

## **Classics 191: The Age of Constantine**

T 2-5, Public Affairs 2325

Professor Kathryn McDonnell

Office: Dodd 247L

Email: [kmcdonnell@humnet.ucla.edu](mailto:kmcdonnell@humnet.ucla.edu)

Office Hours: Tues 2-3:30 & by appt.

### **Course Description:**

Some of the greatest changes in the Roman Empire took place during the lifetime of the emperor Constantine. First the emperor Diocletian, and then Constantine himself, changed the administrative structure of the Empire, reformed its currency and economy, re-organized the imperial succession, and re-systematized the military. The profoundest change of all was the legalization of Christianity by Constantine and Licinius in AD 313, and Constantine's subsequent involvement in doctrinal struggles within the Christian church, such as the Council of Nicaea. Constantine also founded a new imperial capital, one that would survive both his death and that of Rome itself to become the capital of two subsequent empires, the Byzantine and the Ottoman.

For all of his apparent vision, however, Constantine remains a bit of a riddle. Did he, in fact, convert to Christianity? Did he intend to conquer the Persian Empire as part of a religious agenda? What did he foresee as his legacy? We will explore some of these questions by considering the history, material culture, beliefs, and literature of the Age of Constantine.

### **Required Texts:**

Noel Lenski (ed.). *The Cambridge Companion to the Age of Constantine*. Assignments in Lenski and additional readings will be posted on the course website:

<http://ccle.ucla.edu/course/view/10W-CLASSIC191-1>

### **Course Requirements and Evaluation Criteria:**

- Attendance and Participation (10%)
- Attendance is mandatory and participation in class discussion is crucial.
- Class Reports (20%)
- In order to practice speaking to the class and pulling together Powerpoint presentations, you will choose a Constantinian-era monument to present to the class as part of our discussion of Rome, Constantinople, and the provinces. You will also present one article report with an outline of the article's thesis and main points for distribution to the class.
- Research Paper (50%) and Class Presentation (20%)
- The primary component of your grade in this course is your 10-15 page research paper and your 20 minute Powerpoint presentation of your research to the class. You will need to pick a topic for research by the end of the second week of courses and submit a one-paragraph topic description with bibliography in week three.

**Academic Integrity** (<http://www.deanofstudents.ucla.edu/integrity.html>): Please read UCLA's Code of Academic Integrity and abide by it. You should be aware that violations include cheating, fabrication, multiple submissions, and plagiarism. Familiarize yourself with their definitions. Work that violates Academic Integrity will be immediately reported to the Dean of Students for investigation, and may result in suspension or expulsion from UCLA.

#### Classics 191 - the Age of Constantine Tentative Schedule of Assignments

<b><u>Date</u></b>	<b><u>Topic</u></b>
Tues 5-Jan 12-	Introduction, the Tetrarchy
Tues Jan 19-	Sources for Constantine, Life of Constantine
Tues Jan 26-	Constantine and Rome, Research in Classics
Tues Jan	Religion
Tues 2-Feb	Constantine and Constantinople
Tues 9-Feb 16-	Law and Society
Tues Feb 23-	War and the Frontiers
Tues Feb 2-	Student Research Presentations
Tues Mar 9-	Student Research Presentations
Tues Mar	Student Research Presentations, Concluding Discussion