

“THE ROMAN EMPIRE: ARCHITECTURE & IDEOLOGY” (CLST 272)

3 CREDITS/AICE * MAY 16-31, 2025 * NO PRE-REQS

Dr. David M. Pollio, Dept. MCLL (david.pollio@cnu.edu) & Prof. Valentina Sorbera, W&M



COURSE DESCRIPTION

This summer study abroad course introduces students to ancient Roman art and architecture from the death of Julius Caesar (44 BCE) to the rise of Christianity (4th century CE). Pre-departure presentations and readings prepare students to investigate and interpret Roman archaeological sites in their historical and cultural contexts.

The course begins in the Naples-area with visits to the Greek city of Paestum and the Roman cities of Pompeii and Herculaneum and then moves to Rome, where students will examine how the political and military ambitions of the Roman elite shaped the development of the city and its architecture. In particular, students will visit the Roman Forum, Colosseum, and Pantheon; Vatican City; Etruscan “cities of the dead”; and many other sites in and around Rome.

COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course, students will be able to:

1. Describe stylistic elements associated with a work or artistic genre (AICE);
2. Identify the socio-political, historical, cultural, or economic context with which a work or artistic genre is commonly associated (AICE);
3. Demonstrate factual knowledge of Roman institutions (CLST);
4. Demonstrate factual knowledge of Roman material culture (CLST);
5. Evaluate material culture within its original cultural context (CLST).

REQUIRED MATERIALS

- “Roman Architecture 101” (PDF available on Scholar)
- D. E. E. Kleiner, *Roman Architecture: A Visual Guide* (eBook available [here](#) on Amazon.com)

RECOMMENDED TEXT (E-Book or Paperback)

- A. Claridge, *Oxford Archaeological Guide to Rome, 2nd Edition* (Oxford University Press 2010)

OR

- F. Coarelli, *Rome and Environs: An Archaeological Guide* (U. of California Press 2014)

RECOMMENDED APPS

- Citymapper (live transit information)
- Google Translate (Italian offline)
- Ulmon, CityMaps2GO – Offline (free version)
- WhatsApp (works well throughout Europe)

GRADING POLICY

Pre-Departure Quizzes (3): **10%**

Pre-Departure Exam: **10%**

Travel Essays (5): **10%**

Onsite Worksheets (14): **40%**

Onsite Presentation: **10%**

Final Exam: **20%**

Your final grade will be based on the following scale:

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

Pre-Departure Quizzes and Exam

Prior to departure, students will take three quizzes (multiple choice) and an exam (short-answer) via Scholar based on assigned readings and presentations covering essential background material.

Travel Essays

Students will submit five travel essays on ancient sites that we do not visit as a group. The essays should include images as well as a description of the historical context and prominent artistic/architectural features. A list of suggested sites will be provided, but students may visit any relevant site of interest.

Onsite Worksheets

Students working in teams assigned by the instructors will be given worksheets downloaded to their phones that require analysis of onsite features, such as art, architecture, decoration, and infrastructure.

Onsite Presentation (15-20 minutes + Q&A)

Students working in assigned pairs will deliver an onsite presentation, in which they describe the significance, historical context, and artistic/architectural features of a building or monument.

Final Exam

Students will take a comprehensive final exam while in Rome.

ITINERARY AND SCHEDULE OF READINGS & ASSIGNMENTS

[NB: additional information on all sites in Rome may be found in the relevant pages of Claridge and Coarelli]

<p>Pre-Departure Meetings</p>	<p>Meeting 1 – TBA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Course Introduction ● “Outline of Roman History” (PPT) & “Birth of a City” (PPT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading: Gibbs, “A Summary of Roman History” (pp. 22-42) ● “Roman Architecture: The Basics” (PDF) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reference Guide: “Roman Architecture 101” (pp. 1-20) <p style="text-align: center;">*** QUIZ 1 ***</p> <p>Meeting 2 – TBA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Art/Architecture of the Monarchy and Early Republic” (PPT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading: D. Kleiner, “Technology and Revolution in Roman Architecture” (pp. 35-49) ● “Art/Architecture of the Late Republic and Age of Augustus” (PPT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ F. Kleiner, “The Augustan Principate” (pp. 61-72) <p style="text-align: center;">*** QUIZ 2 ***</p> <p>Meeting 3 – TBA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● “Art/Architecture of the Empire” (PPT) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “The Flavians” (pp. 126-134) ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “Trajan” (pp. 156-164) ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “Hadrian” (pp. 180-185) ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “Marcus Aurelius” (pp. 197-201) ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “Septimius Severus & Caracalla” (pp. 238-240, 242-245) ○ Reading: F. Kleiner, “Constantine” (pp. 294-298) ● CNU Worksheet ● Travel and Program Logistics <p style="text-align: center;">*** QUIZ 3 ***</p> <p style="text-align: center;">*** PRE-DEPARTURE EXAM ***</p>
<p>May 16 (Fri) & May 17 (Sat)</p>	<p>Travel Days: USA to Italy</p> <p>Meet at Dulles Airport (IAD) with your bags and passport for group check-in.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depart IAD (5/16) / Arrive NAP (5/17) <p>Met at airport and taken to hotel (Pompei NA).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Free Time ● Group Dinner <p>[Hotel: TBD]</p>

<p>May 18 (Sun)</p>	<p>Naples in Antiquity (Neapolis)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at Hotel ● Train to Napoli Centrale ● Museo Archeologico Nazionale (Worksheet 1) ● Piazza Bellini (visible Greek wall foundations) <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lunch on your own ● Free Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ “Naples Underground” Tour (optional) ○ San Lorenzo Maggiore Tour (optional) <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Dinner ● Train to Pompeii ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 19 (Mon)</p>	<p>Paestum: Greeks and Romans</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Emerson, “Paestum” (pp. 187-195, 212-213)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at Hotel ● Bus to Paestum ● Paestum (Worksheet 2) ● Group Lunch <p>Herculaneum: Life in a Roman City</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> D. Kleiner, “Habitats at Herculaneum and Early Roman interior Decoration” (pp. 95-111)</p> <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Herculaneum (Worksheet 3) <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bus to Pompeii ● Group Dinner ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 20 (Tue)</p>	<p>Pompeii: Urban Design</p> <p><i>Readings:</i> D. Kleiner, “Civic Life Interrupted: Nightmare and Destiny on August 24, AD 79” (pp. 50-70) & “Lifestyles of the Rich and Famous: Houses & Villas at Pompeii (pp. 71-94)</p>

	<p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at Hotel ● Pompeii: infrastructure, commerce, entertainment (Worksheet 4A) <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lunch on your own ● Pompeii: domestic architecture (Worksheet 4B) <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Dinner ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes)
<p>May 21 (Wed)</p>	<p>Travel Day: Naples to Rome</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at Hotel ● Bus to Napoli Centrale ● Train to Stazione Termini, Rome ● Vans to the Centro <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lunch at the Centro ● Tour of the Centro ● Passeggiata del Gianicolo ● Free Time <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes) <p>[Centro: Via Alessandro Algardi, 19, 00152 Roma RM, Italy; +39 06 580 6113]</p>
<p>May 22 (Thu)</p>	<p>The Etruscans, Part I – Tarquinia: Images of the Afterlife</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Tuck, “Etruscan Tomb Paintings” (pp. 41-44)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro (depart by bus) ● Tarquinia (Worksheet 5A) ● Bag Lunch <p>The Etruscans, Part II – Cerveteri: City of the Dead</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Steingraber, “Architecture of the Tombs” (pp. 97-111)</p> <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Cerveteri (Worksheet 5B)

	<p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 23 (Fri)</p>	<p>Aristocratic Competition: Rise of the Republic</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Reading: D. Kleiner, “It Takes a City: The Founding of Rome and the Beginnings of Urbanism in Italy” (pp. 23-34) & EAH, “Forum Boarium” (pp. 1-3)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● Circus Maximus ● Palatine Hill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Iron Age Huts / Forum Romanum – Monarchy & Republic (overlook) ● Bag Lunch <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Forum Romanum – Late Republic (Worksheet 6A) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation: Temple of the Castors ○ Student Presentation: Basilica Aemilia ● Forum Boarium (Worksheet 6B) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Temple of Hercules Victor / Temple of Portunus ● Free Time <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 24 (Sat)</p>	<p>Transformation: From Republic to Empire – Public and Private Life</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> Freeman, “The Ides of March” (pp. 349-359 [excerpt])</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast on your own ● Forum of Caesar (overlook) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation ● Largo Argentina <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Republican Temples / Theater of Pompey (Death of Julius Caesar) <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Group Lunch ● Theater of Marcellus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation ● Insula dell'Ara Coeli (overlook) ● Free Time

	<p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner on your own ● Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 25 (Sun)</p>	<p><i>Pax Romana: Age of Augustus/Julio-Claudian Dynasty</i></p> <p><i>Reading:</i> D. Kleiner, “From Brick to Marble: Augustus Assembles Rome” (pp. 1-22)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast on your own ● Campus Martius [meet outside the <i>Ara Pacis</i> Museum] <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mausoleum of Augustus ○ <i>Ara Pacis</i> (Worksheet 7) <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Lunch on your own ● Forum of Augustus [meet at the Forum’s overlook] (Worksheet 7, cont’d) ● Forum Romanum – Age of Augustus (overlook) ● Nero’s <i>Domus Aurea</i> (“Golden House) <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner on your own ● Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 26 (Mon)</p>	<p>Succession: Flavian Dynasty</p> <p><i>Readings:</i> D. Kleiner, “The Prince and the Palace: Human Made Divine on the Palatine Hill” (pp. 199-214) & “The Creation of an Icon: The Colosseum and Contemporary Architecture in Rome” (pp. 182-198)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● Palatine Hill <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Domitian’s Palace (Worksheet 8) ○ Museum (optional) ● Bag Lunch <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Arch of Titus <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation ● Colosseum (Worksheet 9) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Exterior & Interior <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)

<p>May 27 (Tue)</p>	<p>Expansion & Consolidation: Trajan & Hadrian</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> D. Kleiner, “The Mother of All Forums: Civic Architecture in Rome Under Trajan” (pp. 215-236)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● Forum of Trajan (overlook) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation: Column of Trajan ● Column of Marcus Aurelius ● Gelato at Giolitti ● Pantheon (Worksheet 10) <p>Rise of Christianity: Constantine</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> D. Kleiner, “Rome of Constantine and a New Rome” (pp. 387-404)</p> <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bag Lunch ● Arch of Constantine <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Student Presentation ● Free Time <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes) + Prep Time – Teams (30 minutes)
<p>May 28 (Wed)</p>	<p>Life and Death in Imperial Rome</p> <p><i>Reading:</i> D. Kleiner, “Bigger Is Better: The Baths of Caracalla and Other Second and Third-Century Buildings in Rome” (pp. 281-294)</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● Baths of Caracalla, VR tour ● Bag Lunch <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Catacombs of St. Domitilla ● Capitoline Museums (Worksheet 11) <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes)

<p>May 29 (Thu)</p>	<p>Final Exam Day!</p> <p>Morning & Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● Final Exam ● Bag Lunch <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes)
<p>May 30 (Fri)</p>	<p>Vatican City</p> <p>Morning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Breakfast at the Centro ● St. Peter’s Square ● Vatican City <p>Afternoon</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Bag Lunch ● Vatican Museum (self-guided tour) ● Free Time <p>Evening</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Dinner at the Centro (7:30pm) ● Daily Reflection – All Participants (30 minutes)
<p>May 31 (Sat)</p>	<p>Travel Day: Italy to USA</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Depart FCO / Arrive IAD

Course Policies

Physical Demands

This course will require students to spend significant time outdoors in the sun and heat and to walk up to five miles each day, often uphill or on rocky/uneven/slippery surfaces, especially at isolated archaeological sites in the Naples-area and around Rome. Furthermore, due to limited resources, these sites do not provide comprehensive support and/or services for people with disabilities.

Attendance and Deadlines

Attendance at all scheduled meetings at CNU and in Italy is mandatory. Students who miss an exam or assignment due-date will receive a grade of zero unless they have appropriate documentation. Students are responsible for any information missed due to absence.

Oral Presentation

Because our itinerary cannot be changed while we are in Italy, make-ups for on-site presentations will not be permitted.

Disruptive Behavior

Behavior that disrupts the teaching/learning environment of this course will not be tolerated and may result in the dismissal of the offending student from the program.

Online Resources

Students are responsible for all materials posted on Scholar and for any information sent to their official CNU email account.

Academic Honesty

Violations of Academic Honesty include (but are not limited to) using unauthorized “cheat sheets” during an in-class quiz or exam; copying from another student (or allowing another student to copy your work) during an in-class quiz or exam; or, in general, presenting the work of others as your own.

The penalty for cheating on any assignment given in this class is a grade of zero for that assignment; make-up assignments will not be permitted. In addition, the instructor is required to adhere to the policies and procedures for violations of Academic Honesty as outlined in the CNU Student Handbook.