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 4 examinations (60%), 4 papers (20%), and periodic writing assignments (20%). More than three unexcused absences will result in a grade reduction.

**Required Books**

Nagle, *The Ancient World* (AW)
Bailkey and Lim, *Readings in Ancient History* (Readings)
Sandars, *Epic of Gilgamesh*

**Class Schedule**

1/10 Introduction

I. Early Civilizations

1/12 Neolithic Revolution/Sumerian Civilization          AW 1-20
1/14 Emergence of Kingship                                Readings 17-20
1/19 *Creation Story* (and map quiz)                     Handout; writing assignment1
1/21 *Epic of Gilgamesh*                                  Gilgamesh; writing
assignment2

1/24  Early Imperialism          AW 10-11, 34-36; Readings 24-32
1/26  Early Egypt                AW 21-31
1/28  Theology of Memphis        Handout; writing assignment3
1/31  Egypt through the Middle Kingdom  AW 31-33
2/2   Indo-European Impact       AW 38-42, 76-85
2/4   Hyksos and Egyptian Imperialism  AW 42-50; paper #1 due

2/7   FIRST EXAM

II.  Big Empires and Little Peoples

2/9   Overview 1500-300 B.C.        Readings 48-54; AW 53-58, 61-63, 64-65, 50-52
2/11  Hebrew History in Near Eastern Context  AW 57-60, 65-75; Readings 68-94; writing assignment4
2/14  Exile and Creation of Judaism  Readings 94-104
2/16  Greek History Overview/Homer  AW 87-97; Readings 107-120, 130-133; writing assignment5

2/18  From Aristocracy to Democracy  AW 97-119, 164-183;
2/21  Athenian Empire              AW 120-140; Readings 151-165
2/23  Civic Problems/Civic Culture  AW 141-164; Readings 165-193; writing assignment6
2/25  Socrates/Plato               Readings 200-215, 218-225; paper #2 due

2/28   SECOND EXAM

III.  Toward One World

3/2   Alexander                    AW 184-194; Readings 260-269
3/4   Hellenistic World            AW 194-204; 225-234
3/14  Hellenistic Philosophies     AW 205-225; Readings 292-295, 386-393, 473-477; writing assignment7

3/16  Rise of Rome                 AW 235-256; Readings 303-313, 319-324
3/18  Roman Wars                   AW 257-294; Readings 314-319
3/21  Transformation and Crisis    AW 295-329
3/23  Augustus                     AW 330-336; Readings 397-414; writing assignment8
3/25  The Roman Peace              AW 336-349; Readings 414-
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<td>3/28</td>
<td>The Roman World</td>
<td>AW 349-359, 362-381</td>
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<td>3/30</td>
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<td>IV.</td>
<td>Toward Late Antiquity</td>
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<td>Religions in the Roman World</td>
<td>AW 357-362; Readings 427-435</td>
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<td>Jesus and Paul</td>
<td>Readings, 485-506; writing assignment9</td>
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<td>Pagans and Christians</td>
<td>Readings 506-541</td>
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<td>3rd-century Crisis and Response</td>
<td>AW 381-388; Readings 542-549</td>
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<td>Constantine</td>
<td>AW 388-390; Readings 549-556</td>
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<td>The Christian Empire</td>
<td>AW 394-411; writing assignment10</td>
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<td>4/15</td>
<td>Late Roman Government and Society</td>
<td>AW 411-419</td>
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<td>Consolidation/Unity, A.D.400</td>
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<td>Roman World and World View</td>
<td>Readings 564-571</td>
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<td>Beyond the Roman World</td>
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<td>Fractures and Fragmentation</td>
<td>AW 420-422, 390-392</td>
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<td>4/27</td>
<td>6th Century and Beyond</td>
<td>AW 392-393, 423; Readings 571-576</td>
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<td>4/29</td>
<td>Legacy of the Ancient World</td>
<td>Paper # 4 due</td>
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<td>Review</td>
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<td>5/6</td>
<td>EXAM #4</td>
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**WRITING ASSIGNMENTS**

In most cases you will have to reflect on the readings to respond to the assignment—that is, there aren’t answers which just appear in the readings waiting to be identified. So read the writing assignment, then read the assigned text carefully, and consider how the reading provides indications that will help you respond to the assignment. **These must be turned in on the assigned class day in typed form to receive any credit.**

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

1) 1/19: **What indications are there in the Babylonian account of creation that stability and order are achieved only with great difficulty and remain precarious?**
2) 1/21: What wisdom does Gilgamesh finally learn in this story (do not include the
death of Gilgamesh section in your reading)?

3) 1/30: Phrases like “Ptah-tenen”, “the Great Wall”, “South of his Wall” are all
used to designate “Memphis” in the Theology of Memphis (the term
“Memphis” itself never actually appears). With this circumlocution in mind,
how does this story magnify the importance of Memphis?

The remaining writing assignments, except for the last, are all based on assigned
readings from Bailkey and Lim, Readings in Ancient History

4) 2/11: The selections (68-94) provide a biblical view of 1) earliest human history
and 2) early Hebrew history. Sketch each of these.

5) 2/16: In the Iliad selections (107-120) how do humans and gods resemble each
other and how do they differ from each other?

6) 2/23: Why does the Old Oligarch think democracy is not a very good form of
government at Athens?

7) 3/14: What seems to constitute happiness according to the Cynics, Lucretius, and
Marcus Aurelius?

8) 3/23: How do Augustus’ statements in his Res Gestae indicate how he wanted to
be perceived?

9) 4/4: Identify passages in the Gospel readings which point to distinctive Christian
virtues

10) 4/13: From the discussion in Nagle, pp. 399-411, identify points of continuity and
points of difference between traditional classical or Roman practices and ideas
and those of the Christianized Roman world.