



CULTURE WARS IN ROME

Herbst Program of Engineering, Ethics & Society
Engineering Leadership
University of Colorado
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Instructor: Dr. Diduch

Office Hours: By appointment

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Course Description:

Culture Wars in Rome: This course is a (very!) broad investigation of the highpoints of the literature, history, art and architecture, theology, and philosophy that have shaped Rome and, to a considerable extent, the entire western world over the last 2,500 years.

Do you want to know something about how religion affects politics? About the strengths and weaknesses of republican or democratic government? About whether the needs of a society may conflict with the interest of individuals? About the rise and fall of powerful empires? About the origins of our modern secular (or “non-religious”) western world? About monumental art and architecture? About the origins of engineering? About great literature? Then the study of Rome has much to offer. It is fascinating, highly influential, and an enduring point of reference for politics both good and bad; it also helps raise (big) questions on which intelligent people disagree.

This will not be primarily a history course, but it will be useful to keep in mind the following simplified and provisional division of Roman culture and history:

I. Ancient pagan, aristocratic Rome: “Rome of the Caesars” (1000 years)

II. Medieval Christian, monarchical or papal Rome: “Rome of the Popes” (1000 years)

III. Modern secular, democratic Rome: “Rome of the People” (150 years)

We will try above all to understand why these three Roman cultures were so hostile toward one another. By so doing, we will understand better these three fundamentally different and influential views of how human beings should live as individuals and in society. Is, for example, democracy superior to aristocracy and monarchy? Are secular societies superior to ones supported by religious beliefs? Can toleration and multiculturalism solve the challenges posed by cultural disagreement? Should a society stress human rights and entitlements over duty and obligation to the common good?

More generally, this course is designed to give you good practice in careful reading and observation, in addition to intelligent conversation. Francis Bacon, a father of modern engineering, referred well to these goals when he said “Reading enriches the mind, conversation makes it nimble, and writing makes it precise.” If things go well, you will also learn to derive increased enjoyment from these three kinds of activities.

GOALS AND OUTCOMES

Here is a more specific breakdown of the content learning and skill development this course aims to provide.

1. Students will be able to identify key ideas, concepts, assumptions, and values of certain core texts and works of art and architecture in the Western tradition.
2. Students will improve their reading comprehension by practicing active reading strategies.
3. Students will improve their writing skills by preparing a final report on their experience in Rome.
4. Students will engage their capacity for critical thinking by performing rational analysis and logical argument.
5. Students will practice oral communication skills and refine their sense for civil conversation by participating in graded class discussion, and giving on-site presentations.

Texts

Blue Guide to Rome (will be provided)

Recommended: I STRONGLY recommend listening to Wayne Ambler’s podcast **Get Ready for Rome!** Ambler was the former Director and Founder of Culture Wars and his podcasts are extremely helpful.

All other course readings will be made available to you electronically through Canvas. If I have problems posting materials to Canvas, I will simply email you the readings in advance, so please check routinely your CU email account. Likewise, if you have problems finding the readings, just email me and I will send you what you need.

Assignments and Grading:

Participation in Pre-Departure Classes – 15%
Participation in On Site Discussion and Activities – 40%
On-Site Presentation – 10%
Final Exam (in Rome) – 10%
Portfolio, including Sketching Assignments (Final Project) – 25%

PLAGIARISM IS STRICTLY PROHIBITED.

IF YOU HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS ABOUT WHAT COUNTS AS PLAGIARISM, ALWAYS CONTACT ME FIRST BEFORE HANDING IN YOUR ASSIGNMENT.

STUDENTS ARE EXPECTED TO ABIDE BY THE CU HONOR CODE

All incidents of academic misconduct shall be reported to the Honor Code Council (honor@colorado.edu; 303-735-2273). Students who are found to be in violation of the academic integrity policy will be subject to both academic sanctions from the faculty member and non-academic sanctions (including but not limited to university probation, suspension, or expulsion). Other information on the Honor Code can be found at <http://www.colorado.edu/policies/honor.html> and at <http://www.colorado.edu/academics/honorcode/>

Grading Scale

A+	98-100%	B+	88-89%	C+	78-79%	D+	68-69%
A	93-97%	B	83-87%	C	73-77%	D	63-67%
A-	90-92%	B-	80-82%	C-	70-72%	D-	60-62%

Courtesy in the Classroom

Please note that your participation grade will reflect how well you demonstrate courteous conduct in class, both to myself, but especially toward your fellow students. To help you understand what I mean by 'Courtesy in the Classroom,' consider the following rules I expect to implement:

- Since most texts are electronic, I don't mind if you use your laptop to read them in class, though I much prefer that you work from hardcopies. If you plan to use a computer, then you must not use it for any other purpose than reading the assigned text for that day. **All phones, i-pods (etc.) are to be**

put away before class. **DO NOT CHECK PHONE DURING SEMINAR PERIOD

- Do not get up and leave while class is in session.
 - No eating in class. You may bring whatever beverage you wish.
 - Do not engage in any activity that causes a distraction to the instructor and / or to other students in the class. It should be noted that I will be the one who defines what constitutes a distraction.
 - You are not allowed to do work for other courses during our class time.
- Working on appointment calendars, schedules, etc. is also prohibited.

Disabilities

If you qualify for accommodations because of a disability, please submit to me a letter from Disability Services in a timely manner. Disability Services determines accommodations based on documented disabilities. Contact Disability Services at 303-492-8671 or by e-mail at dsinfo@colorado.edu.

If you have a temporary medical condition or injury, see Temporary Medical Conditions: Injuries, Surgeries, and Illnesses guidelines under Quick Links at Disability Services website and discuss your needs with me.

Religious Observances

Campus policy regarding religious observances requires that faculty make every effort to deal reasonably and fairly with all students who, because of religious obligations, have conflicts with scheduled exams, assignments or required attendance. If you have a schedule conflict due to religious obligations, please see me before or after class or visit my office so we can discuss the appropriate accommodation. See full details at http://www.colorado.edu/policies/fac_relig.html

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(ODH) at 303-492-2127 or the Office of Student Conduct (OSC) at 303-492-5550. Information about the ODH, the above referenced policies, and the campus resources available to assist individuals regarding discrimination or harassment can be obtained at <http://hr.colorado.edu/dh/>