

CLCV3201A/HIST3009A

ALEXANDER THE GREAT: TYRANT OR
HERO?

Professor: Greg Fisher
Office: PA 2A54
Office hours: W, 1000-1100
Phone: 613-520-2600 ext. 8425
E-mail: greg_fisher@carleton.ca
Lectures: M. 0835-1135

Overview

This course will explore the pivotal events which took place between the battle of Chaeronea, in 338, and the establishment of the Successor kingdoms throughout the Hellenistic world. This period witnessed the establishment of Macedonian hegemony in Greece, the emergence of Alexander the Great, the defeat of the Persian Emperor, Darius III, and the extension of Greek political and cultural influences as far as parts of Afghanistan, India, and Egypt. An understanding of Alexander's conquests provides valuable insights into our own world, particularly in Afghanistan, a place of some considerable modern interest. An examination of Alexander's descent into tyranny, showing the truism of how 'absolute power corrupts absolutely' is fascinating to follow.

Main problems, questions and themes

Alexander. How do *you* account for his achievements? To what extent were they the result of other developments, particularly in Greece, or was he simply one of history's 'Great Men?' What were his goals? Did he see himself as a divinity? As the heir to the Achaemenid Persian kings?

Historians and historiography. What are the most important historical sources for this period? How do we evaluate the testimonies, histories and accounts concerning Alexander? What are some of the main problems? How have pictures of him been skewed by other concerns, in both modern and ancient historiography?

Identity in the world of Alexander. How 'Greek' did the Near East become during this period? Afterwards? What kind of impact did the spread of Greek culture have? Was it significant, or only skin-deep?

Continuity and change. How much did the Persian-dominated world of the Near East change as a result of Alexander's conquests? How much did it stay the same?

The unity of the world of Alexander. Did Alexander's conquests make a difference in terms of bringing some kind of cultural or political unity to the Near Eastern lands of Greece, Egypt, Asia Minor, Syria, etc.?

Comparative history. What can we learn from Alexander's descent into tyranny? How much for e.g. is he like Hitler, or Stalin? **A major part of this course will involve examining what can be learned from Alexander's failed military campaign in Afghanistan.**

Course objectives:

1. To develop the tools of historical analysis, particularly balanced, critical thinking, as they concern the study of ancient history.
2. To apply these skills in class discussion, written analyses, and presentations.
3. To encourage the student to use his or her reading of the ancient evidence to develop and argue a particular point of view.

Readings

Required (at the bookstore):

1. P. Green. *Alexander of Macedon. An Historical Biography* (California).
2. W. Heckel and L. Tritle (eds.), *Alexander the Great. A New History* (Blackwell).
3. F.L. Holt, *Into the Land of Bones. Alexander the Great in Afghanistan* (Berkeley).

➔ Note that this is the second edition of Holt's book, due to be released in October. We will not need this book until November.

4. S. Pressfield, *The Afghan Campaign* (London).

We will be considering these readings in class discussions, so it is **vital** that you stay up to date. A reading guide will be posted in the first week of term. We will also watch the documentary by Michael Wood, *In the Footsteps of Alexander the Great*.

Course Evaluation/Important Dates

Note on plagiarism. I draw your attention to the University's regulations and guidelines on plagiarism, which can be found on the last page of this course outline. Note that I have a policy of submitting **all** work suspected of plagiarism to the Associate Dean of FASS, **without exception**. I also have a **zero tolerance policy for late assignments** without a medical note. **All late assignments without adequate explanation will receive an automatic zero.**

October 1, Monday:	take-home assignment due	25%
November 5, Monday:	take-home assignment due	25%
December 3, Monday:	short essay due	25%
December 19, Wednesday:	take-home final due (questions handed out on Dec 8, last day of class).	25%

Note that as per my policy with upper division courses, one day will be designated a study day where we will have no formal meeting. This date is set for Monday, December 3rd.

All evaluation in this course is via written work. Marks will be given for clearly-written, concise answers which address the question in a balanced, analytical and thoughtful way, and, particularly in the case of term papers and take-homes, support your arguments in a convincing fashion. I expect correct spelling and use of grammar! Poorly-written answers will lose marks.

All exams will be submitted electronically through WebCT e-mail by 11.59 EST on the set day.

1. The two **take-home assignments** will involve short essays questions on material covered in readings and in class. No further research is expected of you for this assignment. Questions will be provided **one week** before the due date.
2. The **short essay** (max. 8pp) will be a consideration of a topic covered in the class. More details will follow in class at the appropriate time.
3. The **final exam** is due as per the date above. This is an essay exam and the questions will be given out on the final day of teaching, as per University policy. You may use any sources you wish (i.e., this is an open-book exam) but I do not expect you to go beyond your assigned readings and class notes. **Please note: all written work provided as part of the take-home exam must be the work of the individual writing the exam. Group work is not acceptable. Citations should be used where appropriate, following the formats you have used for your term papers; if you are referencing from class notes, it is acceptable to cite as “class notes, date.”**

Participation. There is no grade for participation, but I expect you all to become involved in class discussions, size of the class permitting. Also, if anything is unclear, or you have a question, don't hesitate to ask.

Please make sure you keep up with the readings and attend class regularly. Both are vital for success in this course.

Office hours. My office hours are at the top of this page. Please e-mail me or talk to me after class to arrange a suitable time if they are not convenient.

Class time. I would ask all of you to give your full attention in class. If you have to make a phone call, send a text, etc., please leave the class and return when you are finished. This is to avoid distracting your teacher and the students around you.

Note: standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean. This means that grades submitted by the instructor may be subject to revision. No grades are final until they have been approved by the Dean.

Course Calendar

Here is a list of the topics we will be covering, by month.

- September: Background to the Macedonian kingdom, the situation in Greece, reign of Philip II, birth and early career of Alexander. Invasion of the Achaemenid Empire (Iran) and journey of conquest. Sources and historiography.
- October: Conquest of the Achaemenid Empire; journeys to the east; problems of integration of Persians/Greeks; problems in Greece.
- November & December Wars in Afghanistan, India, Pakistan; conspiracies; the Gedrosian desert; death of Alexander; successor states; Indo-Bactrian kings; legacy of Alexander – hero or villain?

Other Notes

1. Please see the final page, “Regulations common to all Humanities courses”, for information on plagiarism, requests for academic accommodation, etc.
2. If you cannot complete an assignment due to illness or other unforeseen circumstances, it is your responsibility to inform me so that alternative arrangements can be made. Documentary evidence of your reason for missing an assignment must be provided.
3. It is your responsibility to come to class prepared. This includes doing the readings.
4. LATE PAPERS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED. There are NO exceptions, unless you have a compelling reason why you cannot submit your paper on time (illness, emergency etc.), in which case it is YOUR responsibility to inform me so alternative arrangements can be made.

REGULATIONS COMMON TO ALL HUMANITIES COURSES

COPIES OF WRITTEN WORK SUBMITTED

Always retain for yourself a copy of all essays, term papers, written assignments or take-home tests submitted in your courses.

PLAGIARISM

The University Senate defines plagiarism as “*presenting, whether intentional or not, the ideas, expression of ideas or work of others as one’s own.*” This can include:

- reproducing or paraphrasing portions of someone else’s published or unpublished material, regardless of the source, and presenting these as one’s own without proper citation or reference to the original source;
- submitting a take-home examination, essay, laboratory report or other assignment written, in whole or in part, by someone else;
- using ideas or direct, verbatim quotations, or paraphrased material, concepts, or ideas without appropriate acknowledgment in any academic assignment;
- using another’s data or research findings;
- failing to acknowledge sources through the use of proper citations when using another’s works and/or failing to use quotation marks;
- handing in “*substantially the same piece of work for academic credit more than once without prior written permission of the course instructor in which the submission occurs.*”

Plagiarism is a serious offence which cannot be resolved directly with the course’s instructor. The Associate Deans of the Faculty conduct a rigorous investigation, including an interview with the student, when an instructor suspects a piece of work has been plagiarized. Penalties are not trivial. They can include a final grade of “F” for the course

GRADING SYSTEM

Letter grades assigned in this course will have the following percentage equivalents:

A+ = 90-100 (12)	B = 73-76 (8)	C - = 60-62 (4)
A = 85-89 (11)	B- = 70-72 (7)	D+ = 57-59 (3)
A- = 80-84 (10)	C+ = 67-69 (6)	D = 53-56 (2)
B+ = 77-79 (9)	C = 63-66 (5)	D - = 50-52 (1)

F	Failure. Assigned 0.0 grade points
ABS	Absent from final examination, equivalent to F
DEF	Official deferral (see “Petitions to Defer”)
FND	Failure with no deferred exam allowed -- assigned only when the student has failed the course on the basis of inadequate term work as specified in the course outline.

Standing in a course is determined by the course instructor subject to the approval of the Faculty Dean.

WITHDRAWAL WITHOUT ACADEMIC PENALTY

The last date to withdraw from **FALL TERM** courses is **DEC. 3, 2012**. The last day to withdraw from **FALL/WINTER (Full Term)** and **WINTER** term courses is **APRIL 10, 2013**.

REQUESTS FOR ACADEMIC ACCOMMODATION

You may need special arrangements to meet your academic obligations during the term because of disability, pregnancy or religious obligations. Please review the course outline promptly and write to me with any requests for academic accommodation during the first two weeks of class, or as soon as possible after the need for accommodation is known to exist. You can visit the Equity Services website to view the policies and to obtain more detailed information on academic accommodation at: carleton.ca/equity/accommodation/

Academic Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

The Paul Menton Centre for Students with Disabilities (PMC) provides services to students with Learning Disabilities (LD), psychiatric/mental health disabilities, Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD), Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD), chronic medical conditions, and impairments in mobility, hearing, and vision. If you have a disability requiring academic accommodations in this course, please contact PMC at 613-520-6608 or pmc@carleton.ca for a formal evaluation. If you are already registered with the PMC, contact your PMC coordinator to send me your **Letter of Accommodation** at the beginning of the term, and no later than two weeks before the first in-class scheduled test or exam requiring accommodation (*if applicable*). After requesting accommodation from PMC, meet with me to ensure accommodation arrangements are made. Please consult the PMC website for the deadline to request accommodations for the formally-scheduled exam (*if applicable*).

PETITIONS TO DEFER

If you miss a final examination and/or fail to submit a **FINAL** assignment by the due date because of circumstances beyond your control, you may apply a deferral of examination/assignment. If you are applying for a deferral due to illness you will be required to see a physician in order to confirm illness and obtain a medical certificate dated no later than one working day after the examination or assignment deadline. This supporting documentation must specify the date of onset of the illness, the degree of incapacitation, and the expected date of recovery.

If you are applying for a deferral for reasons other than personal illness, please [contact](#) the Registrar’s Office directly for information on other forms of documentation that we accept.

Deferrals of assignments must be supported by confirmation of the assignment due date, for example a copy of the course outline specifying the due date and any documented extensions from the course instructor.

Deferral applications for examination or assignments must be submitted within **5 working days** of the original final exam.

ADDRESSES: (Area Code 613)

College of the Humanities 520-2809	300 Paterson
Greek and Roman Studies Office 520-2809	300 Paterson
Religion Office 520-2100	2A39 Paterson
Registrar's Office 520-3500	300 Tory
Student Academic Success Centre 520-7850	302 Tory
Paul Menton Centre 520-6608/TTY 520-3937	501 Uni-Centre
Writing Tutorial Service 520-2600 Ext. 1125	4 th Floor Library
Learning Support Service 520-2600 Ext 1125	4 th Floor Library