# Roman Civilization

**Spring 2025 | Hunter College | Classroom W224 | In person**

**Monday and Wednesday, 5:30-6:45 PM**

**Professor Keren Freidenreich / kf2643@hunter.cuny.edu**

**Office Hours: by appointment, on Zoom**

## Required Materials/Websites/Programs

There is no required Textbook for this course. All materials will be provided as PDFs through BrightSpace (BS). Thus, BS is a required website.

Please be sure you can log in and see our class. If you have any issues with BrightSpace, please contact me via email ASAP. Students will need to type into documents, using a program like Word, Pages or Google Docs; and may need to use a slide presentation program, such as Powerpoint, Keynote, or Google Slides. Students will be asked to convert both documents and slides into PDFs. We will use Zoom for any potential interruptions to our in-person class, so please download the required software (https://zoom.us).

## Classroom Expectations

Welcome to Roman Civilization! This course introduces students to the ancient Romans and their culture from an interdisciplinary perspective. The course will provide a historical chronological framework for the analysis of Roman culture through its literature, art, and architecture. Using a combination of primary texts and archaeological evidence, we will conduct in-depth examinations of key sources that bear witness to the political and cultural changes from Rome's foundation through its eventual demise. In order to appreciate Rome's expressions of cultural identity, ideology, dissent, and artistic imagination, we will cultivate analytical skills in writing assignments and discussions. Students should expect to analyze and think critically about ancient objects and texts.

- This class is currently In-Person. If ever the in-person portion of our class is interrupted, we will pivot to using Zoom.
- It is my goal to respond to emails ASAP and within 24 hours of receipt. Holidays and weekends may extend this timeframe.

A note about content: this course will include various challenging subjects including military and sexual violence, slavery, race, religion, and others. It is essential that students commit to engaging with this material from a scholarly and mature viewpoint. If, however, students feel that certain topics will be too challenging for whatever reason, they are encouraged to speak with Professor Freidenreich as soon as possible.

## Learning Outcomes

By the end of the semester, you will be able to:

1. Gather, interpret, and assess information from a variety of sources and points of view through close readings of texts/material objects guided by lectures and in-class oral exercises. Specifically, students will develop:
    A. An ability to read ancient texts closely and critically
    B. An ability to view material objects closely and carefully
2. Evaluate evidence and arguments critically or analytically in short, written responses and guided oral comments to careful, close readings of ancient texts/material objects. Specifically, students will be able to:
    A. Comment accurately, in writing and orally, on facts and ideas in ancient texts
    B. Point out accurately, in writing and orally, the historical, cultural, and social backdrop for material objects
3. Produce well-reasoned written or oral arguments using evidence to support conclusions in longer papers. Specifically, the student will be able to:
    A. Use multiple texts in conjunction with material objects to demonstrate knowledge of Roman civilization
    B. Present well-informed ideas about how Roman civilization relates to student's own civilization
    C. Analyze the historical development of the ancient Romans to define Roman civilization. Specifically, students will: be familiar with the basic outline and the major figures of ancient Roman history
    D. Analyze the significance of Roman literary and political though in shaping both Roman civilization and your own modern world views. Specifically, students will:
        i. Be familiar with specifics of literary history of the ancient Greeks
        ii. Be familiar with the major Greek thinkers, strains of thought, and social/cultural institutions relevant to ancient Greek civilization as well as their contributions to Greek civilizations and student's own civilization.
4. Analyze and discuss the role played in defining Roman civilization by ethnicity, language, political participation, social institutions, and cultural values. Specifically, students will:
    A. Be familiar with how various groups, such as women, enslaved people, foreigners, elites, etc define Roman civilization.

B. Be familiar with how an individual and groups shaped social and cultural institutions in ways which forced the Romans to rethink their identity and relations to other people.

## Assessments and Grading

Specific instructions for each assessment will be posted on BrightSpace (BS).

Grades will be recorded in BS. Please reach out if you believe a grade was incorrectly recorded (mistakes happen!).

### Attendance

Students are allowed three (3) no-questions-asked absences from the classroom. There is no need to inform Professor F of your absence, although she appreciates knowing in advance. Nonetheless, you bear the responsibility of making up the material on your own. Students who miss more than three (3) classes will be expected to approach Professor F to discuss a way to prove they have caught up. Failure to do so will result in a grade penalty.

### In-Class Writing Assignments (20%)

Every other class or so will include a brief (5-minute) in-class writing opportunity. Perfection is neither required nor expected; the goal is to practice engagement with the reading and lecture material. However, Professor F expects that students will actively engage with the prompt for the day to the best of their gained knowledge – there is no "right" or "wrong" answer. Students will be given three (3) free "No-Pass" grades for absences. After the first three, five (5) points will be deducted for each missed In-Class Writing assignment.

In-Class Writing assignments will be completed and submitted during class meetings. Papers will be provided if needed.

### Short Writing Assignments (35%)

Over the course of the semester, there will be roughly ten (10) Short Writing Assignments: a (500-1000 word) written analysis. For due dates, see the Weekly Schedule below.

Short Writing Assignments will be submitted through a Submission Box in BS.

### Mid-Term (20%)

The mid-term will be a "take-home" / "open-book" assessment, and students will be given one week to complete it.

The Mid-Term will be submitted through a Submission Box in BS.

### Final (25%)

The Final will be a “take-home” / “open-book” assessment and students will have a week from the last day of class to complete the assessment.

The Final will be submitted through a Submission Box in BS.

## Preparation for Class

This course anticipates 4-5 hours of coursework each week in addition to the in-person classroom time. It is expected that you will spend these 4-5 hours on the assigned Readings and Short Writing Assignments (SWAs).

The Weekly Schedule, included both below and on the Weekly Folders in BrightSpace (BS), will inform students about when assigned Readings and assessments are due.

IF YOU ARE HAVING TROUBLE with the material or time management or even technology – PLEASE reach out to me via email. Do not wait until you are feeling completely overwhelmed. There is no shame in confusion or feeling the crushing weight of anxiety and I will happily work with you to problem-solve. I only ask that your questions come from a well informed place. For example, please do not email me and ask “What is due this week?” or “What is the reading for today?” because that information is available in the Syllabus or in BS and I expect students to be able to find this information on their own.

Questions such as “Where is the Syllabus?” or “OMG I’m drowning in this class can you throw me a life-raft?” are absolutely important, so please do not hesitate to contact me via email.

### A Note on Emails

Please begin all emails to me (or, frankly, to anyone) with “Hello Prof. Freidenreich” or “Hi Professor Freidenreich” or “Good Morning Prof. F!” or something along these lines. These greetings indicate an awareness that you are addressing a specific individual with a specific purpose. Emails are not text messages, so please try and use full sentences, or at least full enough sentences that I can understand what you are emailing me about. I have no problem with GIFs, emojis, and whatever else – but do keep in mind that I am not your best-friend or your mom. Be sure to sign your email, “Thank you, [your name]” or “Cheers, [your name]” or something along these lines.

**A Note on Deadlines and Due Dates**

Deadlines and due dates are a way to keep our class moving forward. I create these deadlines and due dates with realistic time frames so that students can move through the semester at a measured pace. I do not use deadlines and due dates as a punitive measure – meaning that deadlines and due dates are not meant to punish students! I expect that most students, most of the time, will have no issues doing the assignments on time. That being said, if ever you cannot make a deadline or due date – email me. I literally have no other way of knowing that you are having issues. I will not ask for personal details regarding the situation affecting your ability to meet the deadlines and due dates. I will work with students to create a schedule that allows them to get back on track without losing sleep.

## Hunter College Academic Integrity Policy

Hunter College regards acts of academic dishonesty (e.g., plagiarism, cheating on examinations, obtaining unfair advantage, and falsification of records and official documents) as serious offenses against the values of intellectual honesty. The College is committed to enforcing the CUNY Policy on Academic Integrity and will pursue cases of academic dishonesty according to the Hunter College Academic Integrity Procedures.

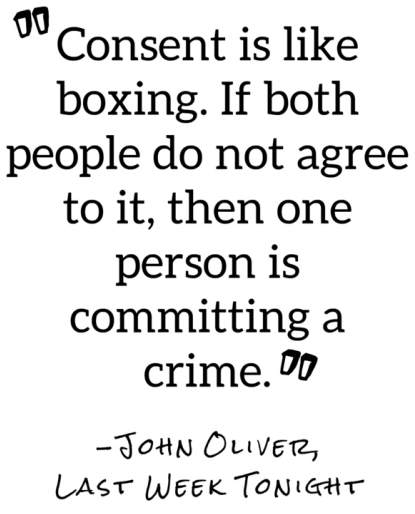
## Hunter College ADA Policy

In compliance with the American Disability Act of 1990 (ADA) and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, Hunter College is committed to ensuring educational parity and accommodations for all students with documented disabilities and/or medical conditions. It is recommended that all students with documented disabilities (Emotional, Medical, Physical, and/or Learning) consult the Office of AccessABILITY, located in Room E1214B, to secure necessary academic accommodations. For further information and assistance, please call: (212) 772-4857 or (212) 650-3230.

## Hunter College Sexual Misconduct Policy

In compliance with the CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct, Hunter College reaffirms the prohibition of any sexual misconduct,

which includes sexual violence, sexual harassment, and gender-based harassment retaliation against students, employees, or visitors, as well as certain intimate relationships. Students who have experienced any form of sexual violence on or off campus (including CUNY-sponsored trips and events) are entitled to the rights outlined in the Bill of Rights for Hunter College.




a. Sexual Violence: Students are strongly encouraged to immediately report the incident by calling 911, contacting NYPD Special Victims Division Hotline (646-610-7272) or their local police precinct, or contacting the College's Public Safety Office (212-772-4444).

b. All Other Forms of Sexual Misconduct: Students are also encouraged to contact the College's Title IX Campus Coordinator, Dean John Rose (jtrose@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-650-3262) or Colleen Barry (colleen.barry@hunter.cuny.edu or 212-772-4534) and seek complimentary services through the Counseling and Wellness Services Office, Hunter East 1123.

CUNY Policy on Sexual Misconduct Link:

https://www1.cuny.edu/sites/title-ix/campus-websites/cuny-policies/

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## Weekly Schedule

Week 1

**Monday, Jan. 27** **Syllabus Overview**

**Wednesday, Jan. 29** **No Class**

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Getting to Know Each Other!*

Week 2

**Monday, Feb. 3** **Types of Sources/Introduction to Roman Civilization**

Reading: {All links available in the Week 2 Folder in BS}

"There is no such thing as a Western civilization" by Kwame Anthony Appiah

"Why We Need to Start Seeing the Classical World in Color" by Sarah Bond

*The White Lie We've Been Told About Roman Statues* (YouTube)

*White at the Museum* (YouTube)

**Wednesday, Feb. 5** **Ancient Italy**

Reading: Introduction(s), Myth-History of Rome PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Dealing with Sources in Antiquity Studies*

Week 3

**Monday, Feb. 10** **Being Roman?**

Reading: Myth-History of Rome PDF

**Wednesday, Feb. 12** **No Class**

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Roman Identity*

Week 4

**Monday, Feb. 17** **No Class**

**Tuesday, Feb. 18** **Rome: The City**

Reading: Introduction(s), The Early Roman Republic PDF

**Wednesday, Feb. 19** **Rome: Hegemon**

Reading: The Early Roman Republic PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Republican Rome*

Week 5

**Monday, Feb. 24** **Roman Religion**

Reading: Roman Religion PDF

**Wednesday, Feb. 26** **Roman Society**

Reading: Roman Society PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Roman Religion and Society*

Week 6

**Monday, March 3** **The Gracchi**

Reading: None

**Wednesday, March 5** **Roman Slavery**

Reading: Roman Slavery PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Roman Slavery*

Week 7

**Monday, March 10** **Writers of the Republic**

Reading: Literary Culture of the Republic PDF

**Wednesday, March 12** **The Late Roman Republic**

Reading: Introduction(s), The Civil Wars PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Republican Literature*

Week 8

**Monday, March 17** **Republic in Crisis**

Reading: The Civil Wars PDF

**Wednesday, March 19** **Antonius and Octavian**

Reading: Introduction(s), Gender and the Romans PDF

Week 9

**Monday, March 24** **The Republic: The End**

Reading: Gender and the Romans PDF

**MID-TERM ASSIGNED**

**DUE BY Wednesday, April 7 at midnight via BS**

**Wednesday, March 26** **No Class; work on midterm!**

**Thursday, March 27** **The Creation of Augustus**

Reading: Introduction(s), The Creation of Augustus PDF

Week 10

**Monday, March 31** **No Class**

**Wednesday, April 2** **The Augustan Era**

Reading: The Creation of Augustus PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: The New Octavian: Augustus*

Week 11

**Monday, April 7** **The Julio-Claudian Dynasty**

Reading: Introduction(s), The Julio-Claudian Dynasty PDF

**Wednesday, April 9** **Nero's Fire**

Reading: Julio-Claudian Dynasty: Suetonius PDF | Choose one: Tiberius, Caligula, Claudius, or Nero

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: How (not) to be a Roman Princeps*

Week 12

**Monday, April 14** **No Class**

**Wednesday, April 16** **No Class**

Week 13

**Monday, April 21** **The Flavians**

Reading: None

**Wednesday, April 23** **More Smoke**

Reading: Roman Writings PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Roman Writings*

Week 14

**Monday, April 28** **The Trajanic Moment**

Reading: Introduction(s), Literature of the Empire PDF

**Wednesday, April 30** **The Hadrianic Moment**

Reading: Literature of the Empire PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Writing in the Empire*

Week 15

**Monday, May 5** **The Antonines and the Severans**

Reading: Introduction(s), Roman Coinage PDF

**Wednesday, May 7** **The Third Century: Crisis**

Reading: Roman Coinage PDF

*Weekly Short Writing Assignment: Roman Numismatics*

Week 16

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| **Monday, May 12** | **TBD** |
| **Wednesday, May 14** | **The Roman Legacy [no reading]** |
| | **Final Paper Assigned** |
| **Wednesday, May 21** | **Final Paper Due** |