ClSt 277: The World of Late Antiquity

Spring 2019   Tuesdays/Thursdays 3:40-4:55 PM

Instructor: Alberto Prieto
aprieto2@luc.edu
Office hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 5:00-5:30 PM and by appointment

Course Description
This course surveys the transformation of the Roman world between the 3rd and 7th centuries AD, when the Classical heritage of Europe and the Mediterranean basin, carefully constructed over centuries by the Romans on Greek foundations, fragmented and evolved into the governmental, religious, socio-economic, and cultural framework characteristic of the Medieval world. This period has traditionally been undervalued and even ignored in historical studies and university curricula, considered either a debased epilogue of decline following on the lofty heights of Classical antiquity or a long and desultory prelude to the ignorance and stagnation of the Dark Ages. In reality, Late Antiquity was a complex, fascinating, and vibrant age, with a large and varied cast of characters, a rich and sophisticated culture, a huge theater of activity, and an endless series of exciting twists and turns on a par with the most significant periods of European history. The course considers all major aspects of the human experience in this broad period—internal administration, foreign policy, religion, economy, military activity, education, social and daily life, and art and architecture—as they played out across the Roman world, from Spain to Mesopotamia, from Britain to North Africa.

Course Goals and Primary Learning Objectives
As a result of this course, the student should be able to:
• identify the key figures, institutions, events, accomplishments, locations, trends, questions, and concerns representing the history, culture, and social, economic, political, and religious organization of the Roman world between the late 3rd and early 7th centuries AD (see examinations below);
• determine and assess the role(s) that each of these had in, and their effect(s) on, the history and development of the Roman world during this period, both singly/individually and corporately, in both general and specific terms (see examinations below);
• develop critical thinking and communications skills (see Assignments 1 and 2 below).

Required Textbooks and Materials
The course will not require a textbook. All weekly readings will be available as PDFs on Sakai, electronic resources in the LUC Libraries, and WWW links.
Examinations and Assignments

The mid-term examination will test the student’s understanding of the major historical events, figures, and trends covered up to that moment. The final examination will allow the student to demonstrate his/her cumulative and synthesized knowledge of the history of Late Antiquity, based comprehensively on notes taken during class lectures and discussions, assignments, and the course readings.

A. The mid-term examination will consist of
1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for Late Antiquity;
2. a blank map requiring labels, dates, and other significant information;
3. a timeline of events; and
4. a short (3+ pages) essay addressing a theme in Late Antiquity.

B. The final examination will consist of
1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for Late Antiquity;
2. a blank map requiring labels, dates, and other significant information;
3. a timeline of events; and
4. a long (5+ pages) essay addressing a theme in Late Antiquity.

The exact scope of the each exam will be presented and discussed in the preceding week.

C. Assignments 1 and 2 will consist of two brief research projects relating the most important facts/details about, and the overall significance of,
1. a province of the Late Roman Empire (size, population, important settlements, date of conquest, major exports, notable events and personalities, etc.) and
2. a specific place or monument in Rome (location, date of creation, creator, materials, notable events and personalities, etc.)
in the context of Late Antiquity.

For both assignments the student will
1. compose a brief written summary (minimum 2 double-spaced typed pages of text) including graphical illustrations, to be submitted to the instructor via Sakai, and
2. make a brief (5-minute) presentation before the class with a succinct (max. 2-page) handout for distribution (including bulleted lists of the most important points and graphical illustrations).

The instructor will provide guidance on research sources.

The papers and presentations will be evaluated on
1. the quality and depth of the research and
2. the clarity of the delivery, both written and oral.

Assignment and Examination Schedule

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Evaluation points / Points contributed to final grade</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2/19-21</td>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>10 / 10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3/7</td>
<td>Mid-term examination</td>
<td>100 / 30</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Assessment and Attendance

The final grade will be calculated as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attendance and participation</th>
<th>10%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 1</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mid-term exam</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assignment 2</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final exam</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td><strong>100%</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The course grade scale is 94-100 = A, 90-93 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 84-86 = B, 80-83 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 74-76 = C, 70-73 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 60-66 = D, 59 and below = F.

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- classes meeting once a week: no more than one unexcused absence;
- classes meeting twice a week: no more than two unexcused absences;
- classes meeting three times a week: no more than two unexcused absences.

As this course meets twice a week, a total of two unexcused absence(s) will be permitted. Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a lowering of your final grade.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago's guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola's standards here:
You are responsible for complying with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the authorization of the instructor.
Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center in the first week of classes.

How to do well in this course

- Take good notes in class. Detailed questions that require more time than can be addressed in class should be posed to the instructor at the beginning or end of class, or in office hours.
- Do the readings BEFORE the class in which they will be discussed and bring the textbook to class. Some reading selections are longer than others, since it is impossible to divide them up equally in a course of this nature. The student should look over the week’s assignments well in advance to budget study time appropriately.
- Jot down notes, observations, and comments about each reading and bring them to class.
- Take all assignments seriously.
- See the instructor in office hours with any concerns about content, expectations, or performance.
- Come to class with specific questions and comments in mind.
- Participate. Contribute to the class and discussion in an informed way.

The importance of the readings and class attendance cannot be over-emphasized. In-class lectures explore specific themes, events, institutions and individuals; the readings provide a broader context for them within the general narrative of Late Antique history.

Class Policies

- As the material presented in the course is cumulative in nature, attendance in class is mandatory. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every class.
- Students will be given readings for each class meeting. Students are expected to be able to discuss the contents of the readings in class.
- Constructive participation in class discussions is essential. Students are encouraged make observations and ask questions.
- All work in class will be based on lectures, readings, assignments, and discussions. As history is by nature largely subjective and often touches sensitive subjects (race, gender, politics, religion, class, sexuality), there is a lot of room for debate, disagreement, and definition. Be curious and forthright, and always respectful.
- During class smartphones and other personal communication devices should be switched off or set to silent mode.
- Lectures may be recorded for study purposes, but only with the instructor’s prior and express permission.
- Students are expected to do all of their assigned work independently, including the assignments and the homework.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

The classroom is a particular environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their
identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process will count significantly against the participation grade component and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, habitually:

- cross-talking or talking out of turn
- whispering or talking to classmates
- reading non-related materials on paper or digital media
- communicating with external parties in any format (phone, text message, VoIP, e-mail, etc.)
- working on any other coursework during class
- arriving to class late or leaving class early
- exiting and re-entering the classroom for bathroom breaks and other non-emergency uses
- sleeping
- eating

Subject to Change Statement
This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. It is the student’s responsibility to check for announcements made during his/her absence.

Weekly course schedule

Week 1 (Jan. 21-24) - Introduction and background

T 1/22: Introduction

Th 1/24: A survey of Roman history from Romulus through the early 3rd century AD
Readings: E. Gibbon, The Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire Chs. 1, 2, and 39

Week 2 (Jan. 28-31) - Late Antiquity in context

T 1/29: The Roman Empire in the 3rd century AD

Th 1/31: Sources and evidence for Late Antiquity
Eusebius, Ecclesiastical History Book I Ch. 1 and Book X Chs. 8-9
Zosimus, New History Book 2 from “Three years after Dioclesian died... “ to end Chronography of 354 (skim)
Ammianus Marcellinus, Roman Antiquities Book 31 Chs. 1-16
Socrates, Ecclesiastical History Book 1 Chs. IV-X
Week 3 (Feb. 4-7) - From the late 3rd to the early 5th century: remaking the Roman Empire

T 2/5: Diocletian, the Tetrarchy, and Constantine

Th 2/7: The successors of Constantine through 411

Week 4 (Feb. 11-14) – The “fall” of the Roman Empire: the 5th and 6th centuries

T 2/12: The disintegration and collapse of the Western Roman Empire

Th 2/14: Justinian and the recovery of the west

Week 5 (Feb. 18-21) - The Later Roman Empire in facts and figures

T 2/19: Geography, ethnography, and infrastructure

Th 2/21: The emperor, the imperial court, the administration, and the army

Assignment 1 due
Week 6 (Feb. 25-28) – The barbarians at the gates

T 2/26: The Western and Eastern Goths and the Vandals

Th 2/28: The Alans, Amals, Avars, Burgundians, Franks, Gepids, Herulians, Huns, etc. etc. etc.; review for mid-term examination
R. Mathisen, “Provinciales, Gentiles, and Marriages between Romans and Barbarians in the Late Roman Empire.” The Journal of Roman Studies 99 (2009), 140-155.

Week 7 (March 4-7) – Art and architecture of Late Antiquity

T 3/5: The art and architecture of Late Antiquity
Readings:
- the royal purple: Cassiodorus, Variae (Letters) I.2
- mosaics in churches: Cassiodorus, Variae (Letters) I.6
- spoliation of ancient buildings: Cassiodorus, Variae (Letters) III.9-10, 31

Th 3/7: Mid-term examination

March 8-17 SPRING BREAK

Week 8 (March 18-21) – Religion in Late Antiquity

T 3/19: The traditional Roman religion, sun-worship, Neoplatonism, and Mithraism
Readings: D. Ulansey, “Mithraism: The Cosmic Mysteries of Mithras”

Th 3/21: Christianity
Readings: The Edict of Toleration and the Edict of Milan
Eusebius, Life of Constantine XXVII-XXXII
Eusebius, Oration in Praise of Constantine Chs. I and VI

Week 9 (March 25-28) – The impact of Christianity... and its internal divisions

T 3/26: The Christianization of the Roman Empire and the traditional counter-reaction
Readings: Mitchell 257-276

Memorials of Ambrose and Symmachus

Excerpts from the *Codex Theodosianus*


Th 3/28: Nicenes, Novatians, Melitians, Donatists, Arians, Monophysites, Acacians, Calcedonians, etc. etc. etc.


**Week 10 (April 1-4) - Settlements, occupations, and the economy**

T 4/2: Urban life and pursuits


Th 4/4: Rural life and the Mediterranean economy


**Assignment 2 due**

**Week 11 (April 8-11) – East vs. west: broad social and economic trends in the divided Empire**

T 4/9: The eastern Mediterranean


Th 4/11: The western Mediterranean


**Week 12 (April 15-18) – Natural and anthropic catastrophes of the 6th century**

T 4/16: Plague, famine, and the devastation of Italy and Africa

Readings: portrait of Justinian: *Procopius, Secret History* Ch. VIII, XII, XVIII

the great plague of 541-543: *Procopius, Persian War* 2.XXII-XXIII

the great blight of 535-536: *Cassiodorus, Variae (Letters)* XII.25-27

the Nika riot of 532: *Procopius, Persian War* 1.XXIV

the devastation of Italy in the 530s: *Cassiodorus, Variae (Letters)* XII.5, 28
the sieges of Rome, 537-: Procopius, *Gothic War* 5.XIX-XXV, 6.III-IX

Th 4/18: Threats in the west, center, and east  

**Week 13 (April 23-25) - The real fall of the Roman Empire**

T 4/23: The late 6th and early 7th century  

Th 4/25: review for final examination

Th 5/2  11:30-1:30    Final examination