

HIST 585-1: Special Topics in History:

Topic: Later Roman Empire (OPUS title)

The Later Roman Empire: Law, Religion, and Society (Complete course title)

Instructor	Day(s)	Time(s)	Maximum Enrollment
Evans-Grubbs	W	1:00 – 4:00 pm	10

Semester Description:

This course explores the political, social, religious and legal changes in the later Roman world (c. 275-476 CE) from the reign of Diocletian through the break-up of the western Empire. The precise parameters of the course and the topics covered will depend on the background and interests of the students enrolled, but will include the "Great Persecution" of Diocletian and the rise of Constantine; the great codifications of Roman law (particularly the Theodosian Code), the disintegration of the western half of the Empire into regional, "barbarian" states, the question of "ethnicity," the Christianization of the Empire, and changes in private life and gender roles. A reading knowledge of Latin and ancient Greek is recommended but not required.

Please note: Official auditors for this class are expected to do the readings and participate in class, and to send in the short weekly email responses. Auditors do not have to do the midterm or final paper. They are asked to give an oral presentation on a topic pertaining to their interests.

Required Textbooks, Articles, and Resources (will include but are not limited to):

1. Ammianus Marcellinus (trans. W. Hamilton), *The Later Roman Empire* (Penguin, 1986)
2. Aurelius Augustinus (St. Augustine) *Confessions* (Oxford's World Classics)
3. Peter Brown, *The Cult of the Saints* (1981) [online through library]
4. Peter Brown, *Through the Eye of a Needle: Wealth, the Fall of Rome and the Making of Christianity in the West 350-550 AD* (2012) [online through library]
5. John Curran, *Pagan City and Christian Capital: Rome in the Fourth Century* (2000).
6. Patrick Geary, *The Myth of Nations* (2002).
7. Kyle Harper, *Slavery in the Late Roman World AD 275-425* (2011) [online]
8. Jill Harries, *Law and Empire in Late Antiquity* (1999) [online through library]
9. John Matthews, *Western Aristocracies and Imperial Court* (1975) [online]

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10. Clyde Pharr (trans.) *The Theodosian Code and Novels, and the Sirmondian Constitutions* (1952). [online through the library]
11. Bryan Ward-Perkins, *The Fall of Rome and the End of Civilization* (2005) [online]

Recommended Textbooks, Articles, and Resources (for background):

1. Averil Cameron, *The Later Roman Empire* (1993). Readable account of the 4th century.
2. Stephen Mitchell, *History of the Later Roman Empire AD 284-641* (2nd ed. 2015) [online through the library]
3. Additional readings include: articles in *The Blackwell Companion to Late Antiquity* (ed. Philip Rousseau, 2009); *The Oxford Handbook of Late Antiquity* (ed. Scott F. Johnson, 2012); the *Cambridge Ancient History* volumes 12, 13, and 14; articles in the *Journal of Late Antiquity*; *L'Antiquité tardive*, *Early Medieval Europe*, and the *Journal of Early Christian Studies*; and readings in ancient sources in translation.

Grading:

There will be a midterm paper of 10-15 pages researching and analyzing laws from the Theodosian Code, and a final paper of c. 20 pages researching the “state of the question” of some current issue in late Roman/late antique studies. In addition, students will send in short email responses to the readings and do short oral presentations on topics relevant to their own interests.