

**HIS 220: The Ancient World  
Ruzicka**

**Stephen**

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**Office hours: 10-11  
MWF and by  
Appointment**

**This course concerns developments in the ancient Near Eastern and Mediterranean worlds from roughly 3500 B.C. to roughly A.D. 500. In order to impose some thematic coherence on developments over this 4000-year span, we consider them as parts of a single “story”. The story is that of political and cultural consolidation (or unification) over a progressively larger area until we reach the “world-state” of the Roman Empire. Along the way, we will learn a good deal about different peoples and civilizations, but we want always to keep in mind that we are trying to understand a larger “story”. That means we always want to ask and understand what the place of different peoples and civilizations is in the larger story.**

**The textbook, Nagle’s *Ancient World*, will provide a basic narrative guide. Lectures amplify and supplement the text. Since Nagle does not present his material in terms of the “story” this course emphasizes, it is critical that students pay close attention to the lecture presentations. We will also be reading extensive primary (original) source selections which alone furnish us with direct experience of the ideas and thought patterns of various peoples and periods of the ancient world.**

**Evaluation is based on the results of three examinations and periodic writing assignments and quizzes.**

### **Required Books**

**Nagle, *The Ancient World* (AW)**

**Sandars, *Epic of Gilgamesh***

### **Class Schedule**

**8/23 Introduction**

#### **I. Early Civilizations**

**8/25 Neolithic Revolution/Sumerian Civilization**

**AW 1-20**

**8/27 Emergence of Kingship**

**8/30 *Creation Story* (and map quiz)**

**Handout**

**9/1 *Epic of Gilgamesh***

***Gilgamesh*; writing assignment**

(see end of syllabus)

<http://www.ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab1.htm>

9/3 Early Imperialism	AW 10-11, 34-36
9/6 Holiday	
9/8 Early Egypt	AW 21-31
9/10 <i>Theology of Memphis</i>	Handout
9/13 Egypt through the Middle Kingdom	AW 31-33
9/15 Indo-European Impact	AW 38-42, 76-85
9/17 Hyksos and Egyptian Imperialism	AW 42-50

## 9/20 FIRST EXAM

## II. Big Empires and Little Peoples

9/22 Overview 1500-300 B.C.	AW 53-58,61-63, 64-65, 50-52
9/24 Hebrew History in Near Eastern Context	AW 57-60, 65-75
9/27 Exile and Creation of Judaism	
9/29 Greek History Overview/Homer assignment	AW 87-97; writing

[http://www.poetseers.org/the\\_great\\_poets/the\\_classics/homer/the\\_iliad\\_-\\_book\\_1\\_-\\_5](http://www.poetseers.org/the_great_poets/the_classics/homer/the_iliad_-_book_1_-_5)

10/1 From Aristocracy to Democracy	AW 97-119, 164-183
10/4 Athenian Empire	AW 120-140
10/6 Civic Problems/Civic Culture	AW 141-164; writing assignment
<a href="http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/424pol-athens.html">http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/424pol-athens.html</a>	
10/8 Socrates/Plato	AW 128-38

## 10/11 Fall Break

## 10/13 SECOND EXAM

## III. Toward One World

10/15 Alexander	AW 184-194
10/18 Hellenistic World	AW 194-204; 225-234
10/20 Hellenistic Philosophies	AW 205-225
10/22 Rise of Rome	AW 235-256
10/25 Roman Wars	AW 257-294
10/27 Transformation and Crisis	AW 295-329
10/29 Augustus	AW 330-336; writing assignment
<a href="http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html">http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html</a>	
11/1 The Roman Peace	AW 336-349
11/3 The Roman World	AW 349-359, 362-3
11/5 EXAM #3	

#### IV. Toward Late Antiquity

11/8 Religions in the Roman World	AW 357-362
11/10 Jesus and Paul <a href="http://ebible.org/web/Romans.htm">http://ebible.org/web/Romans.htm</a>	writing assignment
11/12 Pagans and Christians	
11/15 3 <sup>rd</sup> -century Crisis and Response	AW 381-388
11/17 Constantine	AW 388-390
11/19 The Christian Empire	AW 394-411
11/22 Late Roman Government and Society	AW 411-419
11/24-26 Thanksgiving Holiday	
11/29 Consolidation/Unity, A.D.400	
12/1 Roman World and World View	
12/ 3 Beyond the Roman World	
12/6 Fractures and Fragmentation	AW 420-423, 390-393
12/13 EXAM #4 12-3 p.m.	

#### WRITING ASSIGNMENTS

In most cases you will have to reflect on the readings to respond to the assignment—that is, there aren't answers that just appear in the readings waiting to be identified. So read the assignment, then read carefully, and consider how the reading provides indications that will help you respond to the assignment.

Try to keep your responses to a one-page length = 250 words.

9/1 What values do you think Gilgamesh espouses after his journey to Utnapishtim?

9/29 In the *Iliad* selections (107-120) how do humans and gods resemble each other and differ from each other?

10/6 Why does the Old Oligarch think democracy is not a very good form of government at Athens?

**10/29** How does Augustus make the case in the *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (*The Achievements of the Deified Augustus*) make the case that he has created nothing new but only restored the Republic? Why is this important?

**11/10** Discuss specific passages in the Paul's *Letter to the Romans* which point to distinctive Christian virtues.