

EUH 3383: Pagans, Christians, and barbarians: the world of Late Antiquity



Time and location: Tuesday 1:55-2:45 and Thursday 1:55-3:50, in Flint 111

Dr. Florin Curta

Office: Keene-Flint 212

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays 11-1

Description

Late Antiquity is a period in history that has attracted much attention recently. In part, that is because of an old, 19th-century preoccupation with demarcating the clear chronological boundaries between Antiquity and the Middle Ages. An older generation of historians used to believe that once the Western Roman Empire disappeared in 476, the medieval world began. By now, scholarly opinions have shifted towards the model of a “transformation of the Roman world,” gradually leading to a new type of society, with different values and rules. Since that transformation took a long time, from ca. 300 to ca. 600, a new name was chosen to describe that period—Late Antiquity—to cover the history of the Old World “between Marcus Aurelius to Muhammad,” as Peter Brown put it half-a-century ago in the subtitle of his famous book (the title of which was the inspiration for the subtitle of this course). The course consists of a survey of all aspects of the transformation, from political developments in the Late Roman Empire to the economic and social changes, both inside and outside the empire that marked Late

Antiquity. Particular emphasis will be placed on the role of religion, especially the rise of Christianity, and the fundamental innovations in art and architecture epitomized by the great church of Hagia Sophia in Constantinople.

Textbooks

- Stephen Mitchell. *A History of the Later Roman Empire, AD 284-641*. 2nd edition. Malden: Wiley Blackwell, 2015 [hereafter *Mitchell*, available as e-book through the University of Florida library]
- Michael Maas. *Readings in Late Antiquity. A Sourcebook*. 2nd edition. Abingdon/New York: Routledge, 2010 [hereafter *Maas*, available as e-book through the University of Florida library]

Assignments and grading policies

There is no attendance policy, but you are responsible for attending all lectures and reading the required texts. Class participation may be taken into account to determine the overall grade. The basis for evaluation of performance will be four quizzes and two exams (Midterm and Final). The unannounced quizzes are exclusively based on primary source readings from your *Maas* book and will consist only of multiple-choice questions (no essay). A careful study of these texts is necessary for a good performance at the quiz. The Midterm and Final exams will cover everything from lectures and readings. Both Midterm and Final will consist of two parts: an identification and/or multiple-choice part, and a short essay, in which you will be asked to synthesize your knowledge of the topic, dropping in facts to show that you understand the concrete aspects of that topic. Only the Midterm will be cumulative. Make-up Midterm and Final exam will be given for very serious reasons, in which case you will have to produce some official proof. There is no make-up for quizzes. Extra-credit work will be accepted only for students with active participation in class discussions. The format of the extra-credit option shall be discussed with the instructor during regular office hours. The following point system will be used in determining the final grade:

Quizzes: 40 points

Midterm: 30 points

Final exam: 30 points

Total: 100 points

The following scale will be used in determining your final grade.

Points	Grade
---------------	--------------

97-100	A
--------	---

93-96	A-
88-92	B+
81-87	B
75-80	B-
68-74	C+
61-67	C
55-60	C-
48-54	D+
41-47	D
35-40	D-
under 30	E

Required Policies

Students Requiring Accommodation

Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center by visiting <https://disability.ufl.edu/students/get-started>. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

UF Evaluations Process

Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students>. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via <https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl>. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at <https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results>.

University Honesty Policy

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor

and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: "On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment." The Honor Code (<https://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code>) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to the appropriate personnel.

Weekly Topics

Tuesday, January 13: Introduction. What is Late Antiquity? Sources and definitions [*Mitchell* 15-50]

Thursday, January 15: Late Roman Empire and the Tetrarchy [*Mitchell* 51-66; *Maas* 11-12, 20-22, 105-106]

Tuesday, January 20: Constantine the Great and his successors [*Mitchell* 66-78; *Maas* 8, 9, 44, 59-60, 79-80, 111-112, 117-119, 120, 131-132, 224-225]

Thursday, January 22: From Julian to Theodosius [*Mitchell* 78-107; *Maas* 2-3, 7-8, 68-69, 80-81, 85, 87-88, 96-97, 120, 196, 207-208, 314, 346-348]

Tuesday, January 27: The Western Empire [*Mitchell* 108-125; *Maas* 48-49, 56-59, 349-353, 371-378]

Thursday, January 29: The Eastern Empire, from Zeno to Justinian [*Mitchell* 125-164; *Maas* 9-11, 17-18, 41-42, 45, 61-66, 126-129, 132-135, 137-139, 140-142, 307-308, 340-341]

Tuesday, February 3: How did the empire work? Ideology, administration, government structure [*Mitchell* 165-175 and 185-201; *Maas* 14-15]

Thursday, February 5: Justinian [*Mitchell* 133-164; *Maas* 9-11, 17-18, 41-42, 45, 61-66, 140-142, 307-308, 340-341]

Tuesday, February 10: Roman army [*Mitchell* 176-185; *Maas* 81-85, 86-87, 90-94, 101-104]

Thursday, February 12: Visigoths, Huns. Burgundians, Franks, and Ostrogoths [*Mitchell* 206-241; *Maas* 115, 354-356, 361-363]

Tuesday, February 17: Christianity before the Church: persecutions, saints, early organization [*Mitchell* 242-276; *Maas* 142-146, 163-164]

Thursday, February 19: Christianity within and with the Roman Empire [*Mitchell* 277-299; *Maas* 113-114, 121-123]

Tuesday, February 24: **Midterm**

Thursday, February 26: Christological debates and monasticism [*Mitchell* 299-324; *Maas* 152-161]

Tuesday, March 3: Economy, taxation, cities [*Mitchell* 325-354; *Maas* 22-28]

Thursday, March 5: Society and law, house and household [*Mitchell* 259-270 and 355-407; *Maas* 285-288 and 291-296]

Tuesday, March 10: Marriage and family [*Maas* 248-259]

Thursday, March 12: From cradle to grave [*Maas* 240-248 and 270-284]

Tuesday, March 24: Women [*Maas* 227-239]

Thursday, March 26: Jews [*Maas* 201-207, 208-212, and 216-222]

Tuesday, March 31: Education and philosophy [*Maas* 66-68 and 69-73]

Thursday, April 2: Art and architecture

Tuesday, April 7: The year 536 and the plague: catastrophism or real challenges? [*Mitchell* 408-425; *Maas* 307-309]

Thursday, April 9: Sassanian Persia [*Mitchell* 425-438; *Maas* 327-340]

Tuesday, April 14: From Justinian to Heraclius [*Mitchell* 441-455; *Maas* 380-386]

Thursday, April 16: Heraclius and rise of Islam [*Mitchell* 455-463; *Maas* 390-406]

Tuesday, April 21: Late Antiquity between the “fall” and the “transformation” of the Roman Empire [*Mitchell* 466-492]

Friday, May 1, 10:00-12:00: **Final.**