ARTS 372:
The City of Rome

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office hours:
W, 2-3 p.m. & Th, 11 a.m. - noon

Description and Goals: This seminar-style course will examine the city of Rome from antiquity to the present day. We will explore the vast public squares built of colored marble imported from the four corners of the ancient Roman Empire; the relics of the Christian martyrs and the pilgrims they attracted; the obelisks and straight streets of the Renaissance popes; the colossal “wedding cake” meant to celebrate Italian unification; the bulldozers of Mussolini; and the city’s vexed attempts to reckon with all of this in the present day, and to function effectively as a modern capital with a population of almost 3 million. Our discussions will revolve around two themes in particular: the forms, motives and impact of large-scale interventions into the urban fabric by the various powerful rulers who created the city we know today; and the concept of a “site of memory,” a particular place or monument whose history is selected for commemoration because it is deemed useful for present purposes. Students will develop an in-depth understanding of both of these general concepts, as well as a broad overview of one of the most historically significant cities in the world. Students will also develop two useful life-skills in this course: 1) how to deconstruct and assess scholarly arguments, and 2) how to give short, effective, public presentations.

Readings: I have ordered two books for you at the bookstore: James McGregor, Rome from the Ground Up (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2005) and Claude Moatti, The Search for Ancient Rome (New York: Norton, 1993). Both of these offer useful background and overviews. The former is the best general, historically-oriented guidebook to the city of Rome on the market today, while the latter offers a more focused examination of the history of scholarly engagement with Rome’s ancient ruins. Neither
of these volumes, however, will serve as a textbook per se. The daily readings will be available electronically, either on Blackboard or through the library. You are expected to have read these before each class meeting and to be prepared to discuss them actively.

**Assessment:** Your primary responsibility in this course is to be an active, engaged participant in our discussions of the readings. Over the course of the semester, you will also give three presentations, and write a 10-page paper on, a single monument in the city of Rome, focusing on its moment of creation and two subsequent historical moments when it was adopted, adapted, appropriated, renovated, remodeled and/or repristinated by some potentate with a vested interest. There will also be a map quiz early on and a final exam.

**Grade Distribution:**

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<th>Component</th>
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<tr>
<td>Participation</td>
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<td>Map Quiz</td>
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<td>Presentation I</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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Schedule of Readings:

T, 1/19: Urbanism and the “Grand Manner”


Th, 1/21: Sites of Memory


T, 1/26: Intro to the City of Rome; Rome in the Republican Period


Th, 1/28: Augustus

• *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (The Deeds of the Divine Augustus): [http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html](http://classics.mit.edu/Augustus/deeds.html) [pay close attention to chpts 19-21, and skim the rest]


T, 2/2: Ancient Rome at its Height


**Th, 2/4:** presentations

**T, 2/9:** presentations

**Th, 2/11:** presentations / Map Quiz

**T, 2/16:** Constantine


**Th, 2/18:** Relics

- Epigrams of Damasus


**T, 2/23:** Spolia


**Th, 2/25:** The Marvels of Rome (*Mirabilia Urbis Romae*)


**T, 3/2:** presentations

**Th, 3/4:** presentations

**T, 3/9:** NO CLASS (EM giving paper in Kansas)

**Th, 3/11:** NO CLASS (EM giving paper in Kansas)

**T, 3/16:** NO CLASS (Spring Break)
Th, 3/18: NO CLASS (Spring Break)

T, 3/23: presentations / catch-up

Th, 3/25: Papal Rome I


T, 3/30: Papal Rome II


Th, 4/1: presentations

T, 4/6: presentations

Th, 4/8: Souvenirs, Obelisks and Napoleon


T, 4/13: 1870: Roma Capitale

Archaeology of the Eternal City (Oxford: Oxford University School of Archaeology, 2000), 332-53.


**Th, 4/15: Fascism I**


**T, 4/20: Fascism II**


**Th, 4/22: presentations**

**T, 4/27: presentations**

**Th, 4/29: Rome Today**

