

CLST 12S-01 (1950): ROMAN CIVILIZATION, SUMMER-II 2010

COURSE SYLLABUS

Subtitle: *Are We Rome? Reading Roman Culture.*

Meets Daily 9:30-10:45AM, Allen 226.

Instructor: Daniel J. Griffin, daniel.griffin@duke.edu.

Office Hours: 11:00AM -12:00PM daily and by appointment.

Course Webpage: <https://sites.google.com/site/clst12s2010/>

Synopsis: In 2007, Cullen Murphy published *Are We Rome? The Fall of an Empire and The Fate of America*. The book sparked much debate, not only in the scholarly community, but in popular culture as well. Contention arose over three issues in particular: (1), what about the United States parallels with the Roman Empire; (2), is the comparison valid; (3), what does this mean for us as a country or community going forward? The goal of this course is to read Roman civilization, from the "Rise" to the "Fall", through the lens of responsible comparative analysis. Student will be asked to read the seminal texts of Roman culture with aim of understanding both our own culture and humanity in general. Students will also be exposed to contemporary texts, music and movies (*warning*: some may contain adult content) in order to dissect how modern culture views antiquity. Class discussion is essential: students will be expected to take what they learn from brief in-class lectures and readings and apply that information in dialogue. At the end of the course, the student will be expected to have gained a solid understanding about the basics of Roman civilization and how to use comparative historiographic analysis responsibly.

This class is designed so as to fall in line with the guidelines listed for Cross-Cultural Inquiry (CCI), which is described in the Duke University Student Bulletin as follows: This Mode of Inquiry provides an academic engagement with the dynamics and interactions of culture(s) in a comparative or analytic perspective. It involves a scholarly, comparative, and integrative study of political, economic, aesthetic, social and cultural differences. It seeks to provide students with the tools to identify culture and cultural difference across time or place, between or within national boundaries. This includes but is not limited to the interplay between and among material circumstances, political economies, scientific understandings, social and aesthetic representations, and the relations between difference/diversity and power and privilege within and across societies. In fulfilling this requirement, students are encouraged to undertake comparisons that extend beyond national boundaries and their own national cultures and to explore the impact of increasing globalization.

Roman Civilization, like American Culture, is a topic too large to completely cover in one semester in one class. What I have attempted to do is create a syllabus that, while falling in line with both the guidelines listed above and with the topics generally considered essential to the time period, also appeal to a broad range of interests, one that is not too heavily historical, archaeological, nor philological in nature. I am open for changes based on student interests, and encourage students to explore beyond the boundaries set out below.

Expectations: By the end of the semester, I expect students to have mastery over the following:

- Identify key historical movements, figures, events, and places in the ancient Roman world and explain their impact (in the Roman world and beyond).
- Analyze a piece of historical evidence with an understanding of the effects of perspective bias, audience, context, and genre.
- Consider multiple kinds of evidence for a given period, and integrate those pieces of evidence into a coherent picture of a particular aspect of Roman life.
- Articulate and defend, both verbally and in a written argument, your own reading of texts.
- Recognize and respond to modern uses of Roman culture.
- Understand the intellectual genre of comparison and be able to express your ideas within it.

This class is introductory, and so the goals are modest compared to a more concentrated regimen of study found in the course of a BA in Classical Studies. That said, this is an intellectually demanding University with high standards, and so students are expected to perform to those standards in terms of intellectual quality and production. Considered another way, students will be expected to pass an intellectual Turing Test among their peers on the topic of the Romans.

I understand that this is a Summer Term class, which means a lot of information is covered in a short period of time. However, given that this is a seminar course, it is essential that you have covered the reading **before class and come with things to talk about**. I have scheduled readings to be heavier on the weekends and lighter during the weeks to facilitate this; I will also provide reading questions to help kick start your creative processes.

Grading Breakdown: Grading will be determined largely by attendance and discussion of readings (which should generally take 1-2 hours a night). There will be brief weekly papers (2-4 pages each), short quizzes on the basics (terms will be provided beforehand), and a final project, either a short paper or another creative project approved by the instructor. **If a paper is due, it is due by 9:30 AM the day it is due.**

27%: There are 28 classes: therefore, 27 points for in-class participation, giving you one absence.

32%: There are four short responses, each worth 8%. These are your opportunities to explore themes and ideas brought up in class. I will provide prompts, but if you want to do something else clear it with me first. Submit to me via email in a MS Word format (preferably .docx). I will respond with commenting, and rewrites may be submitted with permission.

5%: Map Quiz on July 9th: all terms will be distributed on the first day of class.

16%: 4 short quizzes, each worth 4%. This will be randomly assigned regularly.

20%: Final Project Grade. I consider a short paper to be in the range of 7-10 pages, but will be willing to consider changing that depending on how the course progresses. The course is titled "Are We Rome?", and students will be expected to express their opinion on some aspect of this question.

Policies & Pet Peeves:

- **Honor code violations will not be tolerated.** I care about your comprehension and exploration of the subject matter, not someone else's, which is why all written assignments require **only** the use of primary sources. I encourage you to email me questions, come by my office hours, or consult a librarian. While I find Wikipedia and the like to be a valuable source, **it is not a scholarly resource and so should not be used in papers**. If you wish to cite another source, you may do so, but please use the Chicago or APA styles of citation.
- Late assignments (posts, response papers, paper outline, etc) will only be accepted with advanced notification. If you must miss a class for which written work is due, you should email the work to me by the beginning of class.
- Although rare absences are understandable, **frequent absence without prior arrangement will affect your class participation grade beyond the amount listed in the syllabus**. If you miss class, I encourage you to contact me and arrange to cover the material during my office hours.
- **Please write CLST12S in the subject line of any email you send to me.**
- I use my computer in classes, and so may you. However, **NO email, IMs, Tweets, BBS messages vel sim**. It is rude to everyone else. Also, excessive pedantry from Wikipedia searching is not appreciated.
- No active cell phones. If you have to take a call, make sure it is likely an emergency and excuse yourself.

- **No cover pages** on assignments. Look at how this syllabus is titled: do something like that. Also, when formatting pages, please have 1 inch margins, 12 point font, double spacing.
- **If you need help doing something, especially technology-wise, ask me.** I will not ask you to do something that I cannot do myself.

Important Dates:

- **July 6 (Tuesday):** First Day of Classes
- **July 8 (Thursday):** Drop-Add Deadline
- **August 2 (Monday):** Last Day to Withdraw W
- **August 12 (Thursday):** Summer Term II Classes End
- **August 15 (Sunday):** 2-5p Final Exam Period, Final Paper Due

Texts for Classes: Most readings will be posted online in .pdf form. **Save a Tree, read them on a computer please.** I have asked you to purchase the following books based on my judgement of their utility:

- Fagles, Robert. *The Aeneid*. ISBN: 0143105132. Penguin Classics.
- Graves, Robert. *The Twelve Caesars*. ISBN: 0140455167. Penguin Classics.
- Murphy, Cullen. *Are We Rome?: The Fall of an Empire and the Fate of America*. ISBN: 0547052103. Mariner Books.
- Ruden, Sarah. *Satyricon*. ISBN: 087220510X. Hackett Publishing.

There are many translations of these works, and I recommend them. It makes things easy if I don't have to track down what you are citing in your papers.