

The University of North Carolina

HIS 207-02: The Hellenistic World Spring Semester 2012

TR 11:00-12:15

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Office Hours: TR 1:00-1:50, and by appointment.

Course Description

The death of Alexander the Great in 323 BCE left his fledgling empire in shambles. Satraps (governors) quickly revolted, forming their own power centers, alliances fell apart, old prosperous cities reasserted their independence, and the briefly united Macedonian, Greek, and Persian realms quickly fell into incessant and tumultuous wars. As the dust of war eventually settled, some recognizable and somewhat stable kingdoms began to take shape, many of which formed by Alexander's former generals. Amidst the raging conflict, however, some astonishing cultural developments did take place. Alexander's bellicose path of conquest open the way for a flood of Greek culture, which came into contact and interacted with the multitude of native cultures in the territories of the old Persian Empire. This influx of Greek culture did not supplant the indigenous culture, nor did it fade away. Some elements took root, while others were cast aside, while even others intermingled with their native counterparts. The result was not a complete expansion of Greek (Hellenic) culture, but rather an imitation of it, formed by the interaction and/or integration of the indigenous and imported Greek cultures. This is the Hellenistic world; a world that was inspired by Greek culture, but one that remembered its indigenous heritage.

This was truly a cosmopolitan world, where dynasties headed by proud Macedonian families ruled over a vast array of indigenous populations, Greek and indigenous customs flourished, and new schools of philosophical and religious thought developed. While the Hellenistic kingdoms bickered amongst each other, new dangers loomed on the eastern and western horizons, in the form of the Romans and the Parthians, each of whom would aid in bringing the Hellenistic world to a close.

This course will trace the political and cultural developments of the Hellenistic world from the death of Alexander the Great (323 BCE) to the Battle of Actium (33 BCE). Students will learn about the various kingdoms that arose after Alexander's death, their individual histories, wars, and political developments. This class will also study the myriad of philosophical, religious, and cultural developments, showing how the Hellenistic period shaped intellectual thought. Moreover, this course will look to the periphery of the Hellenistic world, observe the rise of Parthia and Rome, and study their influence and interaction with the Successor States. By the end of the course, students should be able to answer some prevailing questions:

- Can the incessant conflict and warfare in the Hellenistic period be characterized as an "East-West Conflict" that is rooted in the ambitions of the Persian Empire?

- In what ways did the Hellenistic world influence the perception of man and the universe for philosophers and theologians?
- Can any of the Hellenistic kingdoms be deemed as a “success?” Can any be described as irrevocable failures?
- In what ways did the Hellenistic world influence the Parthian and Roman kingdoms that succeeded it?

Contact Info: Email is the best way to contact me. I will respond within 24 hours.

Learning Goals

At the conclusion of this course, students will also be able to:

1. Analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in a wide variety of places and periods.
2. Use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.
3. Conduct original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources.
4. Use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument, orally and in writing.

Books –

R. Malcolm Errington. *A History of the Hellenistic World* - ISBN 978-063-123-388-6

Roger S. Bagnall, and Peter Derow, eds. *The Hellenistic Period* - ISBN 978-020-569-522-5

Note: We will be following Errington’s narrative closely, so it is imperative that you read the assigned sections. This will serve as a helpful guide and supplement to the lectures.

Attendance

Consistent attendance is paramount for a successful completion of this class. After three absences, your final grade will be reduced by one point for each absence. If you have special and unavoidable circumstances that prevent you from attending class, it will be your responsibility to notify me. Moreover, please be on time as tardiness is disrespectful and disruptive to both your classmates and myself. If tardiness becomes an issue (over three), a third of a point will begin to be deducted from the final grade.

It is your responsibility to sign the attendance sheet! If you do not sign it, I will assume you were absent!

Cell Phone and Laptop Use

Laptops will be allowed for note taking purposes. If I find that you are on facebook, chatting, or playing games, I will ask you to turn your laptop off. You may not think so, but this can be extremely distracting for those around you, and is extremely disrespectful to the instructor.

As for cell phones, please put them on vibrate or turn them off completely. Texting in class is prohibited. It is extremely disrespectful to the instructor and unprofessional.

Academic Integrity

I do not tolerate plagiarism, cheating, or any other violation of the honor code. Any violations will be dealt with according to the Academic Integrity Policy (<http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete>). Don't do it! This includes any and all plagiarism from websites. Cheating and plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the assignment in question. However, I recognize the frustration and confusion of using sources for research and writing, and the resultant fear of being accused of plagiarism. Your safest route is to ALWAYS use citations if you use ideas from another author or source (even if it's a website).

Assignments

I understand that the Greek names and terms involved in studying the Hellenistic world can lead to confusion. After all, everyone in the Ptolemaic dynasty was called "Ptolemy," the Seleucids alternated constantly between "Seleucus" and "Antiochus," while the Antigonids in Macedon alternated between "Antigonus" and "Demetrios." To address this, I have decided to give multiple quizzes throughout the semester while the information is fresh on your mind, hopefully helping to alleviate some of the confusion. There will be **five quizzes**, roughly every other week. The quizzes will consist of Short ID's (matching), and two short answer questions. (Learning Goals 1 and 4)

There will be **one 3-5 page paper** due in the second third of the semester. Students will be given a selection of possible topics and prompts, and provided with the appropriate source materials. (Learning Goals 1, 2, 3, and 4)

Lastly, there will be a **take-home final exam** at the end of the semester, which will consist of two long essays, but with a cumulative aspect. (Learning Goals 1, 2, and 4)

Moreover, you will be graded on **participation**. This will be measured by frequency with which you speak up and ask questions in class, and how much you contribute in discussion days. Students with sterling attendance will receive a little "bump" (an extra point or two) in their participation grade.

On selected days you will splinter into several smaller groups to discuss primary sources and articles illustrative of themes in this course. In preparation for these activities, you are expected to read the assigned sources and prepare two well-considered discussion questions for presentation in class. You will be allowed to skip only **two** postings. These **questions must be posted to the appropriate forum on Blackboard by the preceding Wednesday at 11:59pm.**

The **grade percentages** for assignments will be as follows:

Quizzes: 30% (combined)

Final Exam: 30%

Participation: 20%

Paper: 20%

Blackboard

This course will extensively use blackboard to access readings on E-reserve. Be sure to check it regularly!

Other Class Requirements and Rules

1. Be sure to keep all graded assignments until the end of the semester. You may need them!
2. All course requirements and assignments must be completed in order to pass this class. No incomplete work!
3. Late assignments will be penalized **half a letter grade** for each day past the due date. If you cannot turn an assignment in on time for whatever reason, it is **your** responsibility to contact me.

Lecture and Reading Schedule

January 10 –Introduction to course and course mechanics/Persia and Greece.

January 12 – Persia, Greece, Macedon, and Alexander the Great

Secondary Source Reading: Walbank, *The Hellenistic World*, 31-49

Primary Source Reading: Herodotus: 486-495 and Plutarch, “Alexander,” 1-75

January 17 – Alexander the Great continued...

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 1-12

Primary Source Reading: Plutarch, “Alexander,” 1-75 (**for Discussion**)

January 19 – The Wars of the Diadochoi/**Discussion**

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 13-36

January 24 – The Wars of the Diadochoi

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 36-45

Primary Source Reading: Plutarch, “Demetrios,” 135-180

January 26 – The Wars of the Diadochoi/**Discussion**

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 51-62

Primary Source Reading: Plutarch, “Demetrios,” 135-180(**for Discussion**)

January 31 – Kings and Cities/**Quiz**

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 62-76, 139-142

Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 8-17, 32-37, 139-140

February 2 – Affairs in Europe

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 79-90

February 7 – Affairs in Europe

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 90-110

Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 38-41
February 9 – Affairs in Europe
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 111-131

February 14 – Seleukids/**Quiz**
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 131-138

February 16 – Seleukids/**Discussion**
Secondary Source Reading: Sherwin-White & Kurht, *From Samarkand to Sardis*: 51-59, 72-84, 103-105, 107-111 (**for discussion**)

February 21 – Seleukids
Primary Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 45, 49-53, 55-62

February 23– Ptolemaic Egypt/**Discussion**
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 143-154
Primary Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 144-162, 206-227 (**for discussion**)

February 28 – Ptolemaic Egypt
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 154-161

March 1– Hellenistic Colonialism and Government/**Quiz/Discussion**
Secondary Source Reading: Billows, *Kings and Colonists*: 146-178 (**for discussion**)

March 3-11: Spring Break Holiday: No Class

March 13 - Hellenistic Armies and Warfare
Secondary Source Reading: Billows, *Antigonos the “One Eyed”*: 353-361 (**choice for 03/22 discussion**)
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 46-48, 199-206

March 15 – Philosophy and Religion
Secondary Source Reading: Grant, *From Alexander to Cleopatra*: 214-252 (**choice for 03/22 discussion**)
Primary Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 259-273

March 20– The Arts and Sciences
Secondary Source Reading: Grant, *From Alexander to Cleopatra*: 149-180 (**choice for 03/22 discussion**)

March 22 – Hellenistic Women/**Quiz/Discussion**
Secondary Source Reading: Grant, *From Alexander to Cleopatra*, 194-213 (**choice for 03/22 discussion**)
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 49-51, 239-241

March 27– Rome and Macedon

Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 198-213,
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 64-75

March 29 - Back in *Arche Seleukeia*: Antiochus III
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 214-220
Sherwin-White and Khurt, 188-201 (possibly 202-209)

April 3 – Rome and Greece
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 241-255
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 75-79, 82-85

April 5 – Rome and the Seleucids/**Discussion**
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 165-170
Sherwin-White and Khurt, 210-217
Primary Source Reading: Livy, 188-192, 332-334, 212-213, 312-313 (**for discussion**)

April 10 – Rome and Ptolemaic Egypt/**Quiz**
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 256-260
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 92-93, 118-119

April 12 – Asia Minor/Anatolia
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 260-267
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 88-92
Paper Due!

April 17 - Pontus, Mithridates, and the “ Mithridatic Wars.”
Secondary Source Reading: Errington, 282-290
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 102-105

April 19 - The End of the Seleucids
Text: Errington, 267-278
Sherwin-White and Khurt, 217-223, 225-230.
Primary Source Reading: Bagnall and Derow, 101-102

April 24 – The End of Ptolemaic Egypt/**Last Day of Class!**
Secondary Source: Errington, 290-298

December 9 – **Final Exam due**