

HIST 325: LATE ANTIQUITY, 200-600
SYLLABUS FOR FALL 2006
MWF 12:10-1:00

INSTRUCTOR:

Prof. Megan Williams

Office: Science ***

Office hours: Monday and Wednesday 3-5 PM, or by appointment

Contact: mhw@sfsu.edu (e-mail only; do not leave messages on my office voicemail)

PREREQUISITE:

ENG 214 required; minimum third-semester sophomore standing recommended

DESCRIPTION:

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

1. be familiar with the geography of the Mediterranean and Near East and with major events, persons, and developments in Roman history during the period 200-600 AD, in areas including political, military, administrative, social, economic, cultural and intellectual history
2. be familiar with the various types of evidence available for the period (including documents, coins, archaeological material, art, architecture, and literary evidence)
3. study, interpret and critically evaluate historical evidence in all these forms in its appropriate chronological, geographic and cultural contexts
4. read and critically evaluate modern scholarly interpretations and reconstructions of the period in light of relevant evidence
5. recognize the limitations of evidence and understand the constraints these place upon historical reconstruction, and the limitations of working with translations
6. use research tools competently, including print reference books, electronic databases of books and journal articles, and appropriate internet resources
7. develop, formulate and investigate a specific historical question on a topic of significance in the period
8. produce a research paper presenting evidence and evaluating previous scholarly opinion in order to propose a persuasive and interesting answer to that question
9. further develop historical imagination and empathy, so as to enter into a real dialogue with the past rather than simply viewing past persons and events through the lens of present realities and values
10. become more aware of what is taken for granted in present cultures and of the limitations our own cultures place upon our imaginations and our critical faculties

BOOKS ORDERED:

Cameron, Averil. *The Later Roman Empire*. Cambridge, MA: HUP, 2005. (Cameron 1)

Cameron, Averil. *The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity: AD 395-600*. London: Routledge, 1993. (Cameron 2) NOTE: This book is on back order and is not in the bookstore.

Ammianus Marcellinus. *The Later Roman Empire*. Tr. W. Hamilton, with introduction and notes by A. Wallace-Hadrill. London and New York: Penguin, 1986.

Eusebius. *Life of Constantine*. Tr. Averil Cameron and S. Hall. Oxford: OUP, 1999.

Procopius. *Secret History*. Tr. G.A. Williamson. London and New York: Penguin, 1982.

COURSE POLICIES:

WEIGHTING OF ASSIGNMENTS FOR THE FINAL GRADE:

iLearn activities and participation in discussions	20%
Quiz (20 minutes)	5%
Midterm exam (50 minutes)	20%
Abstract	5%
Research paper	30%
Final exam (120 minutes)	20%

Assignment descriptions, guidelines, and other resources will be available online.

MISSED EXAMS, LATE PAPERS, ATTENDANCE AND EXCUSES:

All assignments **must** be completed to pass the course. Students who fail to complete any one assignment **automatically fail** the course. Papers are to be submitted **in class at 12:10 exactly**. Late papers will be penalized one full grade for every 24 hours late or fraction thereof (e.g., a B paper turned in on the due date at 12:11 pm will receive a grade of C). Papers submitted more than three days (72 hours) after the deadline will receive a grade of F regardless of quality. Regular attendance is necessary to pass the exams; the readings alone will not be sufficient. Attendance will be taken at discussion sessions, with two unexcused absences permitted during the semester. Every student should be prepared to participate in every discussion section; specific guidelines for preparation for each discussion will be posted online in advance. Participation grades will be based on grades for 4 discussions and 6 iLearn activities, for a total of up to 20 points towards the final grade. Make-up tests will be given, late writing assignments excused, and further absences excused, only in the case of **emergencies** documented by (1) an original, signed letter, on letterhead or its equivalent, from a medical professional (in case of illness) or (2) an original death certificate or notarized copy (in case of attendance at a funeral). **No other excuses of any kind will be accepted.**

BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM:

In order for the classroom to serve as a learning environment, students must be courteous to each other and to the instructor, and must show respect for the course material. For example, differences of viewpoint should be expressed with courtesy and without personal hostility; at the same time, students should show respect for the course material by accepting that intellectual debate and disagreement are not personal, but an essential part of the learning process. Disruptive behavior is unacceptable at any time. This

includes talking or making noise during lecture, leaving cell phones on during class, interrupting the instructor or other students, speaking at great length during discussions, and so on. Students who are disruptive will be asked to leave the room. Do not make a habit of coming to class late, leaving during class and returning, or leaving class early, as this is very disruptive to the instructor and to other students.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY:

Integrity is essential to learning as it is to the good life. Its opposite in the academic context, dishonesty in the form of cheating or plagiarism, is unfair to your fellow students and is prohibited by the San Francisco State University Student Code of Conduct. Cheating includes, but is not limited to, copying other students' work and helping other students to cheat. All exams in this course will be closed-book; you may have only blank blue books and pens or pencils during the exam. Plagiarism means using someone else's work without proper acknowledgment (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism> for further discussion of the concept, and more resources). Students in this course are encouraged to work together in preparing for discussions and other group activities, reviewing for exams, and improving their writing, but should not contribute substantial content to other students' papers. Penalties for cheating and plagiarism range from, at minimum, a failing grade on the specific assignment, to expulsion from the University. All cases of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Department Chair and College Dean. Students are responsible for knowing the SFSU regulations concerning cheating and plagiarism, to be found at <http://www.sfsu.edu/~helpdesk/docs/rules/conduct.htm>.

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT (ADA) ACCOMMODATION:

The University is committed to providing reasonable academic accommodation to students with disabilities. The Disability Programs and Resources Center (DPRC) provides academic support services and specialized assistance to students with disabilities. In order to receive accommodation through the ADA, you must make a formal request through the DPRC in SSB 110 (415-338-2472). If you are registered with the DPRC, please let me know so that I can be prepared to accommodate you.

WARNING:

This syllabus is **for informational purposes only**. It is not a final statement of the policies, assignments, or schedule for this course. **Only the online course materials can be considered authoritative, and these are subject to change at any time.** Students are responsible for checking the online course materials regularly (at least three times a week) for any changes. If class must be cancelled, for example because I am ill, this will be announced online, and the syllabus will be adjusted appropriately.

COURSE SCHEDULE:

WEEK 1 (8/27-9/2/2006) Background

Wednesday: Introduction

Friday: Geography and climate

Take first iLearn quiz by today

Reading: Brown, 10-21 (e-reserve)

WEEK 2 (9/3-9/2006) Background

Monday: Labor Day, no class

Wednesday: The Roman empire

Reading: Wells, 223-254 (e-reserve)

Friday: Video: "Roman City"

WEEK 3 (9/10-16/2006) 180-235

Monday: The "principate": administration, culture and society

Reading: Wells, 202-223 (e-reserve)

Wednesday: Severan dynasty

Reading: Wells, 224-256 (e-reserve)

Friday: The Roman military

WEEK 4 (9/17-23/2006) 235-303 II

Monday: Sources for Late Antiquity

Quiz, 20 minutes

Reading: Cameron 1, 13-29

Wednesday: Crisis of the third century

Reading: Cameron 1, 1-12

Friday: Diocletian's reforms

Reading: Cameron 1, 30-46

WEEK 5 (9/24-30/2006) 283-312

Monday: The "dominate": administration, culture and society

Wednesday: **Discussion 1**: Imperial edicts and their ideology (documentary evidence)

Preparation: study Edict of Caracalla, Preamble to Diocletian's Price Edict (e-reserve)

Friday: Visit to the De Bellis collection

Meet at the library

Reading: start Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*

WEEK 6 (10/1-7/2006) 312-337

Monday: Video: "Biography: Constantine"

Reading: Cameron 1, 47-65; continue Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*

Wednesday: Christianity and empire

Reading: Cameron 1, 66-84; continue Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*

Friday: **Discussion 2**: Coinage of Constantine (numismatics)

Preparation: complete **coin study exercise**; finish Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*

WEEK 7 (10/8-14/2006) 337-363

Monday: Constantius II

Reading: Cameron 1, 85-98; Ammianus, selection TBA

Wednesday: Julian and the question of “pagan reaction”

Reading: Cameron 1, 85-98; Brown, 70-81 (e-reserve); Ammianus, selection TBA

Friday: **Discussion 3:** Imperial ceremony (monuments)

Preparation: complete **monuments study exercise**; review Ammianus readings

WEEK 8 (10/15-21/2006) 363-379

Monday: The Goths

Reading: Cameron 1, 133-150; Ammianus, selection TBA

Wednesday: Valentinian and Valens

Reading: Cameron 1, 99-132; Ammianus, selection TBA

Friday: **First exam** (180-379)

WEEK 9 (10/22-28/2006) 380-395

Monday: Theodosius I

Reading: Collins, 54-60 (e-reserve); Ambrose, *Oration on the Death of Theodosius I* (e-reserve)

Wednesday: Rise of Christian institutions

Reading: Cameron 2, 57-69; Collins, 61-79 (e-reserve); Gregory of Nazianzus, *Funeral Oration for Basil of Caesarea* (e-reserve)

Friday: **Library research session** (MANDATORY)

Meet at the library; preparation: come with a list of keywords and ancient authors relevant to your paper topic (about 5 of each)

WEEK 10 (10/29-11/4/2006) 395-425

Monday: Christianizing the elite

Reading: Cameron 1, 150-169; Cameron 2, 69-80; selections from Gregory of Nyssa, *Life of Macrina* (e-reserve)

Wednesday: Disasters of the early 5th century; Theodosius II

Reading: Brown, 114-125 (e-reserve), Collins selection (e-reserve); Jerome, Letter 127 on Marcella (e-reserve)

Friday: **Discussion 4:** Holy men and women (literary sources I)

Preparation: review primary readings since 10/23

WEEK 11 (11/5-11/2006) 425-457

Monday: Theodosian empresses

Abstracts due by e-mail by 12 noon and in hard copy in class at 12:10

Reading: TBA

Wednesday: The Huns

Reading: TBA; Priscus on Attila (e-reserve)

Friday: Veterans' Day (no class)

WEEK 12 (11/12-18/2006) 455-518

Monday: the fall of Rome in the West, 455-476

Reading: Cameron 2, 33-56; TBA

Wednesday: the survival of East Rome, 450-518

Reading: Cameron 2, 81-103; TBA

Friday: **Discussion 5**: portrayals of barbarians (literary sources II)

Preparation: review Ammianus and primary readings since 11/6

11/19-25/2006: Thanksgiving Break (no classes)

WEEK 13 (11/26-12/2/2006) 476-565

Monday: Sixth century dynamics

Reading: Cameron 2, 152-175; start Procopius, *Secret History*

Wednesday: Justinian in the West

Reading: Collins, 116-134; continue Procopius, *Secret History*

Friday: No class (finish research papers)

WEEK 14 (12/3-9/2006) 476-565

Monday: Video: "Biography: Justinian"

Research papers due

Wednesday: Justinian and the East

Reading: Cameron 2, 104-128; continue Procopius, *Secret History*

Friday: **Discussion 6**: Procopius, *Secret History* (literary sources III)

Preparation: finish and review Procopius, *Secret History*

WEEK 15 (12/10-16/2006) End of antiquity (550-600)

Monday: Late 6th Century West

Reading: TBA

Wednesday: Persia and the East

Reading: Cameron 2, 176-196; TBA

Friday: Review session for the final examination

PERSONAL PROFILE:

Name: _____

Class rank: _____

Are you a transfer student? _____

SFSU e-mail address: _____

What is your major? How and why did you choose it?

What was the last book you read for pleasure? Would you recommend it to someone else? Why or why not?

If you had a time machine, where would you go and why?

Why are you taking this class? What do you expect to enjoy most about it?