

Between Fact and Fiction:

Greek and Roman Historians

CLS 295/HIS 295-04

MWF 1:00-1:50 P.M.

Room: JRC 226

Instructor: Regina Loehr (she/her)

Office: HSSC A3228

Office Hours: M 11:00-12:00, T 11:00-12:00, W 9:00-9:50 and by appointment

Course Description

Ancient historians made explicit – and complex – claims about their relation to the truth and past events. How do we as readers navigate their presentations of “the truth” and come to an understanding of the past? In this course students explore ancient historical texts as deliberate works of literature rather than as sources to mine for historical data. Students evaluate the historians’ claims of veracity, examining how the historians frame their narratives and how their choices of material and presentation affect their audiences. This is an important task, not only because historiography is the largest, (one of) the most persistent, and static genres throughout the ancient world, but also because analysis of historical narratives is a skill needed in the contemporary world in which events, narratives, and conceptions of the past and of reality are shifting and debated.

Course Objectives

- To evaluate ancient historians’ claims of veracity,
- To be able to identify the parameters, expectations, and characteristics of the genre of ancient historiography from Herodotus to Tacitus,
- To apply both ancient historiographical theory and modern approaches to analysis of ancient histories,
- To practice skills of literary analysis particular to the application of historical texts.

Required Textbooks

Herodotus. *Histories*. Trans. Aubrey de Sélincourt. Penguin Classics. 2003. ISBN: 9780140449082.
(not available through the Inclusive Access program.)

*Thucydides. *Landmark Thucydides*. Trans. Richard Crawley. Landmark. 1998. ISBN:
9781439106594.

*Livy. *Hannibal’s War*. Trans. J.C. Yardley. Oxford World Classics. 2009. ISBN: 9780191623301.

*Tacitus. *Annals*. Trans. J.C. Yardley. Oxford World Classics. 2008. ISBN: 9780191605031.

*Caesar. *Gallic War*. Trans. Carolyn Hammond. Oxford World Classics. 2008. ISBN:
9780191605666.

*Josephus. *Jewish War*. Trans. Martin Hammond. Oxford World Classics. 2017. ISBN:
9780191057601.

*These textbooks are available through the bookstore’s Inclusive Access program. Unless students opt out of this program, these textbooks will be available to them online, and they will be billed the reduced price directly to their university account.

Optional:

Sallust. *Catiline's Conspiracy, Jugurthine War, Histories*. Trans. W. Batstone. ISBN: 9780192823458.

Evaluation

Participation	10%
Assignments	15%
Take-home Assessments	30%
Research Paper (40%) and Presentation (5%)	45%

Participation

Class participation is the gateway to fuller understanding and analysis of the texts. Your active participation in class discussions helps all of us explore, critique, and enjoy the course material and hones your ability to express your thoughts eloquently. By reading the texts and sharing your responses to and questions of these texts, you develop the critical skills applicable to any analysis of written (and other) material. I will evaluate you on how well-prepared you are for each class period and on how you engage in the discussions.

Readings

Ancient texts form the backbone for this course. Careful reading of all texts is essential for success in this course. Read the assigned texts, take thoughtful notes on anything significant or confusing, and then re-read those sections which cause difficulty. Be able to distinguish the most important ideas, characters, and events in order to engage fully in the course discussions and projects.

Assignments

Throughout the course there will be small assignments. Assignments are designed to give you the opportunity to practice and develop analytical skills appropriate for our course content. As such, they are evaluated on completion and adherence to guidelines. Some of these are designed to check that you keep up with the reading. These will help you engage with the course material and develop the required analytical skills. Other assignments will require consideration of modern treatments of history to help us conceptualize and evaluate ancient historiography.

Take-Home Assessments

There are two take-home assessments in lieu of quizzes or exams for this course. These will allow you to demonstrate your mastery of Greek historiography and Roman historiography, respectively. These assessments also allow me to evaluate your analytical skills. These may consist of identifications, short answer questions, passage analyses, and essay responses.

Research Paper

The research paper presents an opportunity for students to practice the skills learned in this course. Students research a topic in a historian of their choice. This research will be presented in two forms: First as a brief oral presentation to the class, and second as a paper 5-7 pages long. Further guidelines will be provided. Please note that the schedule contains dates for segments of this project; these are designed to help keep on track with this project.

Policies

Inclusion

This course is open for everyone to learn. Please respect your colleagues and me so that we can create an inclusive, supportive, and respectful learning community.

Academic Honesty

The college has a clear policy on academic honesty:

[http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty in Academic Work](http://catalog.grinnell.edu/content.php?catoid=12&navoid=2537#Honesty_in_Academic_Work)

If you are struggling in the course, please come see me. Let us meet and form a plan which can work for you and your other commitments.

Academic Preparation

If you need assistance with any kind of academic skillset, from notetaking to time management and beyond, please consult with the Academic Advising office, on the upper level of Steiner Hall, advising@grinnell.edu

Accommodations

If you require accommodation for any diagnosed disability, please contact the Accessibility and Disability Services, which are located on the 3rd floor of the Rosenfield Center. You can also contact Jae Hirschman directly, by phone at 641-269-3710. If you find yourself struggling with the material or with anything else, please do come and talk to me.

Wellness

For any health needs, physical, mental, or both, please consult with Student Health and Wellness (SHAW) (641-269-3230), which is located in the lower level of the Forum. SHAW will help you coordinate absences from class due to illness, so please notify them as well as me if you will miss class due to illness.

Religious Observances

Please consult the course schedule at the beginning of the semester if you foresee celebrating an important religious holiday during the course of the semester. It is important that you communicate with me in the first two full weeks of the semester if a course requirement will conflict with a religious observance.

Technology

Please be respectful of your fellow students, me, and yourself by disabling all distractions. Please keep cell phones stowed away for the duration of class.

**I reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.

Schedule

01/23-01/27 **Introduction to Historiography**

Mon. Jan. 23: Introductions

Cyclical Narratives: Herodotus

Wed. Jan. 25: Herodotus, 1.1-33, pp. 3-16

Fri. Jan. 27: Herodotus, 1. 34-92, pp. 16-44

01/30-02/03

Mon. Jan. 30: Herodotus, 3.1-66, pp. 170-200

Wed. Feb. 1: Herodotus, 3.67-160, pp. 200-239

Fri. Feb. 3: Herodotus, 7.172-239, pp. 476-500

02/06-02/10

Mon. Feb. 6: Herodotus, 8.40-107, pp. 513-537

Expressing Experience: Thucydides

Wed. Feb. 8: Thucydides, 1.20-88, pp. 14-49

Fri. Feb. 10: Thucydides, 2.1-46, pp. 89-118

02/13-02/17

Mon. Feb. 13: Thucydides 2.47-103, pp. 118-156

Wed. Feb. 15: Thucydides, 3.20-85, pp. 168-201

Fri. Feb. 17: Thucydides, 6.24-32, pp. 375-379; Thuc. 7.1-50, pp. 427-458

02/20-02/24

Mon. Feb. 20: Thucydides, 7.51-87, pp. 458-478

Pushing the Bounds: Ctesias

Wed. Feb. 22: Ctesias, *Persika* 12.25-23, pp. 182-215

Fri. Feb. 24: Ctesias, *Indika*, pp. 47-82

02/27-03/03 *Research Paper Progress: Author or Topic Due.*

Take-Home Assessment I

How to Write History: Polybius

Mon. Feb. 27: Polybius, PDF

Wed. Mar. 1: Polybius, PDF

Incomplete History: Fragmentary Historians

Fri. Mar. 3: Fragmentary Greek Historians, PDF

03/06-03/10 *Take-Home Assessment I Due*

Mon. Mar. 6: Fragmentary Roman Historians, PDF

Memorialization and Civil Strife: Late Republican Historiography

Wed. Mar. 8: Sallust, *The War Against Catiline* 1-22, pp. 3-57

Fri. Mar. 10: Sallust, *The War Against Catiline* 23-61, pp. 59-179

03/13-03/17 *Research Paper Progress: Author AND Topic Due.*

Mon. Mar. 13: Caesar, *Gallic Wars* Books 1 and 2, pp. 26-43
Wed. Mar. 15: *Schedule research paper meetings*
Fri. Mar. 17: Caesar, *Gallic Wars* Books 3-6, pp. 44-74

--Spring Break--

04/03-04/07 *Research Paper Progress: Preliminary bibliography due.*

Mon. Apr. 3: Caesar, *Gallic Wars* 7, pp. 75-92

Patriotism and Teleology: Livy

Wed. Apr. 5: Livy, 21.1-33, pp. 3-34

Fri. Apr. 7: Livy, 21.34-63, pp. 34-65

04/10-04/14 *Research Paper Progress: Thesis statement due.*

Mon. Apr. 10: Livy, 22.1-30, pp. 66-100

Wed. Apr. 12: Livy, 22.31-61, pp. 100-134

Constructing Authorial Trust: Josephus

Fri. Apr. 14: Josephus, *The Jewish War* 1.1-30, pp. 3-7; *The Jewish War* 3.141-442, pp. 170-193

04/17-04/21 *Research Paper Progress: Outline due.*

Mon. Apr. 17: Josephus, *The Jewish War* 5.247-572, pp. 275-303

Wed. Apr. 19: Josephus, *The Jewish War* Book 6, pp. 305-340

Fri. Apr. 21: Josephus, *The Jewish War* Book 7, pp. 341-374

04/24-04/28 *Research Presentations begin*

Writing History under Autocracy: Tacitus

Mon. Apr. 24: Tacitus, *Annals* 1.1-53, pp. 3-33

Wed. Apr. 26: Working Differently Day

Fri. Apr. 28: Tacitus, *Annals* 1.54-81 and 2.1-26, pp. 33-62

05/01-05/05 *Research Presentations*

Mon. May 1: Tacitus, *Annals* 2.27-88, pp. 62-94

Wed. May 3: Tacitus, *Annals* 3.1-19, pp. 95-105; *Annals* 4.28-35, pp. 151-156

Fri. May 5: Tacitus, *Annals* 6.20-51, pp. 195-214; *Histories* PDF

05/08-05/12 **Between Fact and Fiction: The *Historia Augusta***

Research Presentations

Take-Home Assessment II

Mon. May 8: *Historia Augusta*, PDF

Wed. May 10: *Historia Augusta*, PDF

Fri. May 12: Conclusions

**Thurs. May 18, 9:00-12:00: Final Examination Period: *Research Paper Due*
*Take-Home Assessment II Due***