

UNIVERSITY OF WALES TRINITY SAINT DAVID



HPHP4020 **Everyday Life in Athens and Rome** **(Module Syllabus)**

Module Code:	HPHP4020
Credit points:	20
Pre-requisites/restrictions:	None
Taught:	Block 3
Lecturer:	Dr Matthew Cobb

GENERAL INFORMATION

This module explores various aspects of socio-economic, cultural and political life in Ancient Athens and Rome. These places can both be understood as “city-states”, but they also managed to extend their power and territorial hegemony over much larger geographic spaces at certain points during their history (Roman hegemony lasting over a longer period and a much wider area). These cities have rich histories and are still occupied today. However, for this module we will be primarily focusing on fifth to fourth century BC for Athens, and 200 BC to AD 200 for Rome.

AIM(S)

- To provide students within an understanding of various aspects of socio-economic, cultural and political life in Ancient Athens and Rome (primarily focusing on fifth to fourth century BC Athens, and 200 BC to AD 200 Rome).

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Upon the successful completion of this module, the student should be able to:

- Demonstrate an elementary knowledge of the various aspects of cultural and social history relating to Athens and Rome, including topics like entertainment, religion, slavery and education.
- Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the ancient sources and evidence relating to the society and culture of Classical Athens and mid-late Republican and Imperial Rome, as well as an understanding of their problems and limitations.
- Demonstrate an ability to engage with relevant modern scholarship in the fields of Athens and Roman social history.
- Present written and oral work in a manner appropriate for a relevant/professional audience.

INDICATIVE CONTENT

- This module provides a wide-ranging discussion of the social, cultural and economic life of the cities of Athens and Rome, placed within the context of the wider Mediterranean (and global) world.
- The main periods of focus will be the fifth and fourth centuries BC for Athens, and ca. 200 BC to AD 200 for Rome.
- Students will have the opportunity to learn about a range of issues that impacted on the everyday life of ordinary people. Potential topics include work, domestic life, death, entertainment, religion, disease, medicine, slavery and art.
- During the course of this module students will be introduced to a range of key literary, epigraphic, and archaeological evidence for both Athenian and Roman societies.
- During the course of this module students will be introduced to a key range of modern scholarship pertaining to Ancient Athens and Rome.

Study Time Allocation

The study time for the module is divided as follows:

Activity type	Hours	Percentage
Scheduled learning	36	18%
Independent learning	164	82%
Placement learning		
TOTAL	[200 hours]	100%

HOW TO CONTACT ME

If had any general questions that you cannot find the answer to in this booklet or on the Moodle page, please feel free to raise them with me by email: m.cobb@uwtsd.ac.uk, or in the discussion board available in the Moodle space for this course, or in the lecture sessions. Alternatively, we can arrange a one to one for more confidential matters.

STRUCTURE AND ORGANISATION

This 20-credit module has three main teaching weeks (36 hours) and a week following on from that for you to prepare for the final assessment. Attendance is compulsory for ALL lectures, workshops and seminars. If you cannot make a class because of illness or other good reason, you need to inform me (m.cobb@uwtsd.ac.uk).

Organising your work schedule is your own responsibility. You should complete at least 200 hours of work for this module, including time spent in class, preparation time for in class work, as well as assessments.

Course Outline:

This is only a provisional (indicative) guide and is potentially subject to change should circumstances require it.

WEEK 1

	Session one Monday	Session two Thursday	Session three Friday
THEME	Introduction	Households and gender relations	Slaves and slavery
Hour one	What is social history	Gender	Slave societies?
		Lysias 1	Slavery and agency
Hour two	Daily rhythms of urban	Households	Assessment one: quiz 1
Hour three	life		

WEEK 2

	Session four Monday	Session five Thursday	Session six Friday
--	------------------------	--------------------------	-----------------------

THEME	Performance and blood sport	Art and imagery in the Graeco-Roman world	Sexuality in Ancient Athens and Rome
Hour one	The theatre and performance	Exploring “art”	Attitudes to sex and sexuality in the Greek and Roman world
Hour two	Theatre masks	Athletics and art	Sexuality in iconography and material culture
Hour three	Gladiators	Assessment one: quiz 2	

WEEK 3

	Session seven Monday	Session eight Thursday	Session nine Friday
THEME	People power in Athens	The <i>res publica</i> of the Romans	Early Athens
Hour one	Democratic Athens	Roman governance and people power	This session is being delivered by Prof. Louise Steel
Hour two			
Hour three	Slavery and governance	The <i>res publica</i> of the Romans Assessment one: quiz 3	

WEEK 4

	Session ten Monday	Session eleven Thursday	Session twelve Friday
THEME	Presentations	Reception	Take Home Exam
Hour one	All students should attend the session (excepting those with special exemptions).	Greece and Rome on the big and little screen	Questions to be released on the day at 10 am [on the Moodle page]
Hour two		Take home exam overview	
Hour three		Assessment one: quiz 4	

ASSESSMENTS

Assessment 1: Multiple choice quizzes – 4 in total, top two highest marks awarded – worth 20% - these will take place during the main session of weeks 1 to 3

A series of short multiple-choice or short answer questions will be given in 4 separate quizzes dispersed throughout the first three weeks of the module. Each quiz will take place in class and last for 15 minutes. During each quiz you will be asked to answer a series of 10 multiple choice question

relating to themes we have so far covered in the module. Out of the 4 quizzes taken, students will receive the marks from their top two scores (i.e., the highest marks for the two quizzes a student did best in).

Assessment 2: Individual presentation (10 minutes, with 5 minutes of questions) – worth 30% – these will take place on 12 January 2026

Students will be required to present on a topic related to the social history of either Athens or Rome, or both if doing something comparative. You have the freedom to pick the topic that most interests you, so long as it relates Greek and/or Roman social history. If you are unable to pick something, feel free to discuss your ideas with the lecturer. These presentations will take place in front of other members of the class, unless you have specific compensatory measures which stipulate you can present 1:1 (i.e., just to the lecturer without a larger audience).

As the idea is for students to witness other presentations, you should be present for the main session and not just your own timeslot (the exception being, as noted, when an individual has compensatory measures).

Assessment 3: Take home exam (2000 words) – worth 50% – this will take place on the 16 January 2026 – the “exam” will open from 10am, and you must submit by 6pm on the same day via Turnitin [8pm if you have been granted extra time due to compensatory measures]

The “exam” script will consist of a choice of four essay questions that will be revealed on the Moodle page at 10 am on the 16 January 2026. You will need to answer one of these (only one, do not attempt more than one!) during the 8-hour period. The take home exam is essentially like a time-pressured essay. You are expected to write your answer in essay prose-style, with footnotes and a bibliography/reference list included at the end. You won’t see the official questions until the day itself, but advanced notice will be given of the 4 main themes on which each question is based and for which you can choose to do preparatory background research. Additionally, some guidance and suggested reading will be provided in advance. You do not need to be in a specific physical location to do the work, you can work wherever you feel most comfortable (in your own room, the Lampeter campus library, a local café, etc.).

The purpose of the assessment is to replicate real-life work-place scenarios where you might be expected to complete a report in highly time-pressed circumstances.

Coursework submission

For written coursework, unless otherwise specified, the submission links can be found on the Moodle page (under the assignments tab).

Word count

Please be aware that if you go significantly over or under the word limit (i.e. more than 10%), you may be penalised.

REMEMBER that the word count includes everything apart from the bibliography, titles or captions. You must provide the word count clearly on the cover sheet.

Welsh First language

If your first language is Welsh and you would like to submit any assessed coursework in Welsh, please speak the Institute Office as soon as possible to make arrangements for this.

Special needs / requirements

If you have any special needs (e.g., dyslexia, visual impairment) that need to be taken into account for the teaching of this module, please make sure that our Welfare Officers and Student Services are made aware, so that any relevant support can be put in place.

Easy formatting

Information about formatting citations and reference lists/bibliographies for written coursework is available in the Library Reference Guides. You can follow whichever of the four referencing systems you like that are detailed in the library referencing guides, so long as you are consistent within a piece of work.

***** You need to watch plagiarism whenever you use secondary literature (ALL suspect coursework will be submitted to a Turnitin analysis).** Please consult the library referencing guides for advice on how to reference secondary literature.

Bibliography

Please note that the books and articles mentioned are only recommendations. You should read more widely beyond this list, especially when preparing for major assignments.

Classification	Reading List entry
Essential	Gibbs, M. and M. Nikolic (eds.), 2020. <i>Themes in Roman Society and Culture: An Introduction to Ancient Rome</i> . OUP Canada, 2nd edition.
Essential	Osborn, R. 2014. <i>Greek History: The Basics</i> . Routledge.
Essential	Parkin, T. and A. Pomeroy. 2007. <i>Roman Social History: A Sourcebook</i> (Routledge Sourcebooks for the Ancient World). Routledge.
Essential	Pomeroy, S., S. M. Burstein, and W. Donlan. 2012. <i>Ancient Greece: A Political, Social, and Cultural History</i> . OUP USA; 3rd Edition.
Further	Barringer, J. 2015. <i>The Art and Archaeology of Ancient Greece</i> . CUP.
Further	Casson, L. 1999. <i>Everyday Life in Ancient Rome</i> . John Hopkins University Press.
Further	Garnsey, P. and R. Saller 2014. <i>The Roman Empire: Economy, Society and Culture</i> . Bloomsbury Academic; 2nd edition.
Further	Laurin, J. R. 2013. <i>The Life of Women in Ancient Athens</i> . AuthorHouse.