

This course focuses on Roman civilization in the Mediterranean in the late third-fourth centuries CE with an emphasis on the great changes which occurred during the reign of the emperor Constantine (306-337 CE). His reign inaugurated a period of profound change for the Roman Empire: a new capital would be founded in the East in 330 CE, moving the focus of imperial power permanently away from Italy; Christianity became the religion of the empire, sponsored and practiced by the emperor himself; new ideas about what it meant to be Roman and what it meant to be an emperor, emerged; new rivals for power in the east, north and west emerged; and the divide between the Eastern and Western portions of the empire solidified. We will look at this age through a variety of primary sources, e.g. literary, ecclesiastical, archaeological, art historical. The course considers many different aspects to the Roman empire under Constantine, including the religious life of the people of the empire and its emperor; the art and architecture of Constantine and Constantinople; the political intrigues and decisions made by the emperor and his immediate predecessors; elements of late Roman/early Byzantine administration and life; and the impact of this Age of Constantine on the Mediterranean world. This is a GLT and WI course (writing intensive) and features a "Reacting to the Past" role-playing game in which students will consider the impact that Constantine had on religion and administration in the empire.

student learning outcomes

After the completion of this course, the student will be able to:

- 1 Describe the major changes in the Mediterranean world during and after the reign of Constantine, including (but not limited to) the impact on politics, cities, the role of the emperor, the imperial administration, religion, literature, art, and cultural identity.
- 2 Identify the role of Constantine in encouraging major cultural, religious and political changes in the Mediterranean.
- 3 Critically evaluate evidence from multiple sources (literary, archaeological, historical) and representing different perspectives and opinions.
- 4 Write in genres appropriate to the discipline(s) of the primary subject matter of the course.

AGE OF CONSTANTINE

graded assignments

EXAMS // 25%

CCI 327 spring 2019

Midterm 100 points

Final Exam (take-home essay) 100 points

WRITTEN // 30%

Daily Writing & Workshops Variable

Research Proposal & Data Collection 100 points

Creative Project 100 points

Attendance, Participation, &

Class Performance // 15%

(1 absence excused)

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rleblan@uncg.edu
Office: MHRA 1110
Office Hours:

M 1-3:30
W 9-9:45
Or by appt

Class Meets:
W 6:00-8:50pm
MHRA 1206

RTTP // 30%

Position Papers (2) 200pts
Character sketch + Meeting 25 pts
Participation 100 pts + any VP

This is a **writing intensive class**. This does not mean that you will be producing reams and reams of written assignments; rather, it means that we will approach writing in a thoughtful, deliberate, and reflective way, with opportunities for you to revise and improve built into the course assignments and structure. You will write to learn, write to brainstorm, write to collaborate, and write for a grade. The formal assignments (i.e. things that are written outside of class and which go through multiple drafts) will largely be “real world” genres, i.e. forms of writing that you would encounter outside the classroom, and for which there is a certain audience for the writing, with certain expectations built into the genre or imposed upon it by the audience. You will also practice writing in more informal ways, providing reflections about sources, working with classmates in groups to synthesize ideas, and also thinking about how to creatively incorporate the ancient world into writing. The assignments for our reacting game emphasize this approach—writing with a distinct purpose and utility, and writing with an element of creativity.

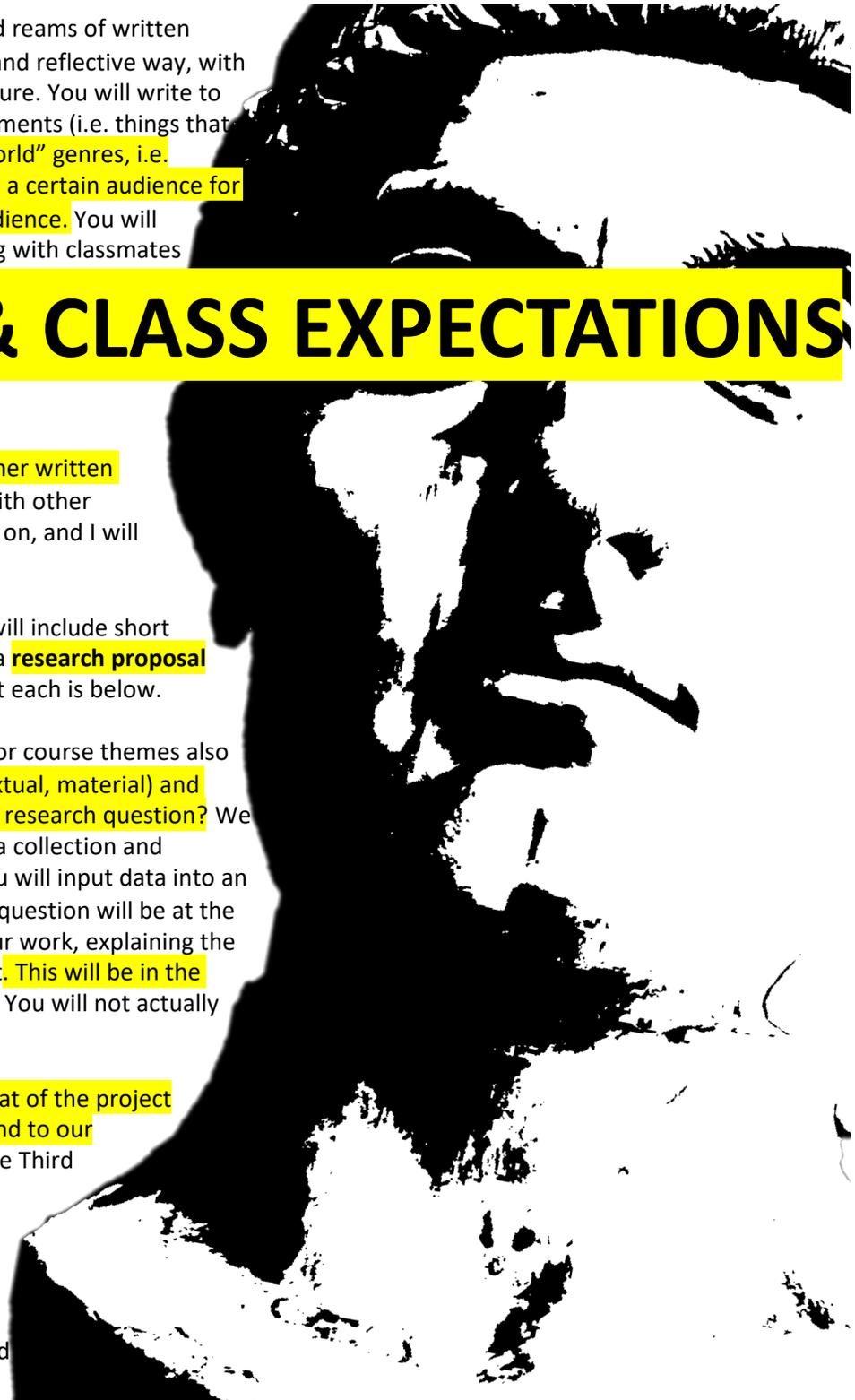
WRITING & CLASS EXPECTATIONS

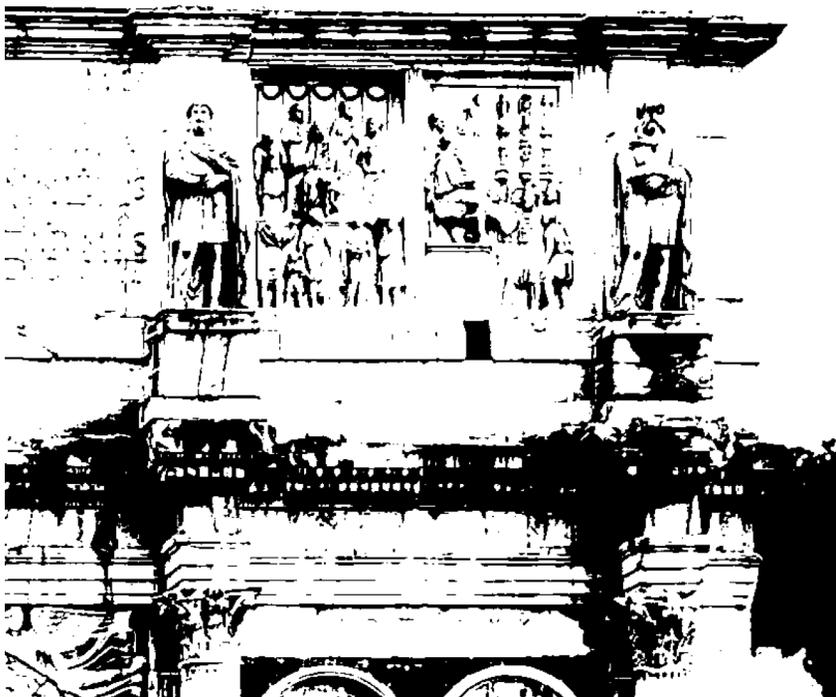
Aside from your RTTP assignments (previous page), you will also complete a series of other written assignments. Some of these are in-class reflections on the day’s reading, or responses with other classmates authored during primary source focused workshops. This class is VERY hands on, and I will spend only about 1/3 of a given meeting talking at you.

The additional formal written assignments are as follows: writing on a **midterm** (which will include short answers, term identifications, image identifications, etc), a **final exam essay** (info TBA), a **research proposal and data set collection**, and an **end-of-the-semester creative project**. Information about each is below.

The **research proposal and data collection assignment** is situated within one of the major course themes also touched upon by our reacting game—**how does one take large amounts of evidence (textual, material) and organize this evidence in order to identify trends, patterns, etc. that will help generate a research question?** We will do TWO in-class workshops (one with text, one with material culture) practicing data collection and organization skills, and then you will select some material to work with on your own. You will input data into an organizational matrix, and then use that to generate a research question. That research question will be at the basis of a research proposal—a three-page narrative providing some background for your work, explaining the evidence that you collected, and elucidating the research questions you want to ask of it. **This will be in the form of an URCA proposal**, one of the undergraduate research categories here at UNCG. You will not actually submit the URCA, but you will use that form as a guide.

The **creative project** is just that—a creative project with a written component. **The format of the project is up to you, but must be inspired by something real-world, and must integrate or respond to our course material in a meaningful way.** You might develop a game based on Zenobia, or the Third Century crisis (an RTTP game, for example, or a tabletop board game); you might write an epic poem about Constantine, a script for a TV drama based on Julian’s life, draw an illustrated manuscript of the *Posthomerica*, or create a graphic novel based on the life of Helena. You will have to submit a project proposal, but I encourage you to be creative and to **think outside the box with this**. Be warned—you cannot just do this the night before! Your project must represent significant effort and time investment, and be grounded in a connection to the primary source or course material.





A key component of the class is a **Reacting to the Past (RTTP)** game centered on the **Council of Nicaea**, a meeting between early church leaders, called by Constantine, in order to make a series of consequential decisions about the administration, beliefs, and organization of the early Christian church. Informed by historical and primary texts, students take on the identity of a key participant in the event. The game unfolds over a series of class meetings, preceded by a number of set-up discussions and readings. **Gameplay is entirely conducted by YOU**. During the Council, members will engage in debate, discussion, and negotiation as they attempt to articulate their view points, gain supporters for their ideas, and achieve a series of goals. Preparation for council includes research in ancient source material, including biblical and historical texts, and you will think through your ideas in two position papers in which you use primary source material to help articulate and reinforce your character's positions on key issues. **All students are required to participate in the reacting game each day.**

Your reacting to the past written assignments will include a **CV of your character** (distributed to others in advance), and **rough and finals drafts of two positions papers**, 3-4 pages in length. You will also be required to come to a **1-on-1 conference** to discuss you character, and to participate daily in the Council sessions.

Please note that the Council of Nicaea game will involve discussions about the nature of early Christianity, and require you to engage closely with biblical texts (both the Old and New Testament, and, in some cases, apocryphal texts) in order to articulate your character's argument. We will focus on issues of organization and administration, but an essential

issue in the council was the nature of the relationship between Jesus and God, a point of much contention among early Christians.

RTTP (REACTING TO THE PAST)

The decision made in the council on this issue had many impacts on the ancient world.

Your **character sketch** will be based on your character role sheet (distributed in week 2), and can be written in a format of your choice, as long as it is a written, real-world genre by which someone introduces themselves to others—thing a CV or resume, a Linked-In profile, or a personal website or social media profile. You will complete a rough draft of this document based on your role sheet and research with primary source materials, and we will go over it during our 10 minute character conference sometime in week 3 or 4. You will revise the character sketch and turn in the final copy on Wed Feb 13.

Your **two position papers** also mimic the conventions of a real-world genre: **two short papers which use facts, data, and sources to help articulate and promote a position**. You will write one 3-4 page paper on the relationship between God and Jesus ("**Creed**"), and one on matters of church administration ("**Admin**"). These papers must use primary source texts to help communicate your position and persuade your audience! Due dates are as follows:

Creed	Rough Draft: Wed Feb 13	Final Draft: Wed March 27
Admin	Rough Draft: Wed Feb 27	Final Draft: Wed April 10



concerning canvas & email

It is your responsibility to check Canvas and your UNCG email daily. You will be notified of any change in schedule or assignments via a Canvas email and posted announcement. Your grades will be posted throughout the semester on Canvas, typically within a week of grading. It is your responsibility to keep up with your grades on Canvas, and to inform your instructor of any errors (i.e. a missing grade) or questions ASAP.

weather & class cancellations

In the event our class is canceled, either due to weather or some other unforeseen circumstance, please **check your email asap** for instructions. I will usually assign an activity, reading, or video in lieu of our class meeting, and you will be given ample time to access and complete the material.

special accommodations

Students requesting accommodations based on a disability must be registered with the Office of Accessibility Resources and Services (OARS) in 215 Elliott University Center (<http://ods.dept.uncg.edu/>; email: oars@uncg.edu). If you have a documented disability and want to discuss academic accommodations, **please talk with me before the end of the second week.**

religious days

State law allows students to have up to two absences for religious reasons per academic year and to be allowed to make up work missed. If this applies to you, you must notify me two weeks in advance and make arrangements to make up missed work at that time. I reserve the right to require you to do this work before your absence.

academic integrity policy

All work completed in and for this course falls under the university's academic integrity policy. Plagiarism, cheating, misuse of academic resources, falsification, facilitation of academic dishonesty and unauthorized behaviors are violations of the academic integrity policy, bringing with them at least grade-related sanctions and, at most, the possibility of expulsion from the university. Please visit the following link for more information: [UNCG Academic Integrity Policy](#) or visit the website of the Office of Student Rights and Responsibilities.

grading scale

A	100-93%
A-	92-90%
B+	89-87%
B	86-83%
B-	82-80%
C+	79-77%
C	76-73%
C-	72-70%
D+	69-67%
D	66-63%
D-	62-60%
F	Below 60%

I am happy to discuss your grades with you.

However, university policy prohibits discussions of grades via email, and so you will have to schedule an appointment to come to my office to discuss any issues or questions you might have. Grades will be posted on Canvas throughout the semester so that you may keep track of your performance in the class. **My "rounding" policy is as follows: I will only take into account the first number after the decimal, i.e. 89.6 will be rounded up to a 90% (A-), but an 89.59 will be a B+.** If I make an error calculating your grade I'm more than happy to fix it, but I do not negotiate grades.

COURSE POLICIES

**please note that I reserve the right to make modifications or changes to this syllabus and course schedule at any time, accompanied by email and verbal notification (as far as possible) of such changes*



course schedule

NB: Class is generally divided up into four blocks, with different topics or activities occupying each block. Those topics are not all listed for each week. Due dates for assignments, or dates of exams, are indicated highlighted in **green**



1/16: Rome B.C.* (Before Constantine)

1/23: The 3rd Century & The Tetrarchy

RTTP: Character role sheets distributed

Read: (1) Look over the RTTP gamebook online, especially pp.8-16; (2) “The third-century ‘crisis,’” in *Aurelian and the Third Century*, Alaric Watson, pp.1-20 (PDF on Canvas); (3) *Historia Augusta’s Life of Zenobia* (PDF on Canvas)

1/30: Constantine & His Reign (Rise, Administration, Cities, Economy)

RTTP: Character Conferences

Read: (1) RTTP Gamebook pp.65-80, 84-87; (2) Sections of Noel Lenski, “The Reign of Constantine,” in *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, pp.59-70 (PDF on Canvas)

2/6: Early Christianity (More RTTP Setup)

RTTP: Character Conferences

Read: NB: READ IN THIS ORDER! (1) Notes from Perpetua’s Journey by Jennifer A. Rea and Liz Clarke (PDF on Canvas); (2) Selections from *Perpetua’s Journey: Faith, Gender, and Power in the Roman Empire* (PDF on Canvas); (3) RTTP Gamebook, pp.17-28, 45-55

2/13: The Heirs of Constantine (Everyone is Named Constan-, and One Guy Named Julian) and Late Antique Biography and Panegyric

RTTP: Character Sketch Due

Read: (1) Panegyric Latinii (link on Canvas); (2) *Gospel of Mark* (link on Canvas, but feel free to use whatever translation you like); (3) Biographies on Constantine and his children from Aurelius Victor’s *De Caesaribus* (PDF on Canvas) (4) If you’re not familiar with the *Iliad* and the Trojan War, read the overview of these on Canvas; (5) Read at least Books I-II of *Posthomerica* (PDF on Canvas)

2/20: More Heirs of Constantine, and Sassanid Persia

RTTP: Creed Position Paper Draft Due

(1) Robert M. Frakes, “The Dynasty of Constantine down to 363,” in the *Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*, pp.91-98 (PDF on Canvas)
(2) Ammianus Marcellinus, selections from Books 16, 22, 25 (on Julian) (PDF on Canvas)
(3) **LISTEN:** BBC “In Our Time” podcast on the Sassanid Empire in Persia (45 min) (link on Canvas)

2/27: Art & Archaeology in the 3rd century

RTTP: Creed Position Paper Draft Due

Read: (1) Carey Dunne, “Vatican Digitizes a 1,600-Year-Old Illuminated Manuscript of the ‘Aeneid,’” [Hyperallergic](#), July 13, 2016; (2) Books III-VII (skip 4!) of *Posthomerica*

3/6: SPRING BREAK—NO CLASS

3/13: MIDTERM + Research Proposal Workshop Creative Project Proposal Due



3/20: How Epic! Quintus Smyrnaeus' *Posthomerica*

Read: (1) Finish the *Posthomerica* for today (Books 9-12—slip 8!); (2) RTTP Gamebook pp.57-66; review pp.65-87

3/27: RTTP Game Session #1: the Creed

RTTP: Creed Final Draft Due

4/3: CLASS CHOICE; Research Proposal Work Session

Research Proposal Data Set Due

Read: TBD

4/10: RTTP Game Session #2: Church Admin

RTTP: Admin Final Draft Due

4/17: RTTP Game Session #3: the Church Admin

Research Proposal Outline Due

4/24: What Kind of Day Has it Been (debrief); the Constantine Question; Rise of Theodosius

Research Proposal Final Draft Due

Read: (1) Eusebius on the conversion of Constantine (link on Canvas); (2) Aurelius Victor, selections from *De Caesaribus* (PDF on Canvas)

5/7: Helena, Constantina, and Late Antiquity; Legends of Constantine (and others!)

Creative Project Due

Read: TBD

**Final Exam due
Tuesday, May 7
@ 10pm**

