HIST 331: History of Ancient Greece

Instructor: Bruce O'Brien

Monroe 215; 540.654.1477; bobrien@umw.edu; office hours TTh 11-12 and 2-3:30, or by arrangement (use Starfish to set up a time; speak with me if you need to meet at a time other than what is available according to Starfish)

***Course description*:**

Course covers the history of the Greeks from prehistory to the successor states of the Macedonian empire. Topics range across all of the Greek world and all areas of culture, from the 'invention' of the alphabet and rise of the *polis* to the early developments in philosophy and medicine. Special attention is given to working with the primary sources, in particular with the narrative histories of Herodotus and Thucydides, in order not only to teach you how to handle the source material for ancient history but also to introduce you to the origins of history as a discipline and its continuing self-appraisal of its methods.

Goals:

This course counts in the History major and is designated an Honors Course. With respect to the goals of the History major (and the Honors Program), you will gain an:

- ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities
- ability to write with clarity about the past
- ability to utilize technological resources in research
- understanding of the discipline's methods and processes

Required Readings:

Nancy Demand, *A History of Ancient Greece in its Mediterranean Context*, 3rd ed. (2013).

(Websites associated with chapters can be found at http://www.sloanpublishing.com/chapter_websites)

Herodotus, *The Landmark Herodotus*, ed. R. B. Strassler.

Thucydides, *The Landmark Thucydides*, ed. R. B. Strassler.

Other required readings are available on Canvas, in the library, or will be distributed in class.

***Written work*:**

The course is writing intensive and has a number of formal and informal assignments. All of these assignments are described on Canvas.

1. Short essay (4 pages): An analysis of Greek society using the *Odyssey*as a historical source.
2. Commonplace Book (length varies). A guided observation and interogation of Herodotus for information on the practice of History in 5th-century Greece.
3. Short assignments. There is no big paper relating to Thucydides or 4th-century Greece. There are, however, a number of small assignments, especially during the second half of the semester. None is more than 3 pages in length; most are a page. *These **cannot be turned in late**---they are due before the class period where they will be discussed (as noted on the syllabus).*
4. Short researched essay (6–8 pages): An investigation of the causes of the Maccabaean Revolt against the Seleucid rulers.

Tests:

There will be two short graded quizzes: One on Herodotus' *Histories* (October 2), and one on I-II Maccabees (November 25). There will be some ungraded quizzes.

***Participation*:**

This course depends on intensive participation of students in discussions. The level of participation will increase as the semester progresses, with the weeks devoted to Thucydides constituting continuous discussion of his methods and subject. For this reason, it is imperative that students keep up with the reading. You will be called on to engage on issues throughout the term.

***Grade*:**

Essay on Homer (10 %), Herodotus quiz (5%), Commonplace book (20%), smaller assignments on Thucydides (5% x 5=25%), quiz on I-II Maccabees (5%), essay on the Maccabeean Revolt (20%), participation (15%)

Grading Principles

In this class, an A (93–100) or A- (90–92) mean that the work done is of excellent quality. B+ (88–89), B (83–87) and B- (80–82) mean that the work was well done, competent, even excellent in some ways, but that there is room for improvement. C+ (78–79), C (73–77), and C- (70–72) signify that the work was satisfactory in most respects, even good in some ways, but that there was much room for improvement. D+ (68–69) and D (60–67) are passing grades, but mean that much more could be done in most if not all areas of the work, but that it was not missing *in toto* any key aspect of the assignment. I assign grades based on a number of variables which, if they can be named (e.g., style, argument, research, etc.), cannot in reality be separated from each other. Each variable affects the others. Deficient style will vitiate argument; poor research will undermine argument, and so on. Students earning less than a C by mid semester will receive a notice of unsatisfactory performance.

As with all courses at UMW, this class will abide by the honor code. In particular, students must not commit plagiarism. Inappropriate collaboration is also forbidden. Any questions concerning the boundary between legitimate and illegitimate appropriation and citation of sources should be brought to the professor before assignments are begun.

Students with Disabilities

The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University of Mary Washington as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through that office and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodations. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

If you have not made contact with the Office of Disability Services and have reasonable accommodation needs, I will be happy to help you contact them. The office will require appropriate documentation of a disability.

Other Resources

If you are depressed or stressed out and finding it hard to cope with school, the people around you, or life in general, I recommend visiting the Taley Center: the Center can be reached at (540) 654-1053 (M-F 8-5), or you can stop by Lee 106.

For events and announcements from the History Department, as well as useful pages on research and writing, see the Department's News and Resources website: http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/

Warning on Electronic Devices

You cannot use a laptop in class unless you have a specific accommodation for this. Unfortunately, too often laptops become a distraction, principally for the user, but also for those around him or her. Phones must be turned off completely and not just set to vibrate. They cannot be used in any way during class. It follows, then, that there will be no texting during class. To text at any point shows you do not respect me or your classmates, let alone the hard work of some who may be paying your tuition. If I see you texting, you will be asked to leave class that day.

Note: This syllabus is subject to change at the discretion of the instructor.

August

30 Introduction to subject and discipline.

September

1 Origin of the Greeks.

Read: Demand, chapter 1.

6 Minoans and Mycenaeans.

Read: Demand, chapter 2–3.

8 Class canceled (conference)

13 The Earliest Greek Records: Linear B.

Read: Selections from Ventris and Chadwick, *Documents in Mycenaean Greek*.

Instructions for Linear B readings (ignore the day and date)

Tablet 1; Tablet 2; Tablet 3

Images (Cn 599 and Ta 707-708) showing composition practices of scribes

Tables of Linear B symbols: 1, 2, and 3.

15 Mycenaean religion and the state in a time of crisis: images and texts

Reading: Pylos tablet Tn 316: Nagy translation; Ventris and Chadwick translation; Palaima translation.

20 The Dark Age, 8th-century Renaissance, and Revolution.

Read: Demand, chapter 4.

Instructions for First Assignment.

22 The Homeric Question, Higher Criticism, and Ancient Travel Literature.

27 The world of Odysseus

Read: *The Odyssey* (books VI-VIII) on Canvas; Demand, chapter 5, pp. 105–11.

29 The Beginning of Greek Historiography: Herodotus.

Discussion of First Essays (due at beginning of class).

Read: *Landmark Herodotus*, "Introduction" (pp. ix–xxxvi) and "Editor's Preface" (pp. xxxvii-xlviii).

Commonplace Book assignment explained.

October

4 Colonization and the Rise of the Polis: Corinth and Sparta

Read: Herodotus, books I–III; Demand chapter 6. Sample of commonplace book.

6 Early Athens

Read: Herodotus IV (esp. IV.110–17 and 145–67) and V.1-V.27; Demand, chapter 7.

11 Ionia and the Invasion of Darius.

Read Herodotus V.28-VI.140; Demand, chapter 8 and chapter 9 (pp. 189–193).

Commonplace Book due in class.

13 Xerxes' Invasion and the Victory of the Greeks.

Read: Herodotus VII–IX; Demand, chapter 9, pp. 193–204.

Quiz on Herodotus' *Histories* (at the beginning of the class)

18 Fall Break

20 Introduction to Thucydides and the Edition.

Read: Demand, chapters 10 and 12; Thucydides, Introduction and editor's

note, and Book I.

25 The First, Second, and Third Years.

Read Thucydides 2.1-103.

Short assignment 1: medical theories in Thucydides

27 The Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth Years.

Read: Thucydides 3.1-88.

Short assignment 2: interpretations of justice and right.

November

1 The Sixth and Seventh Years.

Read: Thucydides 3.89-4.51.

3 The Eighth through Thirteenth Years.

Read: Thucydides 4.52-5.56; Athenian Tribute List

Short assignment 3: Cost of the war.

8 The Fourteenth, Fifteenth, and Sixteenth Years.

Read: Thucydides 5.57-116.

10 The Sixteenth, Seventeenth, and Eighteenth Years.

Read: Thucydides 6-7.87.

Short assignment 4: could Athens have won at Syracuse?

15 The Final Years: Thucydides the Historian.

Read: Thucydides 8.1-109.

Class collaboration: How to read Thucydides.

17 Greek Society

Read: Demand, chapter 11.

Short assignment 5: Greek sexuality.

22 The Fourth Century: from Thebes to Alexander the Great

Read: Demand, chapters 13-14.

24 Thanksgiving Break

29 The Hellenistic World: A Close-up View of Seleucid Judea

Read: I Maccabees and II Maccabees (I may add a few more docs); Demand, chapter 15.

Quiz on I and II Maccabees.

December

1 Weighing Arguments and Evidence.

Searching for evidence of the revolt: web and library resources.

Read: Conflicting scholarly viewpoints on the causes of the Revolt: Hershel Shanks, "Inscription Reveals Roots of Maccabean Revolt," *Biblical ArcheologyReview* 34 (2008). John Ma, "Re-examining Hanukkah," *Marginalia* (July 9, 2013) (other articles may be added)

6 Sharing Discoveries about the Maccabean Revolt.

Contributions to a list of additional primary sources.

Additional resources (for the final paper, for hunting for evidence, for knowledge):

Analyses of I and II Maccabees

David S. Williams, "Recent Research in 1 Maccabees," *Currents in Research: Biblical Studies* 9 (2001): 169–84.

David S. Williams, "Recent Research in 2 Maccabees," *Currents in Biblical Research* 2 (2003): 69–83.

Arguments about Causes (a.k.a. Secondary Sources)

Gilles Gorre and Sylvie Honigman, "Kings, Taxes and High Priests: Comparing the Ptolemaic and Seleukid Policies," in *Egitto dai Faraoni aglia Arabi*, ed. Silvia Bussi (Rome: Fabrizio Serra Editore, 2013), 105–19.

Fergus Millar, "The Background of the Maccabeean Revolution: Reflections on Martin Hengel's *Judaism and Hellenism*," *Journal of Jewish Studies* 29 (1978): 1–21.

Erich S. Gruen, "Hellenism and Persecution: Antiochus IV and the Jews," in *Hellenistic History and Culture*, ed. Peter Green (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993): 238–74.

Abbreviations for Gruen and Gorre & Honigman articles: here.

A Curious Primary Source

Ezekiel the Tragedian, *Exagoge*, trans. R. G. Robertson. In The *Old Testament Pseudepigrapha*, ed. James H. Charlesworth, vol. 2 (New York: Doubleday and Co., 1985), 803–19.

8 Making an argument about Greeks, Hellenization, resistance, identity, and the Maccabees.

Here are the annotated sources listed by the class--not organized, except as they appear on your lists.

9 History and American Studies Symposium: Attend one session

12 Exchange papers electronically (or in person) for peer reviews

Use this peer review form; answer all the questions as fully as possible. Here is the form in Word.

13 Papers returned to authors with comments. (turn in peer reviews you received when you turn in your final paper (or in person at my office, or snap a photo with your phone and email it, etc).

Final Exam Period (Thursday, Dec. 15): Turn in your essay on the Maccabeean Revolt and the Hellenization of the Jews.