Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*—entire text is online at:
<http://www.ccel.org/fathers2/NPNF2-01/TOC.htm>

There is also a pdf available on TED.

NOTE: The webpages begin with Eusebius' Ecclesiastical History. DO NOT READ THIS! Read only the LIFE OF CONSTANTINE (which begins on page 1152 of the pdf)

Week 8 (May 19 and 21)

Class 15 and 16: The World of Saint Augustine

Readings:

Augustine, *Confessions* 1-8, see link at:
<http://www.ccel.org/ccel/augustine/confessions.toc.html>

There is also a pdf available on TED.

SECTION IV: MEDIEVAL ADAPTATIONS

Week 9 (May 26 and 28)

*May 26****Third Paper Due*****Class 17 and 18: Christian Biographies of Barbarian Kings**

Readings:

Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, Book 2.12 (birth of Clovis), 2.25-43 (career of Clovis) (TED)

Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* in *Two Lives of Charlemagne*.

Week 10 (June 2 and 4)

June 2

Class 19: **Byzantine Biography**

Readings:

Antonius, *Life of Simeon Stylites* (TED)

Genesios, *Life of Basil I* (TED)

June 4

Class 20: **Conclusion: Towards the “Renaissance”**

June 8, 11:30-2:30

FINAL EXAM