

Welcome to the course!

- [Quick Welcome and Orientation Video](#)

Welcome to Civilizations of the Ancient World. This course is online, and everything you need is posted here. We'll be using [BlackBoard](#) only to upload papers.

The requirements are here: the required texts under Books, the writing assignments under Essays, and so on. The whole set of tabs together constitutes the syllabus for the course, so make sure to look through each section so you know what's expected of you. To see the entire syllabus as a printable PDF click [here](#), or use the icon across from my name in the main picture.

If you have any questions, don't hesitate to [email me](#).

Course Info

- “History is philosophy teaching by examples.”
— THUCYDIDES

HIS 246: Civilizations of the Ancient World. *3 hours, 3 credits.* A survey of the Mediterranean world, beginning with the first humans and tracing the development of civilization from Mesopotamia and Egypt to ancient Greek City-States and the fall of Rome.

Details HIS 246-A01 (55308), Spring 2021. Online only. Online meetings: Thursdays 9:30-10:45 a.m.

Instructor Dr. Mark B. Wilson, Adjunct Assistant Professor. Email: mark.wilson@lehman.cuny.edu.
Website: <http://markbwilson.com>. [BlackBoard link](#)

Rationale

Our entire lives are conditioned by concepts like civilization and society, yet we seldom stop to think about how they shape our behaviors and expectations. By traveling back to the very emergence of civilization, we can experience both the revolution in how humans related to each other and the proliferation of new kinds of societies—each with their own distinct ideas about communities and individuals, communication, trade, protection, gender, mortality, and the strange, unbounded realms of the gods. All of this forms not just the background but the substance of the modern world: how we think, and what others think of us. The everyday hubbub of ancient worlds vibrates in the bones of our own societies.

Specific Learning Objectives

In this course we'll be pursuing a number of goals, including:

- Exploration of the emergence of civilization and its implications for humanity
- Exposure to the cultures and beliefs of a wide array of diverse Mediterranean civilizations
- Exploration of evolutionary changes in the realms of politics; economics; military techniques; religious beliefs; social norms; writing and literature practices; artistic expression; and science and philosophy
- Examination of how the many interactions and transformations of ancient civilizations developed into a Western identity, part of the origin of the modern Western world
- Development of skills associated with study of history, including interpretation of primary sources and other evidence.

Books

The following three books are required:

Ancient Mediterranean Civilizations, 2d Edition, by Ralph W. Mathisen.
Oxford U. Press, 2014. 978-0-199-38445-7. \$55.80.

- Getting this book:
 - A physical copy is [on reserve at Lief Library](#).
 - Rent (new, used, or digital) or buy (new or used) via [the Lehman Bookstore](#).
 - Rent or buy (new or used) via [Valore Books](#) or [Amazon](#).
 - Buy (new or used) via [Abe Books](#) or [Alibris](#).
- Try to get the right edition, especially if you're buying a used copy. The second edition is significantly different, and page numbers will not match up with earlier editions.

The Epic of Gilgamesh, trans. by Andrew R. George.
London: Penguin, 2003. 978-0-140-44919-8. \$13.00.

- Getting this book:
 - A full online copy can be found at [the Internet Archive](#).
 - Rent or buy (new or used) via [the Lehman Bookstore](#) or [Valore Books](#).
 - Buy Kindle or paperback (new or used) via [Amazon](#).
 - Buy (new or used) via [Abe Books](#), [Alibris](#), [Better World Books](#), or [Powell's](#).
- I strongly recommend the Andrew George edition because he translated directly from the source. It also has a very useful introduction. If you get another edition, make sure it is based on the Standard Version of the epic.
- I recommend against using a random online transcription of the text, as for this 4,500-year old text you definitely want an expert translation with good commentary and extrapolation such as the George.

Four Texts on Socrates, ed. by Thomas G. West and Grace Starry West.
Ithaca: Cornell Press, 1998. 978-0-801-48574-9. \$12.30.

- Getting this book:
 - A physical copy is available [in the stacks at Lief Library](#).
 - Hourly borrowing is available via [the Internet Archive](#).
 - Rent or buy (new or used) via [the Lehman Bookstore](#) or [Valore Books](#).
 - Buy (new or used) via [Amazon](#), [Abe Books](#), [Alibris](#), [Better World Books](#), or [Powell's](#).
- *Four Texts on Socrates* has Aristophanes's *Clouds*, which we'll be reading in class, but the other works may help your interpretation of the play and especially your essay.
- There are basic transcriptions of *Clouds* online, but again the intro and notes will be vital to your appreciation of the play, so you should use this book or another full-text book edition.

The assigned books are available from [Lehman College Bookstore](#) and from Amazon and other online retailers (try searching aggregators such as [Bookfinder](#) for the best deals). Make sure you do so enough in advance that you'll receive the books in time for the assignments.

Academic Expectations

Attendance and Participation

- **Participation in online discussion is a required part of the course.** Missing classes will damage your grade.
 - Textbooks are designed to give you the basics; in our class meetings we try to make sense of things, and sift out what's important. Missing classes means you miss out on a key part of our trying to put things together.
 - If you miss quizzes, it will put a big crimp in your grade for the course. Quizzes are not made up, so the quizzes you miss will count against you.
- Religious observances that affect your class attendance should be discussed in advance.

Guidelines

- **Don't waste this opportunity!** Make the most out of this class.
- **Please use me as a resource.** Interact with me in class meetings online or send me emails with any questions you have—whether they relate to the requirements of the course, or to ideas we're reading about or discussing in class.
- **Come to the class meetings prepared.** By prepared, I mean you should have done the readings and videos for that day—and thought about them. Come in ready to talk about your reactions to the readings and the videos, and the questions they raised in your mind.
- **Check your email.** Make sure I have a good email address for you and check it, as I occasionally send information and updates by email. If you have not gotten an email from me within the first week after school begins, check your spam folders. If you can't find an email from me, send me an email to let me know how best to reach you.
- **Talk to me if you're struggling.** Reach out to me via email, and the sooner the better. Don't wait until it's too late to turn things around.

Grading

Your grade for the course will be determined from the following:

Quizzes	10%
Online Discussion	10%
Interpretive Essays (3)	30%
Midterm	20%
Final Exam	30%

Quizzes

- We'll have short, timed online quizzes to help gauge our relationship with the material in the readings most weeks. Quizzes cover the textbook reading, plus *Gilgamesh* and *Clouds* when assigned. If you did the assigned readings, you should be prepared for the quiz.
- Missed quizzes are not made up. If you miss a quiz, you'll get a zero for that quiz. Therefore, please make sure you are prepared each week and take the quiz.

Online Discussion

- Each week during our online meeting time students gather in [the online discussion area for that week](#) and post reactions to the issues and ideas brought up in the week's readings and videos. Your posts should *include a question* and should respond to other students in the discussion as well.

Interpretive Essays (3)

- You'll write three interpretive essays. Details are on [the Essays page](#).
- One on the portrayal of society or religion in *The Epic of Gilgamesh*;
- One on *Clouds* and its relationship with actual events in classical Athens; and
- A response to your choice of nonwritten artistic depictions of the ancient world, including sculpture, painting, performance, or film, comparing the history that's come down to us with how it has been represented.
- **Optional Draft.** You can submit a draft of the paper to me up to a week before it's due; I'll give you some general feedback (but not a grade). Because I accept drafts, I do not allow students to submit revised versions of their final paper after the due date. To make sure I see it soonest, please email me your optional draft rather than uploading it to BlackBoard.

Exams

- The exams will be "take-home" essay exams, posted on a certain date and due a week later. The midterm exam will cover the course up to that point. We'll discuss the content and structure the previous week, and a review sheet will be provided. The final exam will cover from the midterm onward—except for the essay portion, which will cover themes from the entire course. We'll discuss the content and structure before each exam, and a review sheet will be provided.
- Note that the policy on plagiarism will be strictly observed for the essays and for the exams.

Weekly Schedule

Each week has two parts: before the class meeting day, and class meeting day.

Our online meetings are: Thursdays from 9:30 to 10:45 a.m.

1. Before the class meeting day:
 - Do the assigned readings (and think about them);
 - Watch the video lectures (and think about them); and
 - Complete any written assignments due that week.
2. On the class meeting day:
 - Come to the weekly page below during the scheduled class meeting time and post and interact in the online discussion;
 - Upload any written assignments (if any); and
 - Take the online quiz (if there is one).

The weekly pages listing assignments and hosting our discussions are linked below.



[Week 1](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, Feb. 4](#)

Introduction and evidence.

[Week 2](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, Feb. 11](#)

The origins of civilization - the beginnings of writing - *Gilgamesh*.

[Week 3](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, Feb. 18](#)

Sumer and Semitic Mesopotamia.

[Week 4](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, Feb. 25](#)

The god-kings of Egypt - New Kingdom Egypt.

[Week 5](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, March 4](#)

Minoans - Mycenaean Greeks - Dawn of the Iron Age.



[Week 6](#)

[Meeting Date: Thursday, March 11](#)

Experiments in empire - the Neo-Assyrians - the Persians. Essay #1 due.



The rhapsode

[Week 7](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, March 18](#)

The Greek Dark Age. Midterm exam due.



Panhellenism

[Week 8](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, March 25](#)

Archaic Greece - Sparta and Athens - *Clouds*.



Sparta as a "warrior society"

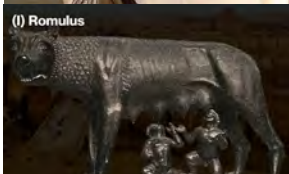
[Week 9](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, April 8](#)

Wars between the Greeks.



[Week 10](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, April 15](#)

The Hellenistic East.



(I) Romulus

[Week 11](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, April 22](#)

Early Italy - the kings of Rome - the Roman Republic.



Rome in the east

[Week 12](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, April 29](#)

The acquisition of empire. Essay #2 due.



Crossing the Rubicon: 'The die is cast'

[Week 13](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, May 6](#)

Civil wars and the collapse of the Republic.



Octavian becomes Augustus

[Week 14](#) [Meeting Date: Thursday, May 13](#)

The Roman principate. Essay #3 due.

Written Assignments

- For this course, you'll write three essays: one on *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, one on Aristophanes's *Clouds*, and one on images of the ancient world.
- Open the sections below for the details, requirements, and guidance.

#1 Essay on *The Epic of Gilgamesh* [Upload to BlackBoard](#) by March 11

#2 Essay on *Clouds* [Upload to BlackBoard](#) by April 29

#3 Essay on Representations and Images [Upload to BlackBoard](#) by May 13

#1 Essay on *The Epic of Gilgamesh*

Write a 3 to 4-page essay taking a position on one of the following topics:

1. **The mortal and the divine.** Choose any of the mortal characters from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and discuss his or her relationship with the gods.
 - Describe and discuss three moments from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* showing your character interacting with or contemplating the gods.
 - Make an argument about what these examples show us regarding Sumer's take on religion and the gods, and what it means to be human. Think about Sumerian culture's traditions and expectations and how they impact on the individual you're writing about.
 - (Note: your best bets are either Gilgamesh or Enkidu; Utanapishtim is also a possibility.)
2. **Gender in Sumerian society.** Choose any of the female characters from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and discuss her relationship with the other characters and Sumerian society.
 - Describe and discuss three moments from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* showing your character's actions or behavior and how it relates to her role as a woman in Sumerian society.
 - Make an argument about what these examples show us regarding gender expectations and the roles of women in Sumerian culture. Think about Sumerian culture's traditions and expectations and how they impact on the individual you're writing about.
 - (Note: your best bet is Shamhat; Ninsun and Ishtar are also possibilities.)
3. **Life and death.** Mortality is one of the major themes of *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, but what is the epic saying about it?
 - Describe and discuss three moments from *The Epic of Gilgamesh* that involve death or mortality—either an actual death, or discussion of death and mortality.
 - Make an argument about what these examples show us regarding Sumerian ideas of death and legacy, and how Sumerian culture thought about death. Think about Sumerian culture's traditions and expectations and how they impact on the individual you're writing about.

Note: While it is not required, you should seriously consider reviewing the tablets that were not assigned for class to see if they contain scenes that provide additional examples and evidence.

Important: Before you upload, make sure your paper conforms to the [Requirements for All Papers](#), including formatting, structure, and citations. You will be marked down drastically if your paper is not properly cited. For how to do citations and bibliographies, see [the Citations handout](#).

#2 Essay on *Clouds*

Write a 3 to 4-page essay taking a position on one of the following topics:

1. **Right and wrong in *Clouds*.** *Clouds* emphasizes traditional values throughout the play and then ends with violence. Does *Clouds* offer an inconsistent message on morality?
 - First, choose a tragedy from the Greek classical period in which morality is a key issue. (Popular options include *Medea* by Euripides; *Elektra* by Euripides or Sophocles; and *Antigone* by Sophocles; but there are other possibilities as well.)
 - Describe and discuss three incidents from *Clouds* that involve a moral decision or an argument between characters about what the morality of an action. Compare each of these incidents with a similar (or contrasting) moment in the tragedy you've selected.
 - Make an argument for the consistency of the moral argument of *Clouds* by comparing it with the moral argument in the tragedy. Where do both plays stand with regard to the Athenian debate on relative morality (*nomos vs. physis*)?
2. **Aristophanes's agenda.** The surviving plays of Aristophanes range over a long and turbulent period of Athenian history. Do his opinions and technique change over time?
 - First, choose another play by Aristophanes. (Popular options include *Frogs*, mounted in 405 BCE, 11 years after the revised version of *Clouds*; *Birds*, mounted in 414; and *Wealth*, mounted in 388; but any of the 11 surviving plays is fair game.)
 - Describe and discuss three moments from *Clouds* that reflect either Aristophanes's opinions or how he makes the play reflect them. Compare each of these moments with a similar (or contrasting) moment in the other comedy.
 - Make an argument for the consistency of Aristophanes's approach to writing, and the evolution of his overall philosophy across this most troubled period. What themes and ideas are present in both plays? Is his approach, methodology, or agenda consistent? If not, how does it change?
3. **Socrates vs. Socrates.** The "Socrates" found in Aristophanes's *Clouds* is a deliberate distortion driven by a desire to discredit the real Socrates. What does this version of Socrates have in common with the one depicted in works by Socrates's student, Plato?
 - First, choose a work by Plato in which Socrates is a major character. (Possibilities include: *Phaedo*, which has Socrates discussing life and afterlife on the brink of his execution; *Apology*, a version of Socrates's self-defense against charges of irreligion; or any other dialogs that focus on how Plato wanted to show Socrates's methods and beliefs.)
 - Describe and discuss three moments from *Clouds* that reflect an opinion or behavior expressed by Aristophanes's version of Socrates. Compare each of these moments with a similar (or contrasting) moment in the work by Plato. What characteristics of Socrates and his philosophy were most exaggerated by the two authors (in ridicule or praise), and why?
 - Make an argument about how Socrates was seen by Athenians in their time of strife. What stood out about his behavior and beliefs that caused him to be venerated by some, and yet so feared by others that he was executed?
 - (What's important to remember is that *both* versions of Socrates are distortions, twisted in the service of what their authors were trying to say about them. Aristophanes and Plato each had an agenda re: how they wanted to show Socrates. That means that both authors offered a distorted picture of Socrates that separates us from the real-life man.)

Important: Before you upload, make sure your paper conforms to the [Requirements for All Papers](#), including formatting, structure, and citations. You will be marked down drastically if your paper is not properly cited. For how to do citations and bibliographies, see [the Citations handout](#).

#3 Essay on Representations and Images

Write a 3 to 4-page essay taking a position on one of the following topics:

- 1. Two pieces in a museum.** How a culture sees abstract ideas (masculinity, virtue, old age, divinity, and so on) is often reflected in its artwork. What can two different works of art depicting the same idea, but from different times or places, tell us about how the cultures that produced them?
 - First, go to a museum website and find **two works of art from the ancient era** (3500 BCE to 500 CE) that (a) reflect the same abstract idea or the same subject *and* (b) come either from different cultures or from the same culture but different historical periods.
 - For example, you could choose two love goddesses, one from Egypt and one from Rome; or you could choose two little girls, one from Archaic Greece and one from Hellenistic Greece.
 - Possible venues include: Metropolitan Museum’s Egypt Collection; Metropolitan Museum’s Greek and Roman Art Collection; Brooklyn Museum of Art’s Ancient Egyptian Art Collection; and Fordham Museum of Greek, Etruscan and Roman Art. You are, of course, not limited to these venues, and you are not limited to New York.
 - Describe and discuss three aspects of the first artwork that seem to reflect how the artist felt about the subject and what the subject stood for. Compare each of these aspects to a similar (or contrasting) aspect of the second artwork. (Some possibilities include facial expression, dress, use of technique or medium, stiffness/fluidity, apparent strength/weakness, idealism/realism, or any other elements offering some kind of insight into what the artist was trying to convey.)
 - Make an argument about how consistently the same core idea was seen in the two times or places that produced these two works. If art is an expression of cultural values, what do the differences between these works tell you about the respective cultures they come from? What do their similarities tell you about what these ancient cultures have in common?
 - On a separate “Works Discussed” page after your essay:
 - List the title of each work, the artist, the approximate date it was created, the city or region it came from originally, and the name of the museum gallery where the work can be found.
 - Paste in photographs of the items. If it’s permitted at the museum, take a picture of the items while you’re there. If it’s not, find pictures of those specific items on the museum’s web site.
- 2. The ancient world on film.** Every depiction of an historical event, whether in prose, poetry, painting, theater, or film, involves an artist using history to convey his or her own beliefs. What do the creators of the film and the authors of the source material it was based on want you to believe?
 - First, choose and watch any feature-length film set in the ancient era (3500 BCE to 500 CE). Then find the ancient [primary source](#) material it was based on and read it. (Some suggestions are below.)
 - Describe and discuss three moments from the film that demonstrate what the filmmakers are trying to say about these events and the people or cultures involved. Compare each of these moments to the corresponding moment in the primary source material.
 - In both cases, you are to discuss **the filmmakers’ and the author’s intent and agenda**—how the filmmakers and the ancient authors are using the past to drive their own agendas and beliefs.

- **Do not** use the source to fact check the film and list what it got “wrong”. **You must consider the primary source to be at least as skewed, manipulative, and agenda-driven as the film.**
- Make an argument about what the creators of the film and the authors of the source material want you to believe. How were these stories twisted (or preserved) to shape the audience’s perception of the culture depicted in the film and the primary source?
- On a separate “Works Discussed” page after your essay, list the title of film, year, director, stars and studio. Then list the books you drew your written evidence from, using standard citation style. The references to the primary source must be cited in the text as usual.

Important: Before you upload, make sure your paper conforms to the [Requirements for All Papers](#), including formatting, structure, and citations. You will be marked down drastically if your paper is not properly cited. For how to do citations and bibliographies, see [the Citations handout](#).

Some possibilities for the film and sources option include, but are not limited to, the following. Links to most of these primary sources can be found on the [ancient texts page](#) on my website.

Greece and Greek Mythology

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
300 (2007) or The 300 Spartans (1962)	Battle of Thermopylae Herodotus, The Histories book 7
300: Rise of an Empire (2014)	Battle of Salamis Herodotus, The Histories book 8
Agora (2009)	Hypatia Socrates Scholasticus, Ecclesiastical History, 7.15; John of Nikiû, Chronicle 84.87-103; The Suda, Life of Hypatia
Alexander the Great (1956) or Alexander (2004)	Alexander Plutarch, Alexander; or Arrian, Anabasis
Atlantis (2011)	Atlantis myth Plato, Timaeus and Critias
Barefoot in Athens (1966)	Socrates Plato, Phaedo, Apology
Clash of the Titans (1981, 2010)	Theseus Plutarch, Theseus; Ps.-Apollodorus, Bibliotheca; Ovid, Metamorphoses
Damon and Pythias (1962)	Damon and Pythias, Syracuse Cicero, On Duties 3.45; Diodorus Siculus 10.4
Electra (1963)	Elektra Euripides, Elektra; Sophocles, Elektra
The Fury of Achilles (1962)	Achilles, Trojan War Homer, Iliad Books 1, 9, 16-19
Helen of Troy (1956)	Helen, Trojan War Homer, Iliad 3, Odyssey 4, 23; Euripides, Helen; Ovid, Heroides 16; Isocrates, Helen
Hercules (1997), Hercules (2014), or The Legend of Hercules (2014)	Hercules Ovid, Metamorphoses 9, 12; Apollodorus, The Library; Euripides, Herakles; Apollonios Rhodios, Argonautika 1.1175–1280
Iphigenia (1977)	Iphigenia Euripides, Iphigenia at Aulis
The Odyssey (1997) or Ulysses (1955)	Odysseus Homer, Odyssey [focus on key events of the film]
The Trojan Horse (1961)	Trojan War, Aeneas Virgil, Aeneid Book 2
The Trojan Women (1971)	Greek subjugation of Troy Euripides, The Trojan Women
Troy (2004)	Achilles, Trojan War Homer, Iliad [focus on key events of the film]

Rome and the Roman Empire

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
Agora (2009)	Hypatia Socrates Scholasticus, Ecclesiastical History, 7.15; John of Nikiû, Chronicle 84.87-103; The Suda, Life of Hypatia
Attila (2001)	Attila Jordanes, Origin and Deeds of the Goths 36-53; Procopius, History of the Wars 3.4
Boudica (2003)	Boudica Tacitus, Annals 14.29–39, Agricola; Cassius Dio, Roman History 62
Caligula (1980) [warning: explicit sex]	Caligula Suetonius, Caligula; Cassius Dio, Roman History 59

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
The Centurion (1961)	Battle of Corinth Polybius, The Histories book 38
Centurion (2010)	Roman Britain Tacitus, Agricola
Cleopatra (1963, 1999)	Cleopatra, Caesar, Antony Plutarch, Caesar and Antony
Coriolanus (1963)	Coriolanus Plutarch, Coriolanus; Livy 2.33–2.40
Decline of an Empire (2014)	St. Katherine of Alexandria Saints lives of Saint Katharine of Alexandria
Druids (2001)	Vercingetorix, Julius Caesar Julius Caesar, Gallic Wars book 7; Cassius Dio 40:33–41, 43:19; Plutarch, Caesar 25–27
Duel of Champions (1961)	Horatius Livy 1.24-26
The Eagle (2011)	Roman Britain Tacitus, Agricola
Empire (2005 Mini-Series)	Augustus Suetonius, Augustus; Nicolas of Damascus, Life of Augustus; Cassius Dio, 45–56
The Fall of the Roman Empire (1964)	Rome under Commodus Cassius Dio 73; Herodian 1.15; Historia Augusta, “Commodus”
The First King: Birth of an Empire (2019)	Romulus and Remus Livy 1.4-6; Dionysius 1.71-87; Plutarch, Romulus; Ovid, Fasti; Appian, Roman History book 1
Gladiator (2000)	Rome under M. Aurelius, Commodus Cassius Dio 73; Herodian 1.15; Historia Augusta, “Commodus”
Hannibal (1959) or Hannibal (2006)	Hannibal Barca, 2d Punic War Cornelius Nepos, Hannibal; Livy 21-30; Plutarch, Fabius
Hero of Rome (1964)	Scaevola, Lars Porsena, formation of Roman Republic Livy 2.1-21
I, Claudius (1976) [1-2 episodes]	Claudius Tacitus, Annals 11–12; Suetonius, Claudius
Julius Caesar (1953, 1970, 2002)	Julius Caesar Plutarch, Caesar; Suetonius, Divine Julius
Messalina (1960)	Messalina. Claudius Suetonius, Claudius 26-29, 37; Tacitus Annals 11-12; Cassius Dio 60-61
Pompeii: The Last Day (2003) or Pompeii (2014)	Eruption of Vesuvius, Roman Italy Pliny the Younger’s letters to Tacitus, #65 and #66
Quo Vadis? (1951, 2001)	Persecution of Christians under Nero Tacitus, Annals 13–16; Suetonius, Nero; Cassius Dio 61–63
Rome (2005–2007) [use 1-2 episodes]	Collapse of the Roman Republic Various (see me)
Fellini Satyricon (1969)	Imperial Rome, homosexuality Petronius, Satyricon
Scipio Africanus: The Defeat of Hannibal (1937)	Scipio Africanus, 2d Punic War Polybius 10; Cornelius Nepos, Hannibal; Livy 26-29; Valerius Maximus 3.7; Plutarch, Marcellus and Fabius
Siege of Syracuse (1960)	Archimedes, Siege of Syracuse Plutarch, Marcellus; Livy 21-23
The Sign of the Cross (1932)	Persecution of Christians under Nero Tacitus, Annals 13–16; Suetonius, Nero; Cassius Dio 61–63
Spartacus (1960) or Spartacus: Blood and Sand (2010)	Spartacus, Roman galdiators/slavery Appian, Roman History 116–120; Plutarch, Crassus 8–11

Egypt

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
Cleopatra (1963, 1999)	Cleopatra, Caesar, Antony Plutarch, Caesar and Antony
Exodus: Gods and Kings (2014)	Moses, Hebrew exodus Old Testament, Exodus
The Prince of Egypt (1998)	Moses Old Testament, Exodus
A Queen for Caesar (1962)	Cleopatra Plutarch, Caesar and Antony
The Ten Commandments (1956)	Moses, Hebrew exodus Old Testament, Exodus

Israel, Canaan, Biblical Stories

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
Abraham (1993 miniseries, 1994 film)	Abraham Old Testament, Genesis books 11–25
David and Goliath (1960), David and Bathsheba (1951)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel
Esther and the King (1960)	Esther Old Testament, Esther

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
Exodus: Gods and Kings (2014)	Moses, Hebrew exodus from Egypt Old Testament, Exodus
Jacob (1994)	Jacob and Esau Old Testament, Genesis 25–50
Jason and the Argonauts (1963)	Jason Ovid, Metamorphoses; Apollonius Rhodius, Argonautica
Jesus of Nazareth (1977)	Jesus New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Joseph (1995) or Joseph and the Amazing Technicolor Dreamcoat	Joseph Old Testament, Genesis 37–50
King David (1985)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel
Last Days of Sodom and Gomorrah (1962)	Sodom and Gomorrah, Abraham, Lot Old Testament, Genesis 14-19
The Last Temptation of Christ (1988)	Jesus New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Masada (1981 Mini-Series)	Siege of Masada Josephus, The Jewish War book 1
The Nativity Story (2006)	Birth of Jesus New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
Noah (2014)	Noah, Great Flood Old Testament, Genesis 6-9
One Night with the King (2006)	Esther Old Testament, Esther
The Passion of the Christ (2004)	Jesus, the Crucifixion New Testament: Matthew, Mark, Luke, John
The Prince of Egypt (1998)	Moses Old Testament, Exodus
The Red Tent (2014 miniseries)	Dinah (daught. of Jacob) Old Testament, Genesis 30, 34
Risen (2016)	Aftermath of the Crucifixion, Roman Judea New Testament, Acts of the Apostles
Samson and Delilah (1949)	Samson and Delilah Old Testament, Judges 13-16
Sins of Jezebel (1951)	Israel under Ahab Old Testament, 1 Kings 16-22
Slave of Dreams (1995)	Joseph Old Testament, Genesis 37–50
Solomon and Sheba (1959)	Solomon and Sheba Old Testament, Kings or Chronicles; Josephus, Antiquities book 8
A Story of David (1960)	David, kingdom of Israel Old Testament, 1 Samuel, 2 Samuel
The Ten Commandments (1956)	Moses, Hebrew exodus from Egypt Old Testament, Exodus

Mesopotamia, Persia, Asia

Film	Subject / Possible primary sources to compare
Esther and the King (1960)	Esther Old Testament, Esther
Gautama Buddha (2007)	Siddhārtha Gautama The Buddhacarita, Lalitavistara Sūtra, and other Buddhist biographies
Intolerance (1916) [Part 1 only]	Iron Age Babylon Herodotus 1.70–144; Josephus, Antiquities 10–11
One Night with the King (2006)	Esther Old Testament, Esther
Queen of Babylon (1954)	Semiramis, Babylon Diodorus Siculus, 2.4-20

Overview Videos

[Quick overview: The *Gilgamesh* Essay \(due in week 6\)](#)

[Quick overview: The *Clouds* Essay \(due in week 12\)](#)

[Quick overview: The Images Essay \(due in week 14\)](#)

[Writing an Interpretive Essay \(1\): Thesis and Structure](#)

[Writing an Interpretive Essay \(2\): Sources and Citations](#)

Documents related to the writing assignments

[Citations Packet Policies: Plagiarism](#)

[Policies: Plagiarism](#)

Submitting Assignments

- **All written assignments must be submitted via [BlackBoard](#)** using the upload links there. BlackBoard is accessed through CUNY Login. If you have trouble with BlackBoard, please call the IT helpdesk at (718) 960-1111 or go the Lehman College [BlackBoard support page](#). I won't accept written assignments by email . If BlackBoard itself is down, I'll announce alternative arrangements to the class.
- **Late assignments will be marked down.** I'll still accept late submissions, but there will be a penalty that will hurt your grade.
 - Written assignments will be marked down one letter grade per class meeting after the assignment due date, up to a maximum of 30 points. That means you're still better off turning in your paper late, and having it be marked down, than not turning it in at all.
 - I do not give extra credit opportunities except to the entire class. I do not grade on a curve.
 - I do not give incompletes unless we've discussed and agreed on the grounds for giving one prior to the final exam.
 - Make-up assignments or exams are given only in cases of documented medical emergency or comparable life disruption.
 - I do not accept rewritten essays after an assignment has been submitted, graded, and returned; but some deductions are reversible (see the sample grading sheet on the Requirements page).
- Any instances of plagiarism, whether on essays, papers, quizzes, or exams, will have dire consequences. See [the policies page](#) for what counts as plagiarism and the penalties involved in presenting the work of others as your own.

Requirements for All Papers

All written assignments for this course MUST adhere to these requirements—or be subject to a reduced grade.

Requirements

Check all of the following before submitting any paper. ***All papers submitted to me must:***

Formatting musts

1. Be typed, double-spaced, in 12 pt. standard font, with one-inch margins.
2. Have a cover page with the title, your name, my name, and the date.
3. Have page numbers on each page after the cover. The cover should not have a page number.
4. Include [both citations and a bibliography](#). (See Evidence musts.)
5. Run at least the required length specified in the assignment.
6. Have titles of books, films, and plays italicized and capitalized.
7. Be submitted via BlackBoard as a Word or compatible file attachment or as a PDF attachment.

Evidence musts

1. Support all assertions with evidence from your sources.
2. Use only [primary and secondary sources](#). Tertiary sources are not allowed, ever.
3. Provide a footnote or a parenthetical citation for all direct quotations, descriptions, paraphrases, and ideas from sources.
4. Include a bibliography listing all sources used.

Structure musts

1. Have an introduction paragraph that states the problem or question being addressed; discusses possible opinions on this problem; and ends with a thesis statement—a statement of opinion that someone could disagree with.
2. Cover three reasons why your thesis is true. Each should have an assertion (what your reason is), a description of supporting evidence (some moment in your evidence that's an example of your assertion), and a discussion of how your evidence demonstrates the point you're making.
3. Have a conclusion that summarizes your three reasons and why they support your thesis.

Tips for Meeting the Requirements

Formatting notes

- Use the template. Save the trouble of setting up the cover and page numbers—use [the MS Word template file](#) I created.
- Page counts. Page counts are for full pages not counting the cover page and bibliography. If the requirement is “3-4 pages”, what I am looking for is at least 3 full pages of text, not counting the cover and not counting the bibliography.
- BlackBoard notes. You may only submit via BlackBoard. Do not submit written assignments as submission text—they must be file attachments. If you need help with BlackBoard, go to [the Lehman IT BlackBoard support page](#) or call the IT helpdesk at (718) 960-1111.

Evidence notes

- You may not use tertiary sources for any assignment. Tertiary sources include textbooks, encyclopedias, study guides, dictionaries, my lectures, and almost everything on the internet except online scholarly journals and transcribed primary sources. If you’re not sure, ask me.
- Citing direct quotes is not enough. This common mistake will lose you points. Paraphrases and ideas must also be cited.
- Citation styles. You can use Chicago, MLA, or any other citation style. What matters to me is that anything that’s not your analysis must have a footnote or a parenthetical citation that points to an item in your bibliography. See [the Elephant Pamphlet](#) for more on citations and bibliographies.
- The number of sources you need to use varies from assignment to assignment.

Structure notes

- See [the Elephant Pamphlet](#) for more on how to do all of this, including thesis statements, essay structure, and citations.
- You can submit an optional draft for any paper, no later than one class meeting before the due date. I won’t grade it, but I’ll give you feedback about how well you’re addressing your topic and thesis. To make sure I see it soonest, please email me your optional draft rather than uploading it to BlackBoard.
- I will not mark down for grammar, but clarity is important. Please spell-check and, if you’re not sure about your writing, have a friend read it.
- See me for guidance. I am available anytime, by email or in office hours, to discuss any aspect of your paper.

Grading Criteria

Each paper will be graded according to the following criteria. A copy of the grading form I use is available on the course website.

- Introduction (20%) • States a topic and problem within the assignment • Ends with a definite thesis statement (a specific opinion that can be disagreed with) • Thesis gives insight into the assignment prompt
- Organization (25%) • Main body organized in 3 sections, each addressing a different aspect of the thesis and building support for it • Each section is driven by a specific, concrete assertion • Each section is self-contained and focused on its topic
- Analysis (25%) • Interpretation dominates over description (why over what) • Analysis prefers the specific to the general • Analysis provides insight on the relevant time and culture • Analysis supports the section assertions and overall thesis • Analysis provides in-depth answers to questions in prompt
- Evidence (15%) • Evidence used is relevant and well-chosen • Assertions are consistently supported by evidence • Independent voice retained with judicious use of quotes
- Conclusion (15%) • Paper ends with an appropriate concluding paragraph • Conclusion draws together the arguments made in each section and reinforces the thesis • Conclusion answers questions from assignment prompt

Reversible deductions: If you have one of these deductions, you may resubmit your paper with these problems fixed, and I will modify or remove the deductions. Only these deductions can be reversed.

No cover sheet	-3
No page numbers	-2
Work titles not italicized/capitalized	-2
Missing items in bibliography	-4
No bibliography	-8
Some citations missing	-5
Many citations missing	-10
All citations missing	-30

Nonreversible deductions: These deductions reflect problems inherent to the paper as it was submitted. They cannot be reversed.

Submitted late (1 meeting)	-10
Submitted late (2 meetings)	-20
Submitted late (3+ meetings)	-30
Too short	-10
Fewer sources than required	-20
Tertiary sources used	-10
Heavy use of tertiary sources	-25
Plagiarism	-100

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Listed below are various official school policies included in all Lehman College syllabi, with clarifications relating to this course as required.

You are responsible for this information and for all information in this syllabus.

Attendance Policy

Student handbook notes that “Students are expected to attend all class meetings as scheduled, and are responsible for all class work missed as a result of late registration or absence. Excessive absences in any course may result in a lower final grade.”

- **Participation in online discussion is a required part of the course.** Missing classes will damage your grade.
 - Textbooks are designed to give you the basics; in our class meetings we try to make sense of things, and sift out what’s important. Missing classes means you miss out on a key part of our trying to put things together.
 - If you miss quizzes, it will put a big crimp in your grade for the course. Quizzes are not made up, so the quizzes you miss will count against you.
- Religious observances that affect your class attendance should be discussed in advance.

Accommodating Disabilities

Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may require any special considerations should register with the Office of Student Disability Services in order to submit official paperwork to instructor.

- Office of Student Disability Services: Shuster Hall, Room 238, 718-960-8441.
- Student Disability Services: <http://www.lehman.edu/student-disability-services/>
- Email: disability.services@lehman.cuny.edu.

Student Handbook

Students are strongly encouraged to download and become familiar with the Student Handbook.

- Student handbook link: <http://www.lehman.edu/campus-life/support-services.php>.

Technology and Blackboard Information

You are required to use Blackboard to access course materials and to post assignments to Safe Assign.

You are required to provide your best email address to me; if not provided I will use the one given by the school. Either way you must sign into that email account for course messages—and check it! Blackboard will only allow me to send individual and mass messages to Lehman accounts. If there is an issue, this is the only account to which I can send and if I email the class something, the fact that you didn't know about an assignment or course change because you don't check your email will never be accepted for not knowing the information.

- Blackboard Links and Support: <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/blackboard.php>
- For Information Technology: <http://www.lehman.edu/itr/>

Instructional Support Services (ISSP)

Lehman College's Instructional Support Services Program (ISSP) is home of the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) and Science Learning Center (SLC). Both offer students an array of activities and services designed to support classroom learning. Open to students at any level, there are individual, small group, and/or workshop sessions designed to improve "proficiency in writing, reading, research, and particular academic subject areas. Computer-assisted writing/language tutorial programs are also available," as well as individual tutors, workshops and tutors.

Regular tutoring hours for fall and spring semesters are: M–T 10 a.m.–7 p.m., and Sat. 10 a.m.–2 p.m.

- Lehman College Tutoring Center (LTC): Humanities, Social Sciences, and Writing Tutoring: <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/instructional-support-services/humanities-tutoring.php>
- Or visit the offices in the Old Gym, Room 205; or call ACE at 718-960-8175, and SLC at 718-960-7707.

Library Tutors are also available in the Library. These tutors offer help with Library resources and computers.

Writing-Intensive Course Requirements

Lehman Students must complete four writing-intensive courses. In a WI Course, "students should be expected to write approximately 15-20 pages of proofread, typed work that is turned in to the instructor for grading." Various courses stipulate various requirements designed to meet this requisite over the course of the semester. WI courses focus on revision, short and long assignments, graded and ungraded writing, journals, etc, and each will have "a class-size limit of twenty-two. Under no circumstances will more than twenty-five students be admitted to any writing-intensive section."

- Writing Intensive FAQs: <http://www.lehman.edu/academics/general-education/writing-faqs.php>

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY AND PLAGIARISM POLICY

Assignments that include any plagiarism will receive a zero. Students engaging in repeated instances of plagiarism will fail the course outright and will be remanded to the College for disciplinary action.

What is plagiarism?

Here is CUNY's official definition of plagiarism:

- Plagiarism is the act of presenting another person's ideas, research or writings as your own. The following are some examples of plagiarism, but by no means is it an exhaustive list:
 - Copying another person's actual words without the use of quotation marks and footnotes attributing the words to their source.
 - Presenting another person's ideas or theories in your own words without noting the source.
 - Using information that is not common knowledge without acknowledging the source.
 - Failing to acknowledge collaborators on homework and laboratory assignments.
- Internet plagiarism includes submitting downloaded term papers or parts of term papers; paraphrasing or copying information from the internet without citing the source; and "cutting & pasting" from various sources without proper attribution.

Key Points

Use of writing or ideas. The key phrase is right up front in the definition: "another person's ideas". Copying and pasting from another source without attribution is plagiarism, but so is using someone's ideas even if they're reworded. Plagiarism is the act of using someone else's work and presenting it as your own, under your name.

What is an essay? When you present an academic essay, it's an act that says, "This is what I think. These are the conclusions I have drawn from studying this issue." An essay is your assessment of a subject, and the ideas in it are presented as your ideas, with any ideas not your own carefully footnoted and clearly segregated so it's clear what is your analysis and what is evidence drawn from primary or secondary sources.

Paraphrasing. Paraphrasing or putting things into your own words does not alter the use of someone else's ideas as your own. Here's why. If the phrase appearing in an essay written by someone else is, for example, "To apply this type of painting to residential interiors was a Roman idea", and in your essay it's reworded as "it was the Romans who applied this type of painting method to home walls", it doesn't change the fact that someone else's ideas are being presented as if they were your own, as if those ideas originated in your own mind. It's still intellectual dishonesty.

Citations. All information from any source you use must have a citation, period. This is true whether it's a direct quote, a paraphrase, or just an idea you're talking about that came from the source you used. For more information on citations, please see the section on citations and bibliographies in [the Elephant Pamphlet](#) (pages 13-19).

CUNY Plagiarism Policy

“Academic dishonesty is prohibited in The City University of New York. Penalties for academic dishonesty include academic sanctions, such as failing or otherwise reduced grades, and/or disciplinary sanctions, including suspension or expulsion.” All violations are reported to the Department and Lehman College’s Academic Integrity Officer.

Policy for this Course

Lehman College is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty.

Acts of academic dishonesty include—but are not limited to—plagiarism (in drafts, outlines, and examinations, as well as final papers), cheating, bribery, academic fraud, sabotage of research materials, the sale of academic papers, and the falsification of records. An individual who engages in these or related activities or who knowingly aids another who engages in them is acting in an academically dishonest manner and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Plagiarism includes the incorporation of any material that is not original with you without attribution, whether from a book, article, web site, or fellow student, in any paper or assignment.

Assignments that include any plagiarism will receive a zero and the offending student will be subject to additional action by the College. Students engaging in repeated instances of plagiarism will fail the course outright and will be remanded to the College for disciplinary action.

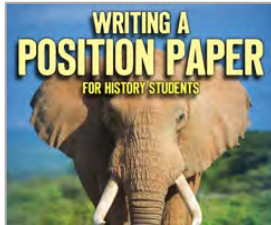
- For detailed information on definitions and examples of Academic Dishonesty, including Cheating, Plagiarism, Obtaining Unfair Advantage and Falsification of Records and Documents, please refer to the student handbook or visit: <http://lehman.smartcatalogiq.com/en/2017-2019/Undergraduate-Bulletin/Academic-Services-and-Policies/Academic-Integrity>

Resources



[Citations](#)

The basics you need to know for this class about footnotes and bibliographies in two fun pages.



[Writing a Position Paper](#)

AKA the Elephant Pamphlet. Guidance on research, structure, and citations.

[PDF](#) - [HTML](#)



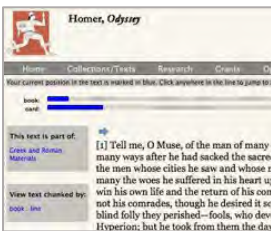
[Maps and Timelines](#)

Helpful maps of the ancient Mediterranean world, and timelines of the ancient era.



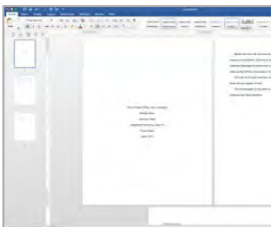
[Online Video Lectures](#)

My video lectures on YouTube for Ancient Civilizations, Ancient Greece, and Women in Antiquity.



[Online Ancient Texts](#)

A fairly exhaustive list of ancient authors and online translations into English.



[MS Word Essay Template](#)

A Microsoft Word file that's already set up for the formatting required for my essays. Save as... or Save as Template... after opening.



[Common Word Mix-Ups](#)

Suggestions for sorting out a few of the words that are commonly mixed up in English writing.

Lehman College Support Sites

- [IT Help Desk](#)
- [BlackBoard support page](#)
- [Tutoring Center](#)
- [Disability Services](#)
- [Covid-19 Updates and Resources](#)
- [Lehman College Bookstore](#)

Remote Research Help

- [Lief Library Remote Resources Page](#)
- [Lief Library Remote Research Searchable FAQs](#)
- [Lief Library main page and OneSearch access](#)
- [Research Options under Covid-19](#)
- [Choosing Sources for Research](#)
- [Archive.org Emergency Library](#)