

**Department of Classical Studies**  
**Course Outline**  
**CS2840A: Cleopatra: Histories, Dreams, and Distortions**  
**Autumn 2024**



**INSTRUCTOR:** Dr. K. Olson ([kolson2@uwo.ca](mailto:kolson2@uwo.ca))

**OFFICE:** Lawson Hall 3227 (661-2111 x 84525)

**OFFICE HOURS:** in-person, Mondays 4:00-5:00 or by appointment

**TIME AND PLACE OF CLASS:** See OWL Brightspace

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

- S. Schiff. *Cleopatra: A Life*. (Back Bay Books, 2010, ppk)
- P. Jones. *Cleopatra: A Sourcebook*. (Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2006, ppk)

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:**

The details of Cleopatra's life story are well-known: the ambitious and intelligent queen's liaison with Julius Caesar, the birth of their son, and her passionate love-affair and subsequent suicide (via asp) with Roman statesman Mark Antony. Cleopatra's story is one of death, sex, and power, which may be treated in witty or tragic fashion. This course examines the life and times of Cleopatra, her role in Egyptian and Roman history, and Cleopatra in ancient art and coinage. The Cleopatra we know is the Cleopatra of myth and fantasy as well (a myth which began during her lifetime) and we will also look at the reception of her image from antiquity to the present in literature, art, and film.

## LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

On successful completion of this course students are expected to be able to:

- have acquired a knowledge of the life of Cleopatra
- address the possible symbolism and meaning of content/subject matter in ancient art within its specific and larger social/historical context
- read, comprehend, and sum up ancient literary sources in translation concerning Cleopatra
- have acquired a knowledge of the reception of Cleopatra in fiction, art, and film and understand and explain why she is portrayed in a certain way

## LEARNING OUTCOMES/TRANSFERABLE SKILLS:

Students completing this course are expected to have acquired:

- an understanding of the importance of historical perspective
- an understanding of how social norms and customs and the construction of Cleopatra is a product of time, events and context
- a developed understanding of the limits of primary evidence as actual historical fact

### IMPORTANT POLICIES:

#### Note from the Dean of Arts and Humanities

You are responsible for ensuring that you have successfully completed all course prerequisites and that you have not taken an antirequisite course. Lack of prerequisites may not be used as basis of appeal. If you are not eligible for a course, you may be removed from it at any time, and you will receive no adjustment to your fees. These decisions cannot be appealed.

#### Religious Accommodation

When a course requirement conflicts with a religious holiday that requires an absence from the University or prohibits certain activities, students should request accommodation for their absence in writing at least two weeks prior to the holiday to the course instructor and/or the Academic Counselling office of their Faculty of Registration. Please consult University's list of recognized religious holidays (updated annually) at:

<https://multiculturalcalendar.com/ecal/index.php?s=c-univwo>.

#### Accommodation Policies

Students with disabilities are encouraged to contact Accessible Education, which provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive testing. The policy on Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities can be found at:

[https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation\\_disabilities.pdf](https://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/Academic%20Accommodation_disabilities.pdf)

**Scholastic offences** are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, at the following Web site:

[http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic\\_policies/appeals/scholastic\\_discipline\\_undergrad.pdf](http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf).

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

### **Academic Counselling**

Your Home Faculty's Academic Counselling or Academic Advising Office will support or refer whenever you have an issue that is affecting your studies, including information on adding/dropping courses, academic considerations for absences, appeals, exam conflicts, and many other academic related matters. Do not hesitate to reach out to them if you are struggling and unsure where to go for help. Contact info for all Faculties is here: [https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty\\_academic\\_counselling.html](https://registrar.uwo.ca/faculty_academic_counselling.html)

### **Mental Health Support**

Students who are in emotional/mental distress should refer to Mental Health@Western (<https://uwo.ca/health/>) for a complete list of options about how to obtain help.

### **Gender-based and sexual violence**

Western University [is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence](#) and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced gender-based or sexual violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts, [here](#). To connect with a case manager or set up an appointment, please contact [support@uwo.ca](mailto:support@uwo.ca).

### **Accessible Education**

Please contact the course instructor if you require lecture or printed material in an alternate format or if any other arrangements can make this course more accessible to you. You may also wish to contact Accessible Education at [http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/accessible\\_education/index.html](http://academicssupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/index.html) if you have any questions regarding accommodations.

### **Learning Development and Success**

Counsellors at the Learning Development and Success Centre (<https://learning.uwo.ca>) are ready to help you improve your learning skills. They offer presentations on strategies for improving time management, multiple-choice exam preparation/writing, textbook reading, and more. Individual support is offered throughout the Fall/Winter terms in the drop-in Learning Help Centre, and year-round through individual counselling.

### **USC**

Additional student-run support services are offered by the USC, <https://westernusc.ca/services/>.

### **Copyright**

Lectures and course materials, including power point presentations, outlines, and similar materials, are protected by copyright. You may take notes and make copies of course materials for your own educational use. You may not record lectures, reproduce (or allow others to reproduce), post or distribute lecture notes, wiki material, and other course materials publicly and/or for commercial purposes without my written consent.

## **GRADES:**

Midterm #1: 30%

Midterm #2 (**non-cumulative**): 30%

Final Exam (**cumulative**; tests **ALL** lectures & readings, Sept-Dec) 40%

## **NOTES TO STUDENTS:**

1. Since the tests are given in-person in class time, there can be no conflicts. **More than one test on the same day does not constitute a conflict.** Plan your schedule ahead of time. All exams are **multiple-choice**.

2. Exam questions will be based on lectures as well as assigned readings. Failure to complete the required readings before an exam does not constitute a valid reason for postponing that exam. **Plan your schedule ahead of time.**
3. Those who miss classes or parts of classes remain responsible for the material they have missed. The instructor and the TA will not review the contents of lectures for those who arrive late or miss classes. I post **very** basic powerpoints on OWL, but class attendance is still **essential** to understand the details of the lecture.
4. The final grade is calculated on the basis of your performance on the exams **only**. **You cannot do an extra assignment to make up for a poor performance on an exam.** Nor can I re-weight exams except in cases of documented medical or personal crisis; and I need to hear from your academic counsellor.
5. I am happy to speak to you about your grade based on your performance in the class. I am not willing to discuss your grade based on: 1) the grades you usually receive in other courses; 2) the grade you feel you deserved; 3) the grade you need to get into a special programme.
6. If a lecture and its readings appears on the syllabus, **that lecture and readings will appear on the midterms and final exam**, regardless of whether the lecture is given in-person, uploaded as a document to our OWL site, or recorded and uploaded to the OWL site.