“Now the chief cause of success or the reverse in all matters is the form of a state’s constitution; for springing from this, as from a fountain-head, all designs and plans of action not only originate, but reach their consummation.”

- Polybius, *Histories* VI.2.9-10

“[L]ove of fame is the ruling passion of the noblest minds, which would prompt a man to plan and undertake extensive arduous enterprises for the public benefit.”

- Alexander Hamilton, *Federalist*, at 437 (No. 72)

**Course Description:**
The Constitution of the Romans presided over one of the most unexpectedly prosperous empires in history. The purpose of this course is to examine the various aspects of the Romans’ Republic, focusing on its operation from roughly the end of the Second Punic War to the period of the Gracchic Reforms, when Rome was the established Mediterranean power. As we’ll see, the “Republic” of this period was different from what preceded it, and, quite obviously, to what came after. We will focus on the structure and evolution of the primary elements of Rome’s governmental system and the role its leaders play within that system, and what exactly is a “Roman leader.” Like America’s, the Romans’ system was one of apparent checks and balances, but unlike America’s, there was no paper Constitution with established laws. As we’ll see, this made Rome’s government both more flexible and paradoxically, more stable than other ancient systems, but the fact that the world is ever more impossible to predict and that people will lay claim to power in whatever way they can presents an eternal warning for trusting absolutely in the sovereignty of laws and customs. During our exploration, we will also investigate the question of whether an American system that is in part based on the Roman one, despite our avowal of democracy and the Roman rejection of the same, suggests certain analogous bases for the politically ambitious.

**Objectives:**
By the end of the course, you will be expected to:

1. Know the primary ancient historical events of the ancient Roman Republic, especially during the period of 246 to 133 BC;
2. Understand the governmental system of the Romans, especially the role of
magistrates, the senate, the assemblies, and the tribunes;

3. Critically discuss the strengths and weaknesses of the Roman system, with particular focus on the sovereignty of the various constitutional bodies and positions;

4. Discuss in detail and with nuance the causes and effects of the change in the Republic’s governance over time, how monarchy was checked, but how it eventually occurred anyway, and the inevitability of the Principate;

5. Describe how a Roman became a powerful political entity;

6. Engage with ancient political theorists like Polybius and Cicero, as well as modern ones, in discussions about the nature of the Republic; and

7. Relate in what ways the Roman system anticipates modern political problems and speculate on the value of the permanence of “Constitutions.”

Required Textbooks:

Grade Breakdown:
  25% Participation
  20% Midterm
  10% Theme Compositions
  25% Roman Senate Game and Post-Mortem
  20% Final Paper

Course Requirements:
• Pedagogically, the course will be conducted using the Socratic method. This will involve the asking of questions, both for recitation of fact and data, but also for more in-depth thinking and discussion. If a question will not be asked in class (by me or by a fellow student), I will assume you understand it, and be able to answer or speculate on it. I will be keeping records of your participation and will update you on your participation performance every three weeks: a general rubric is posted on Blackboard.

• Laptops and Tablets are a privilege, not a right. You may use a laptop in class, but if the use of one proves distracting, I will send them into exile faster than Clodius cast out Cicero. Phones of any sort are forbidden; turn them off. Should one ring or beep in class, a nota will be placed beside your name and you risk damnatio memoriae.

• Reading Assignments are to be read before the date as listed in the chart below. All readings come from class texts or are posted under Blackboard > Readings. The latter are noted by the abbreviation (bb).
• There will be one **Midterm** for the evening of **Wednesday, March 6th**. The format will be discussed one week or so prior to its date.

• **Senatus Bowdoinensis**: From weeks 9 to 12 (the Kalends of April to the 8th day before the Kalends of May), the class will change from its regular *acta classis* and involve you in the machinations of Roman political power; in sum, you will be acting the part of senators and, given various requirements based on individual roles, will partake in a simulated senatorial process. Your grade will be based on meeting various goals and accomplishments within this atmosphere as well as your *post-mortem*, an ~1000 word essay due by the final day of class (and submitted via **Blackboard**), that examines and revisits how you did, where you were successful, where you weren’t, etc. “Rules” and expectations for this section of the class will be described and distributed in full the week after Spring Break. The goal of this portion of the class is to create a first-person perspective on the pressure, rivalry, and difficulties involved in having a Roman political career, and how the Roman system affects public and national policy. Within the Roman Constitution as we understand it, how does one balance respect for tradition and concern with the public good with the very real pressures to succeed despite countless obstacles? Can (or *should*?) politics be virtuous, as the Romans often paint their Republic?

• **Senate Readings (Lectiones Senatus)**: Throughout the senate portion of the class, we are scheduled to read a solid helping of Livy. As listed below, you are expected to read five books from our text (5 consecutive between books 21 and 30), and for these five books you are to complete a political summary. The format of these summaries, which will focus on political actions of Rome’s senate, magistrates, and assembly, will be the same for each reading. Guidelines will be given for them *during spring break*. The content of Livy will *not* be directly discussed in class, and the five reports are to be submitted via **Blackboard**, in a **single electronic document**, by the last day of our Roman Senate, April 24th. For each book lacking a response in your final submission, you will lose 2% of your final grade for the class.

• **Senate Tweets (Pipuli Senatus)**: You will be required, especially during the Senatorial sessions, to check Twitter for information that will be invaluable to your senatorial success. Such things as locations for the meetings, cancelation due to bad auspices, emergency congregations, or vital issues that arise in the course of day-to-day empire management that must be addressed at the next convened meeting, may all arise, and the source of all *rumores* and *agenda* will be [@BowdoinCLAS214](https://twitter.com/BowdoinCLAS214).  

• **Theme Compositions**: Aside from Livy, there are several original sources that will be read, including Polybius, Cicero, and Plutarch. In total, there are twelve dates when you are required to read one or more of them. Among your requirements is that of writing *three* compositions of between 800 and 1200 words that discuss how a certain aspect of Roman governance is portrayed in that work. You may choose to do these compositions on any three works you wish. If you intend to complete one, you must submit it via **Blackboard** (under the
appropriate submission #) prior to class meeting that day. N.B. You may not do these compositions for the Livy readings. (On those, see Senate Readings above.) Whether you do a composition on a primary source or not, you will be expected to have read them, as they will be discussed in class.

- **Final Paper:** Each of you will be required to write a final paper based on a topic of your choosing, which has to do with Roman politics. A general bibliography will be posted on Blackboard. You may choose any topic, but all topics must be OKed by me before they will be accepted. A topic must be chosen by April 10th, and a draft will be due Friday, May 3rd. I will return the draft to you with comments by the last day of class (Wednesday, May 8th). The final version will be due by 11:59 pm, Saturday May 18th. These may be submitted in either hardcopy or electronic form, and a set of guidelines and formatting requirements will be distributed after spring break.

**Make-Up Work:**
Absolutely no make-up work or extra credit will be assigned or accepted in lieu of missed participation opportunities, assignments, or exams.

**Special Needs:**
Anyone who has a special need that may require some modification of seating, testing, or other class requirements should talk to me as soon as possible. I will be pleased to make the appropriate arrangements in consultation with you. Whatever the modification, you will need to be registered with the Dean of Student Affairs (2nd floor, Moulton Union).

**Academic Misconduct:**
Bowdoin has an Academic Honor Code and Social Code. It is detailed in the Student Handbook which is available on line at (http://www.bowdoin.edu/studentaffairs/student-handbook). It is your responsibility to abide by this Code, and any instances of academic misconduct will be referred to the Dean of Student Affairs.

**Percentage/Grade Equivalents:**
93%+ = A; 90-92 = A-; 87-89 = B+; 83-86 = B; 80-82 = B-; 77-79 = C+; 73-76 = C; 70-72 = C-; 60-69 = D; 59 and below = F.

**Class Schedule, Topics and Readings:**
You are required to plan ahead. All dates listed below are due dates. Please refer to this schedule (also posted on Blackboard) frequently in order to assist in your study plan.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>wk</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>1/21 What does “Rome” mean? Background,</td>
<td>1/23 Defining the Undefinable: The Roman</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sources, Expectations, and Goals</td>
<td>Constitution</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> None</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Bringmann 1-56; Polybius 6 (bb)</td>
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<td>2</td>
<td>1/28</td>
<td>A State of Unending War</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Bringmann 57-73; Harris, “Roman Attitudes Towards War” (bb)</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Lintott chs. 1, 3-5; Plutarch, <em>Coriolanus</em></td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>2/4</td>
<td>Authority without Sovereignty: the Senate</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Lintott chs. 2, 6; Bringmann 73-111</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Lintott chs. 7-8; Beck, “Consular Power and the Roman Constitution” (bb)</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2/11</td>
<td>Executive Privilege: Command on the Front</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>2/18</td>
<td>Fusion of Temple and State</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Lintott 10; Rüpke, “Communicating with the Gods” (bb); Cicero, Selection from <em>De divinatione</em> II (bb)</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Develin, “Factions and Prosopography” (bb); Deniaux, “Patronage” (bb)</td>
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<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Plutarch, <em>Cato the Elder</em>; Bringmann, 112-147; Lintott, “Government and the Governor” (bb)</td>
<td><strong>Readings:</strong> Plutarch, <em>Tiberius Gracchus</em>, <em>Caius Gracchus</em>; Bringmann, 147-167</td>
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<td>Date</td>
<td>Event</td>
<td>Readings</td>
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| 7    | 3/4   | Getting out the Vote(r Fraud): Election Day  
_READings_: Develin, “The Candidates” and “Electoral Politics” (bb); Staveley, “Manipulation of the Vote” (bb); Cicero, _Pro Murena_ selection (bb)  
| 3/6  |       | Attack Ads and Super PACs  
.ReadString: Cicero, Selection from _In Pisonem_ (bb)  
_Midterm Exam: Wednesday 3/6, 7pm to 9pm_  
| 8    | 3/9   | Spring Break: 3/9 to 3/24  
| 8    | 3/25  | Things Fall Apart: Marius and Sulla  
_READings_: Bringmann, 167-204  
| 3/27 |       | The Constitution According to Bowdoin Students  
.ReadString: Lintott Ch. 11; Livy 21-30*  
* You are expected to read Livy 21-30 during the next four Roman Senate weeks; your reports of them must be submitted before class the last day our senate meets  
| 9    | 4/1   | Roman Senate I  
_READings_: Livy 21-30*  
| 4/3  |       | Roman Senate II  
.ReadString: Livy 21-30*  
| 10   | 4/8   | Roman Senate III  
_READings_: Livy 21-30*  
| 4/10 |       | Roman Senate IV  
_FINAL Paper Topic Due_  
.ReadString: Livy 21-30*  
| 11   | 4/15  | Roman Senate V  
_READings_: Livy 21-30*  
| 4/17 |       | Roman Senate VI  
.ReadString: Livy 21-30*  
| 11   | 4/17  |       | Roman Senate VI  
.ReadString: Livy 21-30*  
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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Readings</th>
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<tr>
<td>4/22</td>
<td>Roman Senate VII</td>
<td><em>Readings: Livy 21-30</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/24</td>
<td>Roman Senate VIII</td>
<td><em>Readings: Livy 21-30</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>4/29</td>
<td>Sense and Sensibility: Octavian and Antony</td>
<td>*Readings: Bringmann 262-294; Plutarch, <em>Antony</em></td>
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<tr>
<td>5/6</td>
<td>Conceptions of the Constitution: Cicero</td>
<td>*Readings: Cicero, <em>De legibus</em> 3 (bb); Bringmann, 295-321</td>
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<tr>
<td>5/8</td>
<td>The Founding Patres</td>
<td>*Readings: Lintott Ch. 13; Bederman, “Classical Political Models and the Founders” (bb)</td>
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**Final Paper Due: Saturday, May 18th, at noon**