

HTS 3029 Ancient Rome



Oxford Summer Program 2025

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Core IMPACTS in Social Sciences

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence
- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion

Course Description

This course is an introduction to the ancient Roman world. It covers a period of almost one thousand years, from the foundation of the city of Rome, traditionally dated to the middle of the eighth century BCE, to the end of the Julio-Claudian dynasty in 68 CE. We will focus primarily on the city of Rome itself and on Italy, but we will also examine provincial perspectives and developments in the wider ancient Mediterranean world. We will work with a variety of primary sources (literary, epigraphic, numismatic, and archeological), and cover topics as diverse as politics, institutions, social life, religion, and economics. The course will include a game/simulation component (“Reacting To The Past”) on the conspiracy of Catiline (63 BCE), in which students will assume roles of various 1st c. BCE characters and recreate the context of this momentous event in Roman history.

Course Objectives

Students will gain an understanding of Roman history and culture, and of the transformations the Roman world underwent up to the first century CE. Students will be able to discuss Roman expansion and empire formation, Roman identity, and modern and contemporary fascination with the Roman world. Students will be able to explain the ways in which the Roman world has shaped, and in many ways continues to shape, Western culture. More generally, students will learn to ask relevant questions about the history of the ancient world, and to work with primary source material in a responsible manner. In preparing for class and completing the required assignments students will improve their critical reading, research, academic writing, and public speaking skills.

Policy on absences

Attendance is mandatory and will be recorded. Students are allowed **one unexcused absence** and **one make-up quiz**. Beyond that, there will be a 5% deduction from the final grade for every unexcused absence. **Absences due to personal travel complications will not be excused.**

Materials

Required readings

All required readings are listed below on the course calendar.

Recommended books*

Mary T. Boatwright, Daniel J. Gargola, Noel Lenski, Richard J.A. Talbert, *The Romans: From Village To Empire*, ISBN 978-0-19-973057-5 **2nd edition** (please note: the pages assigned on the syllabus will NOT match the 1st edition. However, the content is not significantly different. If you don't mind the work of cross-checking editions, you can save a bit of money by buying the 1st edition. This book is available as an e-book).

***All required materials are free of charge and linked on the course calendar under primary source readings. The textbook ("Background readings" on the course calendar) is optional. If you do not have any background in/previous exposure to ancient history, I strongly recommend keeping up with the background readings. The quizzes will not test your mastery of background reading content – only of the assigned primary sources.**

Requirements

Attendance and participation in class discussion. **NB: Assigned primary source readings must be done prior to each class; this is essential to meaningful participation in class discussion. Read carefully through the participation rubric (on Canvas) – 20%**

Quizzes – **30%** (dates listed on the syllabus); multiple choice and short answer questions, only on primary source readings

Reacting to the Past – **20%** (prep assignment, speech, participation)

Final exam – **30%** (on 08/07 or 08/08)

Course Schedule

<i>Day</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Lecture Topic</i>	<i>Background Readings</i>	<i>Primary Source Readings</i>	<i>Assignment</i>
Week 1					
Tuesday	06/30	Introductions; Course overview; discussion of syllabus		Virgil, Aeneid, Book 1 (Canvas)	
Wednesday	07/01	Foundation Legends I; Roman values	The Romans From Village To Empire, Chapter 1, 1-27	Virgil, Aeneid, Books 2 and 4 (Canvas)	
Thursday	07/02	Foundation Legends II; Rome Under The Kings; Roman values	Chapter 1, 27-42	Livy I.1-7 and 9-16 http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus:text:1999.02.0026	
Friday	07/03	The Early Republic	Chapter 2, 43-69	Livy II.1-7 and 10-14 http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0151%3Abook%3D2	Quiz 1 (on primary source readings assigned for 7/1-7/4)
Week 2					

Monday	07/06	Galic Sack of Rome; Conquest of Italy	Chapter 2, 69-86	Livy V.32-55 http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/hopper/text?doc=Perseus%3Atext%3A1999.02.0154%3Abook%3D5	
Tuesday	07/07	The Punic Wars; A Mediterranean Empire	Chapter 3, 87-124	Polybius, Histories III.50-56 and 111-118 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Polybius/3*.html	Quiz 2 (on primary source readings assigned for 07/07 and 07/08)
Wednesday	07/08	The Roman Constitution		Cicero, On the Laws 3 (Canvas)	
Thursday	07/09	Consequences of Empire; Romanness; Rome in the 2nd century BC	Chapter 4, 125-153	Appian, Civil Wars, I, 1-3 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/e/roman/texts/appian/civil_wars/1*.html Cato the Elder, On Farming, 1-5 https://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Cato/De_Agricultura/A*.html	Quiz 3 (on primary source readings assigned for 07/09 and 07/10)
Week 3					

Monday	07/13	Italy Threatened, Enfranchised, Divided	Chapter 5, 154-183	Plutarch, Life of Sulla, ch. 1-10 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Sulla*.html	
Tuesday	07/14	Domination of Sulla	Chapter 6, 185-216	Plutarch, Life of Sulla, ch. 11-38 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Sulla*.html	Quiz 4 (on primary source readings assigned for 07/14 and 07/15)
Wednesday	07/15	Aftermath of Sulla's Rule; Pompey	Chapter 6, 199-216	Plutarch, Life of Pompey, 1-15, 22-30 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Pompey*.html	
Thursday	07/16	Caesar (to 49 BCE)	Chapter 7, 217-241	Plutarch, Life of Caesar, ch. 1-14 http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Plutarch/Lives/Caesar*.html	Quiz 5 (on primary source readings assigned for 07/16 and 07/17)
Week 4					
Monday	07/20	RTTP prep - core texts	Chapter 7, 241-256	Gamebook core texts #1 Cicero, First Speech against Catiline, #2 Cicero, #3 Sallust (Canvas)	

Tuesday	07/21	RTTP prep – core texts		Gamebook core texts #5 Cicero, Second Speech against Verres, #11 Cicero, On the Agrarian Law, and #15 Plutarch, Why We Ought Not to Borrow (Canvas)	Quiz 6 (on primary source readings assigned for 07/21 and 07/22)
Wednesday	07/22	RTTP prep – logistics & strategizing			
Thursday	07/23	RTTP 1 – Amnesty for hostes			
Week 5					
Monday	07/24	RTTP 2 – Land Reform and Debt Reform			
Tuesday	07/25	RTTP 3 – Senatus Consultum Ultimum			
Wednesday	07/26	RTTP post mortem Religion and Philosophy			
Thursday	07/27	Ashmolean Museum visit – part 1			
Week 6					

Monday	08/03	Ashmolean Museum visit – part 2		Reading on Canvas	
Tuesday	08/04	Caesar II – Civil Wars Augustus I	Chapter 8, 257-294	Suetonius, <i>Life of Augustus</i> http://penelope.uchicago.edu/Thayer/E/Roman/Texts/Suetonius/12Caesars/Augustus*.html 1-4, 8-18, 26-28, 34-35, 41-44, 70-71, 94	
Wednesday	08/05	Augustus II	Chapter 8, 294-308	<i>Res Gestae Divi Augusti</i> (The Deeds of the Divine Augustus) http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html	
Thursday	08/06	The Julio-Claudian Dynasty Roman Britain		Tacitus Cassius Dio	

Grading scale

90-100=A, 80-89=B, 70-79=C, 60-69=D, 0-59=F

Academic Integrity

Students are expected to abide by the Georgia Tech [Academic Honor Code](#) . **Plagiarism is a serious academic offense. According to our Academic Honor Code, plagiarism is the “submission of material that is wholly or substantially identical to that created or published by another person or persons, without adequate credit notations indicating the authorship.” Use of AI-generated content without proper attribution is plagiarism. The penalty for plagiarism will be a “0” grade for the assignment/test in question. A repeat offense will result in a failing grade for the course. All cases of plagiarism will be reported to the Office of Student Integrity ([see process here](#)).**

Accommodations

Support for students with disabilities: Please discuss your ODS-approved accommodations with me at the beginning of the course so we can plan for any necessary adjustments to requirements.

Student/Faculty Conduct

Please refer to the [Georgia Tech Student-Faculty Expectations Agreement](#).