

History 110: The Ancient Mediterranean

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Office hours: Tuesdays 12-1pm and 4-5pm.

Lectures: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, 8:50-9:40am (**1641 Humanities**)

Sections: **301:** Monday 12:05-12:55pm, **302** Monday 1:20-2:10pm, **303:** Tuesday 8:50-9:40am, **304:** Tuesday 9:55-10:45am. All sections are held in **2231 Humanities**.

This course introduces students to the history and culture of the ancient Mediterranean basin, encompassing civilizations that arose from Mesopotamia, Egypt, Anatolia, the Aegean coastline, and Italy. The majority of this class takes place chronologically starting around 3000 BCE with the rise of civilizations in Mesopotamia and Egypt, and ends with the fall of the Roman Empire in the West in 476 CE, though there will be brief excursions into the time periods before and after these usual dates. By the end of this course students will have become more familiar with how the city-states of Sumer first flourished, how various civilizations reacted to the arrival of the Sea Peoples, what the Behistun Inscription says about the legitimacy of King Darius, how and why democracy was invented in Athens, and why the Romans banned men and women from engaging in the orgies of Bacchus.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students will be able to:

- Identify important events, processes, and key terms relating to Mediterranean prehistory and ancient history.
- Analyze ancient evidence, and understand the inherent biases that need to be taken into consideration when looking at ancient evidence. This skill will be exercised not only in discussion sections, but in lectures as well.

- Analyze the problems relating to the reconstruction of historical events and practices when viewed through the lens of ancient source material.

Readings

This class uses the following textbooks:

Mathisen, Ralph W. *Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations: From Prehistory to 640 CE*. 3rd ed. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2020.

Mathisen, Ralph W. *Sources in Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations: Documents, Maps, and Images*. New York; Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2017

Credits

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week (according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy, each lecture counts as an hour and each discussion counts as an hour). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and papers for this class.

Technology

Despite this being an ancient history class, I am no Luddite. Technology has an important place in learning, and laptops can be utilized when completing in-class assignments. However, since too many students cannot distinguish between appropriate and inappropriate use of the internet in class, laptops are not permitted in the lecture hall otherwise.

Please ensure that your phones don't audibly go off in class. If I see you using them in class, prepare to be called out, and even asked to leave.

Assessment

This course allows you to pick one of four possible paths corresponding to different levels of engagement with the learning outcomes of the course. This is sometimes known as "specifications grading," and I am utilizing this grading style to ensure more

fairness and consistency in the grades you receive, to reward thoughtful revisions and persistence, and to reduce overall grade anxiety.

C: Basic proficiency

Competence in the Basic Proficiency path will earn a grade of C. You will gain basic competency in all four learning outcomes. This requires you to:

- Attend class. Pass 13 of 17 in-class assignments and 12 of 14 discussion sections.
- Read the required materials before attending discussion sections.
- Participate in discussion section activities.

Note:

- Complete/incomplete grade is given for every lecture and discussion section.
- There will be a couple make-up assignments available at the end of the semester that can be substituted for a missed or failed class.

B: Knowledge

Competence in the Knowledge path will earn you a grade of B. This requires you to:

- Fulfill all the requirements of the Basic Proficiency path.
- Pass (at 60%) seven online tests spaced throughout the semester.

Note:

- Any one test can be retaken at the end of the semester.

B: Skills

Competence in the Skills path will earn you a grade of B. This requires you to:

- Fulfill all the requirements of the Basic Proficiency path.
- Complete four analytical papers of increasing complexity spaced throughout the semester (1 page, 2-3 pages, 3-4 pages, 5-6 pages).

Note:

- All papers are graded on a complete/incomplete basis according to whether they meet the specifications or not.
- You may rewrite one paper if you do not pass it.

A: Comprehensive

Competence in the Comprehensive path will earn you a grade of A. This requires you to:

- Fulfill all the requirements of the Basic Proficiency path.
- Fulfill all the requirements of the Knowledge path.
- Fulfill all the requirements of the Skills path.

A student who attempts to complete all the elements of the Comprehensive Path, but who fails to achieve a passing grade in all elements, and yet has demonstrated competence above that of either of the B Paths, will earn a grade of **AB**.

A student who attempts to complete all the elements of either the Knowledge or Skills Paths, but who fails to achieve a passing grade in all elements, and yet has demonstrated competence above that of the Basic Proficiency Path, will earn a grade of **BC**.

A student who fails to complete the Basic Proficiency Path, but has earned passes in at least 10 classes and 7 discussion sections will earn a grade of **D**. Less than that gets an **F**.

Weekly Topics and Assignments

Week 1 (Sep. 1-7): Introduction, and Civilization before Civilization (2,000,000-3000 BCE)

Attend: No discussion sections this week; lectures on Wednesday and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 1

Week 2 (Sep. 8-14): Mesopotamia and the Bronze Age (6000-1200 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 2; For discussions, Sources No. 19 (The Law Code of Ur-Nammu) and 20 (The Code of Hammurabi)

Week 3 (Sep. 15-21): Egypt and the Bronze Age (5000-1200 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 3; For discussions, Sources No. 23 ("The Hymn to the Nile), 24 ("The Admonitions of Ipuwer"), and 26 (Hatshepsut's Expedition to Punt)

Complete: Quiz 1, by Saturday, September 20th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 4 (Sep. 22-28): Coastal Civilizations of the Eastern Mediterranean (2500-800 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 4; for discussions, Sources No. 32 (The Invasion of the "Sea Peoples", 33 (The Report of Wen-Amon), and 36 (The "Victory Hymn" of Merneptah).

Complete: Paper 1, by Saturday, September 27th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 5 (Sep. 29-Oct. 5): Iron Age Empires (850-500 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 5; for discussions, Sources No. 39 (The Black Obelisk of Shalmaneser), 40 (The Prism of Sennacherib) and 44 (The Behistun Inscription)

Complete: Quiz 2, by Saturday, October 4th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 6 (Oct. 6-12): Greece in the Dark and Archaic Ages (1100-500 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 6; For discussions, Sources No. 45 (The Trojan War) 46 (The "Dorian Invasion" and the Origin of the Greek Peoples), and 47 (Human Society in the Early Archaic Age)

Complete: Paper 2, by Saturday, October 11th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 7 (Oct. 13-19): Sparta, Athens, and the Classical Age (500-387 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 7; For discussions, Sources No. 56 (Pericles' Funeral Oration and the Plague in Athens), 57 (An Assessment of Athenian Democracy), and 59 (Athenian Anti-War Sentiment and Perceptions of Women)

Complete: Quiz 3, by Saturday, October 18th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 8 (Oct. 20-26): Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Age (387-31 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 8; For discussions, Sources No. 63 (Alexander's Expedition Into India), 64 (The Wars of the Successors), and 65 (The Subordination of Women and Slaves)

Week 9 (Oct. 27-Nov. 2): Civilizations beyond the Near East, Greece, and Rome (2300-31 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 9; for discussions, Sources No. 68 (The Scythians), 69 (The Parthians), and 72 (The Expansion of the Celts into Greece and Anatolia).

Complete: Quiz 4, by Saturday, November 1st, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 10 (Nov. 3-9): Rise of Rome and the Roman Republic (753-120 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 10; For discussions, Sources No. 75 (The Violation of Lucretia and the Founding of the Roman Republic), 76 (The Origins of Roman Law), and 79 (The Bacchanalian Scandal and a Criminal Investigation of the Impact of Foreign Culture on Rome)

Complete: Paper 3, by Saturday, November 8th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 11 (Nov. 10-16): Crisis, Recovery, and the Creation of the Principate (150-21 BCE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 11; For discussions, Sources No. 81 (The Land Law of Tiberius Gracchus), 84 (Catullus), and 87 (An Exemplary Roman Woman)

Complete: Quiz 5, by Saturday, November 15th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 12 (Nov. 17-24): The Roman Peace (27 BCE-192 CE)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Reading Assignment: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 12; For discussions, Sources No. 90 (Deeds of the Deified Augustus), 92 (The Emperor Caligula), 97 (Roman Misogyny) and 100 (Dealing with Christians)

Week 13 (Nov. 25-30): Crisis, Recovery, and the Creation of the Late Roman Empire (192-337)

Attend: Discussion section; Lectures on Monday and Wednesday; NO CLASS ON FRIDAY—THANKSGIVING BREAK

Reading Assignment: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 13; for discussions, Sources No. 104 (The New Persian Empire), 106 (Diocletian's "Edict on Maximum Prices"), and 108 (The Edict of Milan)

Complete: Quiz 6, by Saturday, November 29th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 14 (Dec. 1-7): The Christian Empire and the Late Roman World (337-476)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Reading Assignment: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 14; for discussions, Sources No. 111 (The Murder of Hypatia of Alexandria), 115 (The Sack of Rome by the Visigoths), and 116 (The Sack of Rome by the Visigoths in God's Plan)

Complete: Paper 4, by Saturday, December 6th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

Week 15 (Dec. 8-14): The End of Antiquity (476-640)

Attend: Discussion section; lectures on Monday and Wednesday. NO CLASS ON FRIDAY

Reading Assignment: For lectures, Mathisen, Chapter 15; for discussions, Sources No. 119 (A Visigothic King and his Court), 121 (The Acclamations of the Senate of Rome), and 123 (The Character of Justinian and Theodora)

Complete: Quiz 7, by Saturday, December 13th, at 11:59pm (on Canvas)

All make-up material will be due by December 17th, at 11:59pm