



Fragmentary relief sculpture of riders in formation, 4<sup>th</sup> century BCE, Agora Museum, Athens (M. Cummins)

**CLS/HIS 255: History of Ancient Greece**  
Fall 2023

M. F. Cummins  
[cumminsm@grinnell.edu](mailto:cumminsm@grinnell.edu)  
HSSC A3246, x3305  
Office Hours: Daily, 3:00–4:00 PM;  
by appointment or chance

"History is a study of power in human systems: how it is managed, seized, lost, used, and occasionally even shared."

Gordon S. Shrimpton, *History and Memory in Ancient Greece*, McGill-Queen's UP, 1997, p. 3.

## **SUBJECT and COURSE OBJECTIVES**

The subject of this course is ancient Greek history in the period 1200–323 BCE (Before the Common Era): the rise of Greek city-states such as democratic Athens and militarized Sparta; the contentious and often bitter relationships that existed **between** different Greek city-states and **between** different classes within individual city-states; the uneasy and shifting relationships of these states with the Persian Empire to the east. It was a turbulent time that saw the rise of western democracy, philosophy, art, and literature.

The purpose of this course is not simply to learn a sequence of events from a past time, but to consider carefully how those events are known to us now: to learn about sources—material, literary, and epigraphical—and how, in spite of their distinct limitations, they can be pieced together to yield a narrative. We will learn to appreciate that there are different kinds of narrative and that any narrative is subject to criticism and revision.

A third objective is for you to think consciously not just about **what** you are learning, but also about **how** you learn. The class will meet on Monday and Wednesday, 8:30–9:50 AM, and each class will proceed by lecture in the first half, and by discussion in the second half. Whether in lecture or in discussion, whether by listening, by discussing, by giving oral reports or by writing papers, you will sharpen your abilities to listen, speak, and write critically—to identify and evaluate theses, arguments, and evidence. More on this as we go.

## COURSE OBJECTIVES and MEANS OF ASSESSMENT

The Department of Classics regards the following list as the competencies which students should acquire in a 200-level course on ancient Greek history:

- 1) Knowledge of chronological framework of events (quizzes and exams): the period 1200–323 BCE
- 2) Knowledge of geographical context (quizzes): Greece within the Mediterranean Basin
- 3) Knowledge of significant military, political and social events and their causal connections (class discussion, exams and papers), particularly for Athens and Sparta
- 4) Knowledge of primary sources, whether material or literary; their nature, limitations, and synthesis (class discussion, exams and papers), particularly the historians Herodotos, Thucydides, and Arrian
- 5) Limited knowledge of scholarship so that students are exposed to effective argumentation from evidence (class discussion, exams and papers)

In addition, students should improve academic skills through analytical reading, writing, and oral presentations.

## REQUIRED TEXTS

Pomeroy, Sarah et al., *A Brief History of Ancient Greece: Politics, Society and Culture*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. Oxford, 2014.

Romm, James, ed. *The Landmark Arrian*. Anchor Books, 2012.

Strassler, Robert B, ed. *The Landmark Herodotus*. Anchor Books, 2007.

Warner, Rex, trans. *Thucydides. History of the Peloponnesian War*. Penguin, 1972. Revised edition.

## REQUIREMENTS

Attendance in class is mandatory. One absence is granted without penalty. Additional absences will result in reduction of grade. Tardiness results in a slight deduction.

Thorough reading and study of all assignments.

Thoughtful class participation in lecture and discussion group.

Assigned oral reports and one-page papers; one four-page essay on an ancient historian.

Mid-term and final examinations (written or oral).

## GRADING

Class Participation	35%
Attendance	
Remarks in lecture and discussion	
Short oral presentations, Recorder's Reports	
Quizzes (no make-ups on missed quizzes, unless pre-arranged)	
One-page papers (2–3)	15%
Four-page analysis of Herodotos or Thucydides or Arrian ( <b>variable due dates</b> )	15%
Mid-term exam ( <b>Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup>, 8:30 AM</b> )	15%
Short written identifications OR oral exam at arranged time	
Final exam ( <b>Friday, December 15<sup>th</sup>, 9 AM</b> )	

Short written identifications OR oral exam at arranged time	15%
One-page take-home essay on Alexander the Great	5%

## ACCOMODATIONS and ACADEMIC HELP

At times students require accommodations, often for extracurricular activities, for religious observances, or for disabilities. Please contact me early in the semester if you require accommodations, so that your documented needs can be appropriately met. If you have a disability, you will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Coordinator of Student Disability Resources, Jae Baldree, whose office is Steiner 209; [Hirschma]).

During this semester unexpected conflicts and problems may arise that prevent you from being in class, from participating effectively, or from turning in assignments on time. It is critically important that you communicate to me any obstacles to participation that you are experiencing so that we can work together to create the best possible learning environment. In some cases, I may recommend consulting with the Academic Advising staff. They are an excellent resource for developing strategies for academic success and can connect you with other campus resources as well: <http://www.grinnell.edu/about/offices-services/academic-advising>.

If I notice that you are encountering difficulty and I have reached out to you and not received a response, or if you have missed multiple class sessions or are not meeting our class objectives repeatedly, I will submit an academic alert via Academic Advising's SAL portal. This notifies you of my concern, along with the Academic Advising team and your adviser(s), so that they can reach out to you with additional offers of support.

I place a lot of emphasis on writing in this course. I am committed to helping you improve your writing by giving timely feedback and by meeting with you to discuss your writing, if you wish. I also encourage you to meet with a writing professional in the Writing, Reading, and Speaking Center for additional help, if you think it might be helpful to you. These professionals can assist you with papers, projects, and presentations, as well as applications for internships, fellowships, and graduate school. For a link to the schedule and appointment system, visit <http://mywco.com/grinnell> or search for "Writing Center" on grinnell.edu or GrinnellShare.

## POLICIES

*Workload.* The normal workload for this course is expected to be about four hours per class, but obviously there are individual differences. **Because the class meets on Monday and Wednesday, the interval between classes is not uniform.** You will want to plan ahead in order to spread out your reading and writing assignments into more manageable and consistent pieces.

*Textbooks.* Required textbooks are available for purchase in the bookstore and some are on reserve in Burling Library, or you may buy them online. You must buy the required translations of Herodotos, Thucydides, and Arrian because the English of different translations can vary greatly. I strongly encourage you to buy a print version of these texts so that you can find the relevant pages quickly during our discussions because we will refer to the text constantly. **Bring the text of the ancient author that we are reading to every class session.** You may purchase the text by Pomeroy, *A Brief History of Ancient Greece*, as an e-book because you will not need it in class.

*Note-taking.* I allow laptops in class for note-taking during lecture, but I also post my lecture notes to Pweb after class. So, you will always have access in printed form to the fundamental points of every lecture. These posted notes, however, do not replace lecture because I often

improvise in what I say in class, especially in response to questions, and this additional material is not reflected in the notes posted on Pweb.

*Courtesy in the classroom.* Come to class groomed and alert. As a matter of respect and consideration for other members of the class, observe ordinary norms of courtesy, i.e., arrive before the beginning of class and, except for necessity, do not leave the room during class and do not eat during class (drinks are fine). It is a good practice in general to arrive a few minutes before class, if possible, and to review your notes. Feel welcome to visit with one another before class begins. **Cellphones should be silenced and out of sight before you walk in the door, and should not be consulted until class is over.** It is important for us to treat each other respectfully and with careful attention so that we can successfully carry out a shared intellectual enterprise.

*Absences.* At times absence from class may be unavoidable: in cases of illness, injury, official college trips, observance of religious holidays, or other conflicts. I grant one absence without direct penalty, unless an absence occurs on a day on which you are assigned an oral report. More than one absence, because of the material that you will miss, is detrimental to your class performance and grade. You should notify me in advance of scheduled absences and, if possible, of unexpected absences due to illness or emergency (I do not need to know details, just to be informed of your absence). Email notification is fine. I also impose a penalty for tardiness.

*Penalties for late written work.* Detailed directions for papers is provided separately (in the course area on Pweb under “Documents.” The normal penalty for late submission of any written assignment is one-third of a letter-grade per class session (for example, A → A-; C+ → C). No paper will be accepted later than two weeks after its due date. Late papers should be submitted by email attachment with a doc or docx extension. No PDFs! Final essays **MUST** be turned in by the due date. There are no extensions for the final written assignment in the course.

A (94-100%), A- (90-93%), B+ (88-89%), B (84-87%), B- (80-83%), C+ (78-79%), C (70-77%), D (60-69%).

*Missed oral reports.* There are no make-ups for missed recorder’s reports or oral reports. If you miss class on a day on which you have a recorder’s report or oral presentation due, you forfeit the opportunity to give that report or presentation.

*Academic honesty.* The college's academic honesty policy obviously applies to this course. Students are expected to prepare for class on their own and not to collaborate with other students on any written assignments. Informal discussion, however, of the content of the course, outside of class, is fine. **In this course you will rely on your own unassisted analysis of the text, unless I instruct otherwise. Please note that the use of any external source, without express citation, is a violation of the academic honesty policy.**

*Writing, Reading, and Speaking Center.* I will provide feedback on your writing and on your oral presentations. Please feel welcome to make appointments with the Writing, Reading, and Speaking Center for additional help with either your papers or your oral presentations. Below is a description of the services of this Center, provided by its director:

Grinnell’s Writing, Reading, and Speaking Center supports students working on papers, projects, and presentations, as well as applications for internships, fellowships, and graduate school. In one-on-one sessions, students work with professional instructors to interpret readings, talk through ideas, choose and analyze evidence, develop and organize arguments, craft introductions and conclusions, organize and revise whole drafts, rewrite sentences and paragraphs, plan presentations, and more. Instructors do not proofread papers, but they can teach you how to edit your own work effectively. For a

link to the schedule and appointment system, visit <http://mywco.com/grinnell> or search for “Writing Center” on grinnell.edu or GrinnellShare.