

Department of Classical Studies
Course Outline
CS2840A: Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams, and Distortions
Autumn 2024



INSTRUCTOR: Dr. K. Olson (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 AND PLACE OF CLASS: see OWL

REQUIRED TEXTS:

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

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.
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.

Religious Accommodation

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.

Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf

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

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

Academic Counselling

Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or 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/faculty_academic_counselling.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](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact support@uwo.ca.

Accessible Education

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at http://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

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:

PART ONE: ANCIENT SOURCES

Mon Sept 9

- **The Ptolemies; ancient Alexandria**

Reading: Schiff 20-27; Jones 3-30

Weds Sept 11

- **The Ptolemies; ancient Alexandria**

Mon Sept 16

- **Women in the Hellenistic and Roman world**

Weds Sept 18

- **Cleopatra's early life**

Reading: Schiff 27--38; Jones 31-45

Mon Sept 23

- **Caesar and Cleopatra**

Reading: Schiff 11-20, 38-87; Jones 46-93

Weds Sept 25

- **Caesar and Cleopatra**

Reading: Schiff 88-166

Mon Sept 30: NO CLASS: Nat'l Day of Truth & Reconciliation

Weds Oct 2

- **Cleopatra as Isis**

Mon Oct 7

****IN CLASS EXAM NO. 1****

****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.**

Weds Oct 9

- **Antony and Cleopatra**

Reading: Schiff 167-199; Jones 94-128

OCT 14-18 READING BREAK: NO CLASSES

Mon Oct 21

- **Antony and Cleopatra; Cleopatra and Herod**
Reading: Schiff 201-236; Jones 129-179

Weds Oct 23

- **Antony and Cleopatra**
Reading: Schiff 237-278

Mon Oct 28

- **Antony and Cleopatra: death**
Reading: Schiff 279-324; Jones 180-204

Weds Oct 30

- **Antony and Cleopatra: death**

PART TWO: RECEPTION

Mon Nov 4

- **Augustan Cleopatras; Cleopatra in later ancient literature**

Weds Nov 6

- **Cleopatra in ancient art**

Mon Nov 11

****IN CLASS EXAM No. 2**

Tues Nov 15

- **Cleopatra in Arabic; medieval Cleopatras**
Reading: Jones 270-278

Mon Nov 18

- **Cleopatra in Renaissance literature and art**
Reading: Jones 223-246

Weds Nov 20

- **18th century Cleopatras**
Reading: Jones 247-250, 255-269

Mon Nov 25

- **19th century Cleopatras**

Weds Nov 27

- **20th century Cleopatras**
Reading: Jones 279-306

Mon Dec 2

- **Cleopatra on film 1899-2013**

Weds Dec 4

- **Cleopatra on film 1899-2013**