

## RESEARCH FORUM: GRECO-ROMAN EGYPT

CLASSICS 301-01

FALL 2011

MEETS: TUES./THURS. 1:20 TO 2:50 PM IN OLD MAIN 003

OFFICE HOURS: WED. 12:30-2 PM & THURS. 3-4:30 PM



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### **COURSE OVERVIEW**

This course examines the fascinating and often surprising world of Greco-Roman Egypt. Following its conquest by Alexander the Great in 332 BCE, Egypt fell under the sway of the Greek Ptolemaic dynasty and then—after the death of Cleopatra in 30 BCE—of the Romans, whose emperors ruled it as a special province until the Arab conquest. In examining this historical period, students will learn how to conduct research using the rich variety of surviving ancient evidence, including papyri, coins, paintings, sculpture, and documentary history, and to ask poignant, meaningful questions of the material. Alongside primary sources, they will also be reading and engaging critically with modern discussions and controversies about a range of issues and interpretive problems. A key component of the course will be a final research project, which will allow students to apply and showcase the skills they have acquired in handling this unique subject.

### **COURSE GOALS**

By the end of this semester-long course, students are expected . . .

- To have grappled critically with many of the central questions informing the study of the political, social, and cultural history of Greco-Roman Egypt.
- To be able to prepare, organize, and deliver a scholarly presentation.
- To be able to conduct research on specific topics using both ancient and modern sources and to produce a final research paper featuring a clearly articulated thesis, sound structure, and deft use of analysis and supporting evidence.
- To have acquired valuable skills, including research, writing, interrogative, and analytical strategies, that they can employ not just in their study of ancient history and culture, but also in their other future academic and professional endeavors.

## **EXPECTATIONS & ASSESSMENT**

### Grade Breakdown:

The course features three main components, designed with the above course goals specifically in mind: class participation, a student-led presentation, and a research project. These are described in the paragraphs below and are weighted as follows:

Participation (including attendance and reading surveys)	20%
Presentation (including bibliography)	15%
Research Project	65%*

\*The Research Project has several components. See the “Research Project” handout (also available on Moodle) for a detailed description of each component, along with specific due dates, relative weight of each assignment, and grading rubric.

### Participation:

A significant portion of each class period will be devoted to seminar-style discussion and analysis of assigned readings. Since student discussion will play such a pivotal role in this course, on-time arrival, regular attendance, and active engagement and participation are expected of every student. You are permitted one unexcused absence during the semester; each additional unexcused absence will result in the loss of a 1/2 letter grade from your final course grade. Whenever possible, please notify me of any projected absences well in advance. Note that the instructor has full discretion in all cases as to what constitutes an “excused” absence.

The course schedule provided below outlines the reading assignments for each class. Please note that these are due on the date with which they appear on the schedule. To focus your reading and assist you with preparation, I will be posting prompts and questions for each topic on Moodle. Please consult these before you begin your reading assignments. In addition, you are expected to complete a short Reading Survey on Moodle ahead of each class for which I have assigned readings. Ideally, this should be submitted at least one hour before class (i.e. by 12:20 pm), as it is designed to help me better focus our discussion in class. While the Reading Surveys are meant to be informal, the regularity and thoughtfulness of your submissions will be evaluated and will factor into your final participation grade for the course.

### Presentation:

Over the course of the semester, you will each have the chance to prepare and deliver a scholarly presentation to the rest of the class. You will be working in groups of two or three. I have selected the general topics but have allowed significant leeway to accommodate your creativity. As part of the project, you are required to assemble a scholarly bibliography of approximately 10-12 sources on your topic and to distribute it to the other students in the class session *before* your presentation (i.e. on Thursday if your presentation is on the following Tuesday). This bibliography will allow you to begin

putting into practice the skills you have learned in the library tour and will also help you develop strategies for your final research project. The specific requirements for the presentation are spelled out in detail in the “Presentation” handout, to be distributed in class and available on Moodle.

### Research Project:

This course satisfies Macalester’s requirements for a Writing Designation. A great deal of our collective attention will therefore focus on the preparation and completion of a final research project, which will be enhanced, improved, and evaluated in various stages, culminating in the submission of a 15-18 page paper to be submitted on the final day of class. A series of assignments and in-class workshops will focus directly on the project. As these assignments are cumulative and designed to contribute to your progress with the paper, it is imperative that you submit them on time. Late assignments will result in the loss of a full letter grade for each class period they are delinquent. All of the specific requirements and expectations for the research project, including the relative weight of each component, are spelled out in detail in the “Research Project” handout, to be distributed in class and available on Moodle.

### **CLASSROOM ETIQUETTE & TECHNOLOGY**

To help us avoid awkward interruptions please make sure any devices with an on-off switch are fully turned off for the duration of every class. Since this is a seminar-style discussion class, students will not need to bring laptops to class—and are generally discouraged from doing so. Student-led presentations, which will make use of audiovisual materials, are the one exception to this rule. If you are used to taking notes on the computer while you read, please print them out and bring these hard copies—rather than your computer—to class. Also, please be mindful about interrupting your peers or being dismissive of their comments or ideas in class. Lively debate and even disagreement are important parts of academic discourse, but so are sensitivity, respect, and diplomacy. All students should feel comfortable and confident expressing themselves in the class. Differences of interpretation about historical problems are just that; please don’t make them personal.

### **OTHER IMPORTANT COURSE LOGISTICS**

#### Office Hours & Contact Details:

As indicated in the heading of the syllabus, my office hours this semester will be 12:30-2 pm on Wednesdays and 3-4:30 pm on Thursdays, as well as by appointment. You are invited, even encouraged, to stop by my office, and I am available to discuss questions about the course or to address (as I am able) any other concerns, academic or personal, that you may have. For issues or questions needing a quick response, I can be reached via my office phone or e-mail (both listed at the beginning of the syllabus). I will always try to respond promptly, but please note that I may not always have ready access to e-mail, especially outside of normal business hours and on weekends. If you do need to get in touch with me during these times, you can reach me on my cell phone, 510-717-2482.

### Accommodation for Students with Disabilities:

I am committed to providing assistance to help you be successful in this course. Accommodations are available for students with documented disabilities. You are advised to contact the Office of Student Affairs at 651-696-6220 to make an appointment with Lisa Landreman, the Associate Dean of Students. This should be done as early as possible in the semester. Additional information regarding the accommodations process for students with disabilities can be found at [www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/](http://www.macalester.edu/studentaffairs/disabilityservices/)

### Academic Integrity:

Macalester expects its students to maintain the highest standards of academic honesty and integrity in their college work. A student found guilty of any form of academic dishonesty, including cheating, forgery, and plagiarism, is subject to disciplinary action by the College. Please take a moment to review Macalester's policy on academic integrity: <http://www.macalester.edu/academicprograms/integrity.html>

## **CLASS SCHEDULE & ASSIGNMENTS**

N.B. This schedule is provisional and is subject to change or adjustment at the discretion of the instructor. Ample notice will be given for any changes and the syllabus posted on Moodle will reflect the most recently updated list of assignments.

### Week 1

Thurs. 9/8 Welcome and Introduction to "Greco-Roman Egypt"  
*Readings:* Bowman 11-20.

### Week 2

Tues. 9/13 Ptolemaic Egypt: Historical Context, Sources, and Problems  
*Readings:* Bowman 22-37; Austin 94-96, 444-448; 478-479; 374-6, 450-452, 453-455, 376-378; 508-9.

Thurs. 9/15 Introduction to Papyri  
*Readings:* <http://www.lib.umich.edu/papyrus-collection/learning-about-papyrology>; <http://www.lib.umich.edu/reading/Zenon/index.html>;  
Vandorpe 2009 216-248.

### **Select Topics for Presentation**

### Week 3

Tues. 9/20 Administration, Bureaucracy, and Society in Ptolemaic Egypt

*Readings:* Bowman 56-65; Lewis 1986 104-23;  
<http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/collection/menches>; Austin 553-554, 558-562.

Thurs. 9/22 A Hellenistic Royal Capital: Alexandria  
*Readings:* Green 1990 80-91; Bowman 204-218, 223-229; Austin 33-35; 510-514, 565-566.

#### Week 4

Tues. 9/27 Library Visit: Meet @ 1:20 pm in Dewitt Wallace Library

Thurs. 9/29 Literature and Culture in Ptolemaic Egypt  
*Readings:* Apollonius of Rhodes *Argonautica* 1, 3 (find/read summaries of Books 2 and 4 online); Theocritus *Idylls* 1-2, 5, 14, 15, 17, 29-30; Green 1990 201-215, 233-247.

#### Week 5

Tues. 10/4 Greeks and Egyptians  
*Readings:* Bowman 122-126, 157-164; Austin 326, 545, 569-571; “The Demotic Chronicle”: <http://www.yorku.ca/pswarney/2110/dem-chron>; <http://pcarlsberg.ku.dk/highlights/nectanebosdream>; Gruen 2006 308-313.

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Article Review and Library Exercise Due**

Thurs. 10/6 The Katochoi of the Serapeum: A Closer Look at a Papyrus Archive  
*Readings:* Austin 536-538, 562-564; Lewis 1986 69-87; Rowlandson 1998 98-105.

#### Week 6

Tues. 10/11 Student Presentation #1: The Archaeology of Alexandria

Thurs. 10/13 “Church and State”  
*Readings:* Bowman 166-190; Austin 333-334, 470-475, 480-486, 470-475, 491-496, 496-497, 501-508.

#### Week 7

Tues. 10/18 Student Presentation #2: Portraits of the Ptolemies  
**Comparison of 2 Articles Due**

Thurs. 10/20 The Jewish Experience under the Ptolemies  
*Letter of Aristeas* 1-51, 120-132; *III Maccabees*; Bowman 123-124; Barclay 1996 125-127, 138-150, 181, 192-203.

### Week 8

Tues. 10/25 Student Presentation #3: Cleopatra in Popular Imagination  
**Annotated and Narrative Bibliographies Due**

Thurs. 10/27 No Class (Fall Break)

### Week 9

Tues. 11/1 The Administration of Roman Egypt  
Bowman 37-53, 65-71; Lewis 1983 9-35; *Res Gestae* 21; Tacitus 2.59.  
**Primary Source Reviews Due**

Thurs. 11/3 Student Presentation #4: The Mummy Portraits

### Week 10

Tues. 11/8 In-class Presentation and Discussion of Research Projects  
**Thesis and Abstract Due**

Thurs. 11/10 Women and Society  
*Readings:* Bowman 130-137; Rowlandson 1998 156-162, 312-327;  
Pomeroy 1984 83-98.

### Week 11

Tues. 11/15 The Economy  
*Readings:* Bowman 89-120; Austin 518-531.

Thurs. 11/17 Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt  
*Readings:* Huebner 2007 21-49; Rowlandson and Takashi 2009 104-139.  
**1<sup>st</sup> Drafts Due**

### Week 12

Tues. 11/22 Education, Books, and Literacy  
*Readings:* Rowlandson 1998 299-312; Cribiore 2009 320-334; Clarysse  
1993 186-190;  
<http://tebtunis.berkeley.edu/exhibit/ahanson>

Thurs. 11/24 No Class (Thanksgiving Break)

### Week 13

Tues. 11/29 Dreams, Oracles, and Superstitions  
*Readings:* Lewis 1983 84-106; Rowlandson 1998 69-70, 318-319, 354-365.

Thurs. 12/1 Early Christianity and Monasticism  
*Readings:* Bowman 190-202; Rowlandson 73-76; “Life of Anthony”:  
<http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/basis/vita-antony.asp>; Goehring 39-52.  
**2<sup>nd</sup> drafts Due to Instructor and to Peer Reviewers**

#### Week 14

Tues. 12/6 Peer Review Exercise  
**Peer Reviews Due Back to Peers**

Thurs. 12/8 Writing the History of Greco-Roman Egypt  
*Readings:* Bagnall 1995 1-8, 32-54; Van Minnen 1994 227-251.

#### Week 15

Tues. 12/13 Wrapping Up  
**Final Essay Due**

### **TEXTS AND READINGS**

Required texts available for purchase in the student bookstore:

Bowman, A. 1986. *Egypt after the Pharaohs*. Berkeley. (= Bowman)  
Apollonius of Rhodes. *Argonautica*.



Additional readings available on Moodle:

I have provided you here with the full bibliographic citations for reference, but in most cases, only a short section of each of these works will be assigned and posted. If possible, please print out the selections from **Austin** and bring them with you to class.

- Austin, M.M., 2006. *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed.* Cambridge. (= Austin)  
Bagnall, R. 1995. *Reading Papyri, Writing Ancient History*. London. (= Bagnall 1995)  
Barclay, J.M.G. *Jews in the Mediterranean Diaspora*. 1996. Berkeley. (= Barclay 1996)  
Bülow-Jacobson, A. 2009. “Writing Materials in the Ancient World.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. Bagnall, 3-29. (= Bülow-Jacobson 2009)  
Clarysse, W. 1993. “Egyptian Scribes Writing Greek.” In *Chronique d’Égypte* 68: 186-201. (= Clarysse 1993)  
Cribiore, R. 2009. “Education in the Papyri.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. Bagnall, 320-334. (= Cribiore 2009)  
Cuvigny, H. 2009. “The Finds of Papyri: The Archaeology of Papyrology.” In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. Bagnall, 30-58. (= Cuvigny 2009)  
Goehring, J. 1999. *Ascetics, Society, and the Desert: Studies in Early Egyptian Monasticism*. Harrisburg.  
Green, P. 1990. *From Alexander to Actium*. Berkeley. (= Green 1990)  
Gruen, E. 2006. “Greeks and Non-Greeks.” In *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic*

- World*, ed. G.R. Bugh, 295-314. (= Gruen 2006)
- Huebner, S. 2007. "Brother-Sister Marriage in Roman Egypt: A Curiosity of Humankind or a Widespread Phenomenon?" In *JRS* 27: 21-49. (= Huebner 2007)
- Lewis, N. 1983. *Life in Egypt under Roman Rule*. Oxford. (= Lewis 1983)
- Lewis, N. 1986. *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt*. Oxford. (= Lewis 1986)
- Pomeroy, S.B. 1984. *Women in Hellenistic Egypt*. New York. (= Pomeroy 1984)
- Rowlandson, J. 1998. *Women & Society in Greek and Roman Egypt*. Cambridge (= Rowlandson 1998)
- Rowlandson, J. and Takashi, R. 2009. "Brother-Sister Marriage and Inheritance Strategies in Greco-Roman Egypt." In *JRS* 99: 104-139. (= Rowlandson and Takashi 2009)
- Vandorpe, K. 2009. "Archives and Dossiers." In *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*, ed. R. Bagnall, 216-255. (= Vandorpe 2009)
- Van Minnen, P. 1994. "House to house enquiries: an interdisciplinary approach to Roman Karanis." *ZPE* 100: 227-251. (= Van Minnen 1994)

#### Course reserves:

A number of books related to your presentation topics and possible paper topics have been placed on 2-Hour reserve for consultation at the Dewitt-Wallace Library. This list may grow and be updated as additional books that have been ordered continue to come in.

- Bagnall, R. (ed.) 2009. *The Oxford Handbook of Papyrology*. Oxford.
- Bierbrier, M.L. (ed.) 1997. *Portraits and Masks: Burial Customs in Roman Egypt*. London.
- Doxiadis, E. 1995. *The Mysterious Fayum Portraits: Faces from Ancient Egypt*. New York.
- Fazzini, R.A. and Bianchi, R.S. 1988. *Cleopatra's Egypt: Age of the Ptolemies*. Brooklyn.
- Lewis, N. 1986. *Greeks in Ptolemaic Egypt*. Oxford.
- Riggs, C. 2005 *The Beautiful Burial in Roman Egypt*. Oxford.
- Stanwick, E. 2002. *Portraits of the Ptolemies: Greek Kings as Egyptian Pharaohs*. Austin.