

History 331 Syllabus, Roman Imperial History [![[Image map
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History 331, The Roman and Early Byzantine Empire

Fall 1999

[Dept. of History \(http://www.urich.edu/~history/\)](http://www.urich.edu/~history/)

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- Course Description
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Course Description : Rome's "imperial" period traditionally begins with the "princeps" Augustus consolidating an empire stretching from Spain to Persia, Ethiopia to Russia, under a centralized bureaucracy. The period ends with Rome's Islamic successor driving two tiny survivors, Byzantium and Charlemagne's Holy Roman Empire, back under cover. This course will outline the evolving imperial strategies and their social effects. It will also attempt to explain the vast shift from Augustus' laissez-faire conglomeration of peoples and kingdoms to Diocletian's totalitarian state, from the great pax romana (Roman peace) to the endless battles with wave after wave of "barbarians," from syncretic polytheism to the theocracy of Theodosius and his Muslim followers, in short, from antiquity to the "middle age."

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Requirements : The following will be required of all students taking the course:

- attend classes with a look of intense intellectual curiosity
- complete all the assigned reading carefully taking notes and thinking about the inherent issues
- read Wells/Cameron and take a [test \(his331testfacts 99.html\)](#) on the basic background
- write out a developed problem with the reading for the day (for discussion days)
- contribute thoughtfully to class discussion
- write a detailed and persuasive essay for the midterm and final
- complete one of the following projects (original work is required here):
 - 10 page research paper.
 - 10 page narrative from an ancient perspective.
 - 5 page critical review of Gore Vidal's **Julian**.
 - World Wide Web page on a topic in the course.

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Grading :

- Test: 10%
- Class Participation: 20%
- Midterm: 20%
- Project: 25%
- Final: 25%

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Schedule of Assignments :

(N.B. These texts can only be accessed from UR's campus network.)

- 1. (August 25) Introduction to the Course.
- 2. (August 27) Review of Mediterranean Geography [read Wells]
- 3. (August 30) Review of Essential Names [read Wells]
- 4. (September 1) Review of the Period's Dateline[read Cameron]
- 5. (September 3) Lecture on Mediterranean before Augustus [read Cameron]
- 6. (September 6) Test on Background Information
- 7. (September 8) [What is History? \(history331texts/carr.html\)](http://history331texts/carr.html)
- 8. (September 10) [Suetonius' Life of Augustus \(history331texts/suetaug.html\)](http://history331texts/suetaug.html)
- 9. (September 13) [Res Gestae \(history331texts/resgestae.html\)](http://history331texts/resgestae.html) and the Augustan Revolution
- 10. (September 15) Lecture: the Principate
- 11. (September 17) Succession from Augustus to Tiberius: [Tacitus \(http://hermes.richmond.edu/stevenson/history331texts/augtobib.html\)](http://hermes.richmond.edu/stevenson/history331texts/augtobib.html)
- 12. (September 20) [The Annona and the Lower Classes \(history331texts/annona.html\)](http://history331texts/annona.html)
- 13. (September 22) [Caligula: Suetonius \(history331texts/caligula.html\)](http://history331texts/caligula.html)
- 14. (September 24) [Nero \(history331texts/tacitus3.html\)](http://history331texts/tacitus3.html) and [Decadence \(history331texts/satyricon.html\)](http://history331texts/satyricon.html)
- 15. (September 27) The Roman Empire from the Outside: [Josephus \(history331texts/josephus.html\)](http://history331texts/josephus.html)
- 16. (September 29) Roman [Slavery \(history331texts/slavery.html\)](http://history331texts/slavery.html):
- 17. (October 1) [Barbarians: Tacitus \(history331texts/barbarians.html\)](http://history331texts/barbarians.html)
- 18. (October 4) [Roman Farming \(history331texts/farming.html\)](http://history331texts/farming.html)
- 19. (October 6) Lecture: Greco-Roman Medicine: Galen
- 20. (October 8) Domitian and the Dominate: [Suetonius \(history331texts/dom.html\)](http://history331texts/dom.html)
- 21. (October 13) Lecture: [Roman Architecture and Engineering \(history331texts/enginlect.html\)](http://history331texts/enginlect.html)

- 22. (October 15) [Christianity \(history331texts/christian.html\)](#) from Various Perspectives ([Pliny \(history331texts/pliny.html\)](#))
- 23. (October 18) Lecture: Politics and Sexuality in the Imperial Court
- 24. (October 20) [Midterm \(history331texts/midterm.html\)](#)
- 25. (October 22) Lecture: Roman Games
- 26. (October 25) Septimius [Severus \(history331texts/severus.html\)](#): Historia Augusta
- 27. (October 27) Severan Women: [Cassius Dio \(history331texts/s_women.html\)](#)
- 28. (October 29) Lecture: Mystery Religions (optional: review [Third Century Emperors List \(history331texts/3centemps.html\)](#))
- 29. (November 1) Diocletian: [Barnes \(history331texts/barnes.html\)](#) and [Eusebius \(history331texts/eusebius.html\)](#)
- 30. (November 3) Constantine: [Eusebius \(history331texts/euseb.html\)](#)
- 31. (November 5) Julian on Himself: [Misopogon \(history331texts/julian.html\)](#)
- 32. (November 8) Who Killed Julian: [various readings \(history331texts/whodoni.html\)](#)
- 33. (November 10) [What is Roman Civil War? \(history331texts/civilwar.html\)](#)
- 34. (November 12) Lecture: the Christian State [**PROJECT DUE**]
- 35. (November 15) Late Roman Warfare: [Vegetius \(history331texts/Vegetius.html\)](#)
- 36. (November 17) The Fall of Rome: [City of God \(history331texts/cgod.html\)](#)
- 37. (November 19) Lecture: Theodoric and German Kings
- 38. (November 22) [Justinian's Warrior Belisarius \(history331texts/procop1.html\)](#)
- 39. (November 29) Justinian's Secret Life: [Secret History \(history331texts/procopius.html\)](#) (see also [Ravenna Mosaics \(history331texts/justinian_mosaics/sanvitale.html\)](#))
- 40. (December 1) Lecture: Heraclius and the Big Fall
- 41. (December 3) Lecture: Holy Roman Empire and Beyond
- DECEMBER 9: [FINAL EXAM \(history331texts/finalquestions.html\)](#)

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Texts :

- Colin Wells, **The Roman Empire**.
- Averil Cameron, **The Later Roman Empire, AD 284–430**.
- Averil Cameron, **The Mediterranean World in Late Antiquity, AD 395–600**.
- Gore Vidal, **Julian** (optional).
- All other readings are as linked here on this syllabus.

N.B. The instructor does not allow make up tests under any circumstances, nor does he accept late work.

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