HIST533: Late Antiquity and Byzantium

Course Summary

Course: HIST533   Title: Late Antiquity and Byzantium

Length of Course: 8

Prerequisites: N/A   Credit Hours: 3

Description

Course Description: This course covers the period from the eighth century B.C. colonization of the Mediterranean and the founding of the Byzantium seaport in 667 B.C. through the First and Second Golden Ages, to the fall of Constantinople in 1453 to the Ottoman Turks. The roles of great Byzantium leaders such as Constantine the Great, the spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire, the recapture of Constantinople from the crusaders, and the impact of Byzantium culture on Western intellect are studied.

Course Scope: The course of Byzantine history, from the founding of the eastern empire in the fourth century, to its fall to the Ottoman Turks in the mid-fifteenth century, encompasses the history of the eastern half of the Mediterranean basin and its surrounding peoples and political entities. The Byzantine Empire had a profound influence on her neighbors as well as being a willing recipient of outside influences when such were deemed important by her emperors. The Empire was a bastion of Christianity, a trading center of worldwide importance, a center of learning, and a major military power for many centuries. This course examines the Byzantine Empire, what made the Empire great, and the causes of its decline and eventual destruction.

Objectives

By the end of this course, you will be able to:

- CO-1: Identify the religious, political, social, and economic policies of Late Antique society
- CO-2: Explain the development of Byzantine religious, political, social, and economic policies and weigh their effects on the empire
- CO-3: Distinguish and assess the Empire's relationship with eastern regional powers and rival states
- CO-4: Describe the changing role of the West in Byzantine affairs
- CO-5: Identify challenges faced by the Byzantine Empire and critique its response to these challenges
- CO-6: Analyze significant primary sources for the study of Late Antique and Byzantine history
- CO-7: Evaluate current scholarly theories for Late Antique and Byzantine studies

Outline

Week 1: Introduction to Late Antiquity and Byzantium

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1: Recognize the various components of the course and identify expectations for assessments
- LO-2: Define the concepts of Late Antiquity and Byzantium
- LO-3: Identify major political events and key individuals in the lead-up to Constantine's reign
- LO-4: Sketch Late Antique urban centers

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, *History of Byzantium*, Introduction, Chapters 1-2
- Grig, "Cities in the 'Long' Late Antiquity"
- DeForest, "Emperors, Baths, and Public Space"

Assignments
- Welcome Discussion – The Introductions discussion is due at the end of the week on Sunday. In subsequent weeks, the initial post is due mid-week.
- Week 1 Discussion

Week 2: Constantine I

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1: Identify major political and religious impacts of Constantine's reign
- LO-2: Compare and contrast the primary sources for Constantine, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each
- LO-3: Evaluate scholarly interpretations of Constantine

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapter 3
- Eusebius, *Church History* selection
- Eusebius, *Life of Constantine*
- Liebeschuetz, "Pagan Historiography"
- Zosimus, *New History* selection

Assignments
- Week 2 Discussion

Week 3: Church and State in Late Antiquity

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1 Examine the changing nature of church-state relations in the wake of Constantine
- LO-2 Distinguish the characteristic values and ethos of Late Antique Christianity
- LO-3 Execute a formal historical analysis
- LO-4 Critique the work of peers

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapters 4 and 5
- Harries, *Imperial Rome*, Chapter 13
- Ambrose, *Letter* 40
- Jerome, *Letter* 108
- *Life of St. Antony*

Assignments
- Assignment 1
- Week 3 Discussion

Week 4: Justinian

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1: Identify the impacts of Justinian's reign
- LO-2: Compare and contrast the primary sources for Justinian, assessing the strengths and weaknesses of each
- LO-3: Evaluate scholarly interpretations of Justinian

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapter 6
- Procopius selections
- *Digest of Justinian* selections
- Justinian, *Novels* selections
- Kelly, *Ruling the Later Roman Empire*, Introduction excerpt
- *Ioannes Lydus On Powers* or *The Magistracies of The Roman State* selections
- *Chronicle of John Malalas* selections
- Scott, "Malalas, The Secret History, and Justinian's Propaganda"
- Atkinson, "Justinian and the Tribulations of Transformation"

Assignments
- Week 4 Discussion

Week 5: Justin II-Irene

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1: Identify significant events in the reigns of the Byzantine emperors from Justin II to Irene.
- LO-2: Compare and contrast the criteria used to evaluate Byzantine rulers.
- LO-3: Explain and critique the role of court ceremonial and the nature of Byzantine diplomacy.

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapters 7-8
- Maurice, *Strategikon* selection
- Theophanes the Confessor, *The Chronicle* selection
- Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *The Book of Ceremonies* selections

Assignments
- Week 5 Discussion

Week 6: Nikephoros-Theodora

Learning Outcomes
- LO-1: Identify significant events in the reigns of the Byzantine emperors from Nikephoros to Theodora.
- LO-2: Assess the impact of the West and various eastern groups on Byzantine society and vice versa.
- LO-3: Sketch the relationship between the Byzantines and various foreign groups.

Reading and Resources
Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapters 9-11
- Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *Three Treatises on Imperial Military* selections
- Constantine Porphyrogenitus, *On Administering the Empire* selections
- Michael Psellos, *Chronographia* selections

Assignments
- Week 6 Discussion

Week 7: The Komnenoi Dynasty to the Fall

Learning Outcomes

- LO-1: Identify significant events in the reigns of the Byzantine emperors from the reign of Alexios I to the Fall of the Byzantine Empire.
- LO-2: Engage in big-picture analysis of the Byzantine Empire and its peers, in terms of strategies and goals.
- LO-3: Evaluate the historical narrative of Anna Komnene in light of earlier Byzantine historiography and in light of modern scholarly theories about this historian.

Reading and Resources

Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- Gregory, Chapters 12-16
- Anna Komnene, *The Alexiad* selections

Assignments

- Week 7 Discussion

Week 8: Presentations

Learning Outcomes

- LO-1: Compare and contrast scholarly theories on the fall of the Byzantine Empire.
- LO-2: Create a formal presentation that explains the collapse of the Byzantine Empire.
- LO-3: Critique the work of peers.
- LO-4: Reevaluate past research in light of new information.

Reading and Resources

Links for all readings are provided in the course e-reserve. This is located in each of the weekly lessons.

- As needed for Assignment 2

Assignments

- Assignment 2
- Week 8 Discussion

Evaluation

Late Assignments

Students are expected to submit assignments by the due dates listed in the classroom. Late assignments, including but not limited to Assignments, Discussions, posts and responses, quizzes, and exams, may or may not be accepted after the course end date. Submitting an assignment after the due date may result in a penalty of up to 10% of the grade per day late, not to exceed a maximum 50% of the grade. The amount of the penalty is at the faculty member's discretion. Faculty recognize that students have limited time and maybe more flexible if potential delays are communicated ahead of time.*

*Doctoral and Programs with specialty accreditation may have different late policies.

**Students with DSA accommodations may have different late policies applied. For more information regarding our DSA services, please contact DSA@apus.edu.

Grading

Name	Grade %
Discussions	**60%**
Assignments	**40%**

Materials

Book Title: Various resources from Trefry Library and/or the Open Web are used. Links provided inside the classroom.

All required readings are located in the Reading and Resources tab under the Lessons tab.

Course Guidelines

Writing Expectations

All activities completed in this course are to follow the stated instructions (inside the classroom). Always check the grading rubrics to see what your instructor will be on the lookout for when grading your work. Also, be sure you have read the APUS Plagiarism Policy (the entire Academic Dishonesty section) before submitting work in this or in any other course. See the above Course Outline or the Policies section on this Syllabus for links.

Citation and Reference Style

Attention: You will follow the citation style that is common to your discipline. Instructions regarding citation styles are included in the classroom.

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Also, completing all Assignments (under the Assignments tab) is paramount to your success in this course.

Netiquette

Online universities promote the advancement of knowledge through positive and constructive debate, both inside and outside the classroom. Forums on the Internet, however, can occasionally degenerate into needless insults and flaming. Such activity and the loss of good manners are not acceptable in a university setting. Basic academic rules of good behavior and proper Netiquette must persist. Remember that you are in a place for the rewards and excitement of learning, which does not include descent to personal attacks or student attempts to stifle the learning of others.

- Humor Note: Despite the best of intentions, jokes and especially satire can easily get lost or taken seriously. If you feel the need for humor, you may wish to add emoticons to help alert your readers: ;-), :), .

Disclaimer Statement

Course content may vary from the outline to meet the needs of this particular group.

Communications

Student Communication

To reach the instructor, please communicate through the MyClassroom email function accessible from the Classlist of the Course Tools menu, where the instructor and students email addresses are listed, or via the Office 365 tool on the Course homepage.

- In emails to instructors, it's important to note the specific course in which you are enrolled. The name of the course is at the top center of all pages.
- Students and instructors communicate in Discussion posts and other learning activities.
- All interactions should follow APUS guidelines, as noted in the Student Handbook, and maintain a professional, courteous tone.
- Students should review writing for spelling and grammar.
- Tips on Using the Office 365 Email Tool

Instructor Communication

The instructor will post announcements on communications preferences involving email and Instant Messaging and any changes in the class schedule or activities.

- Instructors will periodically post information on the expectations of students and will provide feedback on assignments, Discussion posts, quizzes, and exams.

- Instructors will generally acknowledge student communications within 24 hours and respond within 48 hours, except in unusual circumstances (e.g., illness).
- The APUS standard for grading of all assessments (assignments, Discussions, quizzes, exams) is five days or fewer from the due date.
- Final course grades are submitted by faculty no later than seven days after the end date of the course or the end of the extension period.

University Policies

Consult the [Student Handbook](#) for processes and policies at APUS. Notable policies:

- [Drop/Withdrawal Policy](#)
- [Extension Requests](#)
- [Academic Probation](#)
- [Appeals](#)
- [Academic Dishonesty / Plagiarism](#)
- [Disability Accommodations](#)
- [Student Deadlines](#)
- [Video Conference Policy](#)

Mission

The [mission of American Public University System](#) is to provide high-quality higher education with emphasis on educating the nation's military and public service communities by offering respected, relevant, accessible, affordable, and student-focused online programs that prepare students for service and leadership in a diverse, global society.

Minimum Technology Requirements

- Please consult the catalog for the minimum hardware and software required for [undergraduate](#) and [graduate](#) courses.
- Although students are encouraged to use the [Pulse mobile app](#) with any course, please note that not all course work can be completed via a mobile device.

Disclaimers

- Please note that course content – and, thus, the syllabus – may change between when a student registers for a course and when the course starts.
- Course content may vary from the syllabus' schedule to meet the needs of a particular group.