

COURSE SPECIFICATION
DOCUMENT

Academic School/Department:	CASS
Programme:	History
FHEQ Level:	5
Course Title:	Rome and the East: Culture and Faith in Late Antiquity
Course Code:	HST 5205
Course Leader:	Professor Alex Seago
Student Engagement Hours:	120
Lectures:	22.5
Seminar / Tutorials:	22.5
Independent / Guided Learning:	75
Semester:	Fall/Spring/Summer
Credits:	12 UK CATS credits 6 ECTS credits 3 US credits

Course Description:

The course covers the areas of the Roman and Sasanian Empires, their adjoining regions and that of their successor states from 200 AD until in 800 AD. The course looks at religious ideas that were rooted in these societies, Polytheisms, Zoroastrianism, Judaism and the newer religions of Christianity and Islam. Students will learn about different methods of critically analysing the material cultures of these peoples: including architecture, mosaics, texts, monuments, murals and the artefacts of both common and elite life. Links will be made from the ideological and cultural aspects of these societies to the political and economic systems in place around them. Historical debates will be explored about the nature of Late Antiquity and whether it can best be understood as a period of cross cultural interaction or as a set of distinct changes in highly localized societies.

Prerequisites: None

Aims and Objectives:

The class aims to foster the acquisition, development and consolidation of a variety of historical and transferable skills through the study of Late Antiquity; which particularly encourages the development of critical thinking. The particular skills focused on include research skills, close reading skills, formulating and presenting a coherent argument in seminars and in writing based upon a critical understanding of a variety of types primary sources and of secondary sources.

Programme Outcomes:

5A(ii); 5A(iii); 5B(i); 5B(iii); 5C(i); 5C(ii); 5C(iii); 5D(i); 5D(ii)

A detailed list of the programme outcomes is found in the Programme Specification. This is maintained by Registry and located at:

<https://www.richmond.ac.uk/programme-and-course-specifications/>

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, successful students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a detailed understanding of the societies studied and the changes they underwent in Late Antiquity.
- Demonstrate an ability for analysing a wide range of secondary sources about Late Antiquity.
- Have a fundamental grasp of methods for reading and interpreting a range of primary source material, particular those associated with material culture.
- Demonstrate the ability to understand the very divergent explanations within secondary sources for changes in this period across the wide area under study.
- Complete assigned work with a degree of clarity, technical competence and critical thinking, and a degree of independence and capacity for self-evaluation, appropriate for a 5000-level course

Indicative Content:

- Late Antiquity as a distinct historical concept.
- Heterogeneity within religious faiths.
- The relationship between political systems and religion.
- Analyzing material cultures
- Critical use of primary sources
- Economic and cultural change
- Understanding identities in pre-modern societies

Assessment:

This course conforms to the University Assessment Norms approved at Academic Board.

Teaching Methodology:

The course will be taught through a combination of lectures, seminar classes and museum visits. Lectures are primarily designed to give an overview of the issues and problems on a particular topic, and thereby provide guidance for seminar discussion. Seminars will be used for debates and group/sub-group discussion, and are intended to provide an interactive and participatory learning environment. Students are expected to do the set readings for each week, and to be prepared to contribute to class discussion and discussion sub-groups. The general approach to classes is informal, and discussion is viewed as an essential part of learning.

Bibliography:

See syllabus for complete reading list

Indicative Text(s):

G. W. Bowerstock, Peter Brown, Oleg Grabar	Late Antiquity
Vesta Sarkhosh Curtis & Sara Stewart	The Sasanian Era
Helen C. Evens ed. With Brandie Ratliff	Byzantine and Islam
Philip Rousseau	A Companion to Late Antiquity

Journals

Web Sites

Please Note: The core and the reference texts will be reviewed at the time of designing the semester syllabus

Change Log for this CSD:

Major or Minor Change?	Nature of Change	Date Approved & Approval Body (School or LTPC)	Change Actioned by Academic Registry
Major	Dates of course shrunk, expanded area, course title, some changes to indicative content, reading and outcomes.		