

CS 3552F (FALL 2025)
ARCHAEOLOGY OF ANCIENT ROME



WELCOME to Archaeology of Ancient Rome!

Ancient Rome was one of the most dynamic, powerful, and accomplished societies to have ever existed. In a mere five centuries, Rome grew from a small hilltop village (*ca.* 900 – 700 BC) to a vast empire that controlled the entire Mediterranean (146 BC). Did you know that the Roman Empire at its largest extent (*ca.* AD 115) covered areas that now comprise at least forty-eight modern countries? Or, that the primary sewer still used today in Rome was constructed by a king of Rome almost 3,000 years ago? This course will look at the archaeological remains from the entire span of Roman history beginning with its life as a small monarchy (*ca.* 753-509 BC), to its long run as a Republic (509-31 BC), to its transition into a vast empire ruled by a single imperial figure (31 BC onward). We will explore the remains of houses, temples, warehouses, bars, bathhouses, and apartment buildings in the major cities of Italy such as Rome, Ostia and Pompeii. We will consider the role of monumentality, symbolism and artistic representation in public and private complexes throughout Rome and Italy. The small artifacts that were used in daily life will be investigated towards understanding their role in the creation and maintenance of power and individual identity. The course focuses on the art, architecture and artifacts from Italy and discusses how these are interpreted today to reconstruct all aspects of life in the past.

I am Dr. Elizabeth Greene and I will be your instructor for this course. I am Associate Professor of Roman Archaeology in the Department of Classical Studies. I teach on all aspects of Classical Archaeology (primarily Greek and Roman), particularly the archaeology of the Roman world and the Roman provinces in Europe, North Africa and the Middle East. I have worked on archaeological excavations in Tuscany and Rome, and on various military forts along the Roman frontier in England. Currently, I am involved in an on-going excavation project at a site called Vindolanda near Hadrian's Wall. Please feel free to discuss with me any aspect of archaeology, how to get involved with archaeological projects, or just come introduce yourself.

INSTRUCTORS INFO:

Instructor: Dr. Elizabeth Greene
Office Hours: TBA

TA/Co-instructor: Cheyenne Eversole
Office Hours: TBA

REQUIRED COURSE MATERIAL

There are no textbooks for this course. Readings and links will be posted to the course website when applicable. These will be listed in the weekly reading with author, title, and URL link when applicable.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Archaeology of Rome and Italy will trace the evolution of the Roman world from the earliest cultural groups found in Italy through the Roman imperial period (*ca.* 1000 BC – AD 300). The course focuses primarily on the archaeological remains from this time period (architecture, sculpture, artifacts, etc.) and how we use them today to understand and interpret social, political, economic and historical phenomena of the Roman world.

The earliest archaeological remains in and around the city of Rome will be the backdrop for our investigation of the initial power struggles in central Italy during the period of the monarchy (753 BC – 509 AD). We will examine the early hut settlements on the Capitoline and Palatine Hills and debate theories about the earliest city wall to be found near the Palatine, argued by some archaeologists to have been the “wall of Romulus”, the mythical founder and namesake of the city (753 BC). We will then explore the establishment of the Roman Republic in 509 BC, when they threw off the power of the kings, when we will explore how we can understand these socio-political changes from the material record. This period takes us through a major part of the establishment of Rome as the dominant power in the Italian peninsula, first by the conquest of neighboring Etruscan cities and eventually by dominating and assimilating all cultural groups in Italy. The period of the Republic also saw conquest overseas with the subjugation of the Carthaginians and Greeks finally in 146 BC, resulting in dominance over Spain, North Africa, and Greece and its surrounding areas.

We will explore the shifting and changing power struggles and social organization through the material expression of both the State and individuals during this time. We will look at the houses, temples, public monuments, governmental structures and spaces, and objects of daily use in order to understand how the incorporation of so many cultural entities changed the face of Rome and Italy to create a multicultural State. The first term ends by looking at the transition from Republic to Empire (31 BC) and will focus particularly on the city of Rome as a landscape to demonstrate and legitimize power. This phenomenon can be traced particularly well in the buildings and artistic program of the Late Republican city (*ca.* 100-31 BC) and that of the early empire under the first emperor Augustus (31 BC – AD 14). We will consider how past motifs and styles from Italy and elsewhere were employed in the power struggles of this shifting and changing world. We will continue learning about the full-grown Roman Empire that spanned what now comprises 48 modern countries from Britain to Syria and from Romania to Sudan.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

On successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

- I. Understand basic archaeological terms relating to the architecture, art and artifacts of the Roman world.
- II. Understand the basic historical timeline, geographical layout and the physical components of the Roman world from its beginnings as a small village in *ca.* 1000 BC to about AD 500.
- III. Identify characteristics of specific Roman sites by reading an archaeological plan or with images of a site’s specific features (e.g. temples, houses, defenses, sculpture).
- IV. Articulate how buildings, city plans, and monuments reflect social and political organization and how these features were used to push political agendas and make broader statements to their audience.

- V. Understand how artifacts and other material culture played a role in the creation and maintenance of one's identity such as ethnicity, sex/gender, religion, class, etc.
- VI. In turn, understand the limitations and biases inherent in the archaeological record and what effect this has on our understanding of life in the past.

LEARNING OUTCOMES/TRANSFERABLE SKILLS

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- I. historical perspective: An understanding that the cultural, political and social phenomena of any historical period needs to be understood within the historical context of which it is a part. The long duration of time covered in this course allows a broad understanding of change and evolution of a culture.
- II. appreciation of the physical environment: How the monuments, buildings, street layout, etc. in any historical period may signify important ideals such as status, identity, and power, on both the civic and individual level. Throughout the course both lectures and discussions will emphasize the messages present in the physical appearance of a city and its monuments.
- III. the ability to analyze primary evidence (archaeological, documentary, artistic, etc.): Students should gain a developed understanding of the potential, as well as limits and restrictions, of our evidence in the reconstruction of past societies. Our class discussions will provide practice and guidance in this interpretation and the research paper will give an opportunity to investigate archaeological material closely and to reach conclusions independently.
- IV. writing skills: Students will learn to synthesize material and present their thoughts clearly and concisely within prescribed limits, to present a thesis statement with clear objectives and approach, and to cogently argue a point in written format. Students will have these opportunities in two research papers that will be written in stages over the course of the entire year. Emphasis is put on acquiring and honing skills in writing and research, rather than on the ability to produce a long paper.
- V. communication skills: The ability to present succinct thoughts in oral discussion is important. Students will practice communicating by stating their opinions and posing questions to their peers towards advancing in-class discussion. It is hoped that students will learn to be inquisitive, to question presumed "fact," and to learn to craft an argument for oral presentation. This should not only involve the repetition of learned knowledge but analysis and conclusions about newly acquired knowledge.

ASSIGNMENTS and ASSESSMENT

Assignment #1 *	Due Sept. 29, accepted w/o penalty until Oct. 3	15%
Assignment #2 *	Due Oct. 27, accepted w/o penalty until Oct. 31	15%
In-class written exam #1 **	October 9	15%
In-class written exam #2 **	November 13	15%
Final Exam (cumulative) ***	During December exam period	35%
Class participation ****	On-going	5%

* Please note that because the submission deadline for these assessments (Assignment #1 and #2) already includes flexibility in the form of acceptance without penalty within a 5-day window, the instructor reserves the right to deny academic consideration for assignments which are submitted following the end of the period of flexibility. Students are expected to submit each of the assignments by the deadline listed. Should extenuating circumstances arise, students do not need to request Academic Consideration and they are permitted to submit their assignment past the deadline on the date specified above (4 days later, submission by 11:55pm on the date specified) without a late penalty. Should students submit their assessment beyond the period of flexibility after the due date, a late penalty of 5% per day will be applied. Academic Consideration requests may be granted only for extenuating circumstances that started before the deadline and lasted longer than the No-Late-Penalty Period.

** If either of the in-class written exams are missed for any reason, students will be required to write a make-up test, in person, shortly after the original test was scheduled. Individual assessments and assignments cannot be missed and there will be no re-weighting of grades in this class. Every assignment and assessment must be completed by every student.

*** All academic consideration requests must include supporting documentation; however, recognizing that formal documentation may not be available in some extenuating circumstances, the policy allows students to make one Academic Consideration request without supporting documentation in this course (see policies regarding missed work above). However, the following assessments are excluded from this, and therefore always require formal supporting documentation:

- Examinations scheduled during official examination periods (Defined by policy)

**** Attendance will be taken every day in this class; however, just attending every class does not guarantee full marks for class participation. We will have in-class discussions, sometimes planned and announced ahead of time, other times they will be spontaneous, where participation is expected. You may also wish to show engagement with the course material and participate by asking questions in class as the material is presented and discussed. If you have any concern about this aspect of the class, please speak to me in person at the start of the term. If you would like to check-in for feedback on your participation level, please speak to me anytime during the semester, but preferably before the very end of the semester, while you still have time to fix things if you're unhappy with your feedback.

Students must familiarize themselves with the *University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs* posted on the Academic Calendar:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:

https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academic_considerations/

All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

COLLABORATION and INDIVIDUAL WORK

Any learning experience is highly enhanced by group discussion, teaching your peers, and asking questions of me and your classmates. I encourage you throughout the course to create study groups, to quiz each other on historical and aesthetic details learned in the course, and to help each other with difficult topics when necessary. These efforts will always create lively discussion in class and ultimately help you remember information and utilize facts towards a greater understanding of our subject matter and better performance on assignments.

It is expected, however, that all of your tests, exams, and written assignments (i.e. things that are passed into me for course assessment) will be your own original work that you have completed by yourself and in your own words. As an example, it is always very useful to study with a group for an upcoming test or exam and this is highly encouraged. What you will want to avoid, however, is creating "sample" or "practice" essays together on topics that you think might end up on the exam and then use those words exactly or even roughly in an exam essay. You want to discuss ideas, quiz each other on facts, and learn from each other. You DO NOT want to take each other's words and original ideas and present them as your own in a paper or on a test or exam. This would be considered plagiarism and is an academic offence on the part of all involved. This is only one example, so please, if you have any questions about what does and does not constitute an academic offence, please come discuss this with me and see the Academic Handbook section on scholastic offences.

USE OF AI ON ASSIGNMENTS

In this course, students are permitted to use AI tools exclusively for information gathering and preliminary research purposes. These tools are intended to enhance the learning experience by providing access to diverse information sources. However, it is essential that students critically evaluate the obtained information, exercise independent thinking, and engage in original research to synthesize and develop their own ideas, arguments, and perspectives. The use of AI tools can serve as a starting point for exploration; however, students are expected to uphold academic integrity by appropriately attributing all sources and avoiding plagiarism. Assignments should reflect the students' own thoughts and independent written work. By adhering to these guidelines, students contribute to a responsible and ethical learning environment that promotes critical thinking, independent inquiry and allows them to produce original written contributions.

CLASSROOM TECHNOLOGY USE

I will post PowerPoint lectures in advance of the class. It is perfectly acceptable for you to download these and have them on your laptop for class (in fact, I suggest this). You will be able to follow along with the lecture and not waste efforts writing down what is written on the slide. Sometimes the lecture will only appear the morning of the class. This is unavoidable for me as I reserve the right to make last minute changes and additions to the PowerPoint before it is covered in class. PowerPoint presentations will be based on a complete subject (e.g. Augustan Rome) and the same file may be used for several lectures. I will label files in a clear and orderly way to minimize any confusion.

I expect that laptops will be used in class for academic purposes. If you choose to spend the class doing other things on your computer not related to class you will be disturbing your peers around you. Please be conscious of this and respect others in the class. If you insist on being there but doing other things on your laptop, please sit at the back of the class so your screen is not disturbing anyone behind you.

****Laptops, phones, and other electronic devices or study aids are NOT allowed in tests or exams****

COURSE COMPONENTS

LECTURES AND ATTENDANCE:

I will take regular attendance in this course (some class meetings will have expected participation, see below), but it is highly recommended that you attend all lectures. The most important part of this course is class meeting. Lectures will use assigned reading as background and will build on these topics as well as introduce new material. Exams will be based on lectures and the reading material together, but it is a good sign that if a particular topic is prominent in the reading and discussed at length in lecture, that this is an important issue and will be found on the tests and exam.

The lectures will always have accompanying PowerPoint presentations and they will be posted on the course website. Since this is an archaeology class, there will be many images that you will be expected to recognize and analyze throughout the course. Images will appear in the PowerPoint presentation for the week's discussions, labeled with their identification and date, but there will be highly relevant information discussed that will only be accessible in the class lecture, including formal presentation by me and informal student participation and discussion. If you miss a class, it is advised that you obtain notes from a fellow student and the PowerPoint, and I encourage you to utilize office hours with questions after you have familiarized yourself with the material. It is not possible to simply replace the class lecture with the PowerPoint without attending lecture and I will also not give the lecture again during office hours to an individual student.

MID-SEMESTER TESTS

Tests are meant to show your comprehension of concepts and ideas, as well as your ability to remember buildings, sites and historical events that are important for the study of Roman archaeology (you will indeed need to memorize information in this course, such as historical dates or building types, to create a solid base of knowledge). Exam questions will require you to understand conceptual ideas, as well as specific dates and features of important buildings and events (e.g.: What symbolic importance is present in the iconography found in the upper story of the Augustan Forum complex?). I am not looking for you to spend lots of time on tiny details that have little consequence on broader concepts (e.g.: How many arches are there on the Colosseum not including the main entrances?). The questions are not out to trick you, but they will require knowledge, thought and reflection to answer correctly.

Mid-semester tests are written and will be taken only in person in the classroom. There will be no remote or virtual options for exams. The mid-semester tests are non-cumulative (e.g. test #1 will cover from the beginning of the semester until the class before the test. Then test #2 will include the material covered from the class after Test #1 to the class before Test #2, etc.). In other words, they only include material covered between each test. They are meant to allow you to synthesize the material and assess your knowledge throughout the semester. Tests will help you identify any problems or gaps before being overwhelmed with the final exam at the end of the semester. See below for information on the Final Exam, but **please note that THE FINAL EXAM IS CUMULATIVE, covering material from the whole course.**

Tests will be taken in one class period and take 1-2 hours to complete (see specific test dates). They will consist of short identifications and/or short answer questions and will also include images for assessment that were encountered in the PowerPoint presentations. Students will be responsible for knowing the place and general date represented in the image, and for understanding why these examples are important for our study of Roman archaeology. I will ask you to identify the image and provide a rough date for its construction/use, its location and one or two further details of its importance (e.g. if I show a picture of the first temple to Jupiter Optimus Maximus on the Capitoline Hill in Rome you will be expected to know what building it is and where it is located, when it was constructed, and I might ask further, e.g. to what god/s the structure was dedicated. Or, from what culture did the Romans borrow this building type?). The short answer questions will require more thought and will generally take about one or two paragraphs to answer. For example, a question could ask: Briefly discuss the cultural components that were present in Italy during the formation of the city of Rome.

I will provide review sheets with important terms and questions to guide your review. These are meant to aid students in understanding major terms and concepts in the course and to help you begin formulating answers. **These sheets are meant to help students organize review of the material and to start thinking about the course comprehensively. They are NOT a replacement for lectures, or a “practice exam”, or a comprehensive list of everything that might be on the exam.**

****No books, notes, laptops or any other electronic devices are allowed during tests****

FINAL EXAM

The final exam in the December exam period will be cumulative and will focus on overall concepts in Roman archaeology that we have looked at throughout the semester. You will need to refer to the material we have examined in class (e.g. sites, buildings, sculpture and other art, artifacts) that illustrates your argument within the essay answer. For example, a conceptual exam question might be: Discuss how the city of Rome became an arena for the physical expression of elite competition at particular points in the history of the city. You would discuss briefly the historical background of your chosen answer and cite specific buildings within Rome, e.g. for the late Republic you might discuss the Theater of Pompey, as an important example and why this complex illustrates your point particularly well. The exam questions will allow you to show that you understand broad concepts while also using specific material from the entirety of the course.

The exam will consist of written essays, all of medium length (i.e. take 40-60 minutes per essay for planning, writing and re-reading, *ca.* 3-5 pages of an exam booklet depending on writing size, style, spacing, etc.). This will give students the ability to show their strengths in various topics and not rely on only one essay for the final exam grade. The last few class meetings are designed to synthesize the material we have covered and help you study for the final exam.

****No books, notes, laptops or any other electronic devices are allowed to be used during final exams****

CLASS PARTICIPATION AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

I will spend much of the time lecturing, but I will also pose questions to the class and we will have discussions during which participation is expected. I will present questions or topics, sometimes spontaneously, sometimes by distribution in advance, and will utilize reading material and past lectures. It is hoped that these discussions will help students use the knowledge that they have gained and to solidify concepts before we move onto new material. For instance, before jumping into the complexity of Augustan Rome, we will stop and discuss the Late Republic and the environment from which Augustus emerged as emperor of Rome. At times we will also do small activities that require discussion with peers or group organization and these will not be voluntary tasks. You do not need to speak or take part in discussion every day, but I do expect that throughout the semester students will be an active member of the class. This is a good (and relatively easy!) way to gain 10% of your final grade and will also be helpful to synthesize information when studying for tests and exams. Please note that just showing up to class regularly does not equal “participation,” though this will obviously help. I encourage you to come speak to me (well before the end of the semester when there is still time to fix things) if you are unsure if your participation is sufficient or if you have any serious issues with this aspect of the course.

ADDITIONAL STATEMENTS (per University Policies)

ACADEMIC OFFENSES

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here:

<http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/scholasticdisciplineundergrad.pdf>.

Statement on the use of plagiarism-checking software

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

POLICY ON ACCOMMODATION FOR RELIGIOUS HOLIDAYS

Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#). Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Religious Accommodation requests for final exams should be submitted via the Student Absence Portal.

ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION AND ACCESSIBLE EDUCATION

Academic Accommodation is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program.”

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>.

Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students.”

https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html

Special Examinations

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

SUPPORT SERVICES

Academic Advising

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

Mental Health Support

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western

(<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

Gender-based and sexual violence

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentssupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Learning Development and Success

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

USC

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.