

**Department of Classical Studies**  
**Course Outline**  
**CS2840A: Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams, and Distortions**  
**Autumn 2026**



**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. K. Olson ([kolson2@uwo.ca](mailto:kolson2@uwo.ca)) she/her

**OFFICE:** Lawson Hall 3227 (661-2111 x 84525)

**OFFICE HOURS:** in-person, Mondays 4:00-5:00 or by appointment

**TIME OF CLASS:** Mon and Wed 1:30-2:20 PM

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- S. Schiff. *Cleopatra: A Life*. (Back Bay Books, 2010, ppk \$24.99)
- P. Jones. *Cleopatra: A Sourcebook*. (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2006, ppk, \$33.95)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The details of Cleopatra's life story are well-known: the ambitious and intelligent queen's liaison with Julius Caesar, the birth of their son, and her passionate love-affair and subsequent suicide (via asp) with Roman statesman Mark Antony. Cleopatra's story is one of death, sex, and power, which may be treated in witty or tragic fashion. This course examines the life and times of Cleopatra, her role in Egyptian and Roman history, and Cleopatra in ancient art and coinage. The Cleopatra we know is the Cleopatra of myth and fantasy as well (a myth which began during her lifetime) and we will also look at the reception of her image from antiquity to the present in literature, art, and film.

**Midterm #1: 30%\*\***

Midterm #2 (**non-cumulative**): 30%

Final Exam (**cumulative**; tests **ALL** lectures & readings, Sept-Dec) 40%

= 100%

**\*\*Please note that this assessment is central to the learning objectives for this course. Accordingly, students seeking academic consideration for this assessment will be required to provide formal supporting documentation. Students who are granted academic consideration for this assessment will be provided with the opportunity to make up this work by a make-up exam.**

### NOTES TO STUDENTS:

1. Exam questions will be based on lectures as well as assigned readings. Failure to complete the required readings before an exam does not constitute a valid reason for postponing that exam. **Plan your schedule ahead of time.**
2. Those who miss classes or parts of classes remain responsible for the material they have missed. The instructor and the TA will not review the contents of lectures for those who arrive late or miss classes. I post **very** basic powerpoints on OWL, but class attendance is still **essential** to understand the details of the lecture.
3. The final grade is calculated on the basis of your performance on the exams **only**. **You cannot do an extra assignment to make up for a poor performance on an exam.** Nor can I re-weight exams except in cases of documented medical or personal crisis; and I need to hear from your academic counsellor. Any missed assessments will be made up with a make-up exam.
4. I am happy to speak to you about your grade based on your performance in the class. I am not willing to discuss your grade based on: 1) the grades you usually receive in other courses; 2) the grade you feel you deserved; 3) the grade you need to get into a special programme.

### IMPORTANT POLICIES:

#### **Note from the Dean of Arts and Humanities**

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

#### **Policy on Accommodation for Religious Holidays**

Students should review the [policy for Accommodation for Religious Holidays](#) . Where a student will be unable to write examinations and term tests due to a conflicting religious holiday, they should inform their instructors as soon as possible but **not later than two weeks** prior to writing the examination/term test. In the case of conflict with a midterm test, students should inform their instructor as soon as possible but not later than one week prior to the midterm.

Religious Accommodation requests for final exams should be submitted via the Student Absence Portal.

**Academic Accommodation** is “a means of adjusting the academic activities associated with a course or program of student in order to permit students with disabilities to participate in those activities at the University and to fulfill the essential requirements of a course or program.”

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodationdisabilities.pdf>. Students with disabilities are encouraged to register with **Accessible Education** at the earliest opportunity. “Accessible Education plays a central role in Western's efforts to ensure that its academic programs are accessible for all students” [https://academicupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](https://academicupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html)

**\*\*PLEASE NOTE that your accommodations must be in place by the time you write the exam. I do not allow make-ups based on the fact that your accommodations didn't come through in time.**

Scholastic offences are taken seriously, and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, here:

[https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_offences.pdf](https://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_offences.pdf)

### **Special Examinations**

A Special Examination is any examination other than the regular examination, and it may be offered only with the permission of the Dean of the Faculty in which the student is registered, in consultation with the instructor and Department Chair. Permission to write a Special Examination may be given on the basis of compassionate or medical grounds with appropriate supporting documents. To provide an opportunity for students to recover from the circumstances resulting in a Special Examination, the University has implemented Special Examinations dates. These dates as well as other important information about examinations and academic standing can be found [here](#).

### **Academic Advising**

Your Home Faculty's Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here:

<https://registrar.uwo.ca/facultyacademiccounselling.html>

### **Mental Health Support**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Gender-based and sexual violence**

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) (GBSV) and providing compassionate support to anyone who is going through or has gone through these traumatic events. If you are experiencing or have experienced GBSV (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at the following website:

<https://www.uwo.ca/health/studentsupport/survivorsupport/get-help.html>. To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Learning Development and Success**

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre <https://learning.uwo.ca> are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

### **USC**

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services>.

### **Academic Consideration**

Students must familiarize themselves with the University Policy on Academic Consideration – Undergraduate Students in First Entry Programs posted on the Academic Calendar:

<https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academicpolicies/appeals/academicconsiderationSep24.pdf>

This policy does not apply to requests for academic consideration submitted for attempted or completed work, whether online or in person. The policy also does not apply to students experiencing longer-term impacts on their academic responsibilities. These students should consult Accessible Education.

For procedures on how to submit Academic Consideration requests, please see the information posted on the Office of the Registrar's webpage:  
<https://registrar.uwo.ca/academics/academicconsiderations/>  
All requests for Academic Consideration must be made within 48 hours after the assessment date or submission deadline.

**AI**

No generative AI programs are to be used in this course.

**COURSE OUTLINE:** to come