

Latin Capstone: The Late Roman Republic

Instructor: Dr. Joey Williams

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Student hour: Tuesday, 3:45 – 4:45

Parent hour: Thursday, 3:45 – 4:45

Course Description:

This year's Latin capstone will examine the politics, literature, and individuals of Rome during the last years of its republic. We will read a variety of authors, including some of the private correspondence of Cicero, a treatise on conspiracy by Sallust, invective by Catullus, and an eye-witness account of the Roman Civil War by Julius Caesar. Students in this course will become familiar with the debates of the age, and they will gain understanding this most dramatic, essential, and complex period of history.

Students will be tasked with regular reading from a variety of ancient authors. They will also collaborate in the creation of a shared, annotated commentary in the form of a class wiki. This commentary will include not only grammatical guides to the texts we read but also links to maps, explanatory descriptions, and useful resources. At the end of the course, students will submit a position paper in which they take a side in the politics of the Late Republic. Writing in the voice of an ordinary Roman, they will argue in favor of one faction or another, and support their argument with examples drawn from the texts we have read in class as well as their own independent research.

Grading Schema:

Participation: 20%

Commentary: 30%

Presentation: 20%

Final Paper: 30%

Assignments:

Participants in this course will engage with ancient texts using digital technologies. As part of our preparation for translation in class, students will take part in the creation of a shared class wiki to create their own commentaries. This commentary will include annotations to the primary source text we are translating together, as well as explanatory descriptions, word studies, maps, and useful online resources. Students' contributions to this commentary will thus be an important part of their regular work for the class, and they will be assessed both on the number and quality of their submissions.

Additionally, students will be asked to take on the voice of an ordinary Roman in the political debates of the Late Republic. Students will do this through a class presentation as well as a final paper. These assignments will be ongoing, and each step of their production will be factored into the participants' grades.

Given the nature of a translation class, participation is essential for all involved. Failure to participate will thus be reflected in your weekly grade.

Instructional Materials:

Readings for this course will focus on the sociopolitical context of the Late Roman Republic and will be taken from a variety of primary and secondary sources. We will read selections from a number of Latin authors, including:

Augustus' *Res Gestae*
Caesar's *Commentaries on the Civil War*
Cicero's *Catiline Orations*
Cicero's *Letters to Friends*
Lucan's *Pharsalia*
Sallust's *War with Catiline*

These will be provided for students in the original language.

We will also read from a number of modern historians in order to better understand the events of the last years of the Roman Republic. These readings will be provided for students during class.

Students will also be assigned "readings" in the form of podcasts from Mike Duncan's *The History of Rome*. These are available for free online, and will be provided to students via email or a shared class resource.

Schedule of Classes:

Weeks 1-2: Prolegomena

Introduction to the course, its requirements, major themes, authors, and sources; the political geography of Italy and the Mediterranean during the 1st c. B.C.E.

Weeks 3-4: Crisis of the Late Roman Republic.

The Social War and the Conflict of the Orders; *Optimates* and *Populares*.

Weeks 5-12: Conspiracy

Readings from Sallust and Cicero on the conspiracy of Catiline.

Weeks 13-19: Civil Wars

Readings from Caesar, Cicero, and Lucan on the war between Caesar and Pompey.

Weeks 20-21: Aftermath and Empire

The Assassination of Julius Caesar; the *Res Gestae*; the Principate.

Weeks 22-24: Choosing Sides

Debating the Late Roman Republic.

This is not an official syllabus. The above schedule is subject to change. By remaining in this course you are agreeing to the policies and requirements discussed above.