

## AHIS1080: The Byzantine Empire: From Constantine to Iconoclasm (306-726)

Callaghan

Semester 1 - 2024



THE UNIVERSITY OF  
NEWCASTLE  
AUSTRALIA

*The School of Humanities, Creative Industries and Social Sciences is committed to providing an inclusive environment in which all cultures are accorded respect and all students and staff are expected to act with honesty, fairness, trustworthiness and accountability in dealings with others. The School recognises and respects the unique histories and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, their unbroken relationship with the lands and the waters of Australia over millennia, and the validity of Aboriginal ways of knowing. We are dedicated to reconciliation and to offering opportunities for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples to access and succeed in higher education.*

### OVERVIEW

#### Course Description

Students will study the primary literary and material sources of the Eastern Roman empire, better known as the Byzantine empire. Byzantium was the cultural and historical successor to the Greeks and Romans and adopted and transformed this inheritance in unique ways. We will explore the religious, political and military history of this important but neglected global empire from the rise of the Emperor Constantine to the Iconoclast controversy. We will consider the interactions between church and state, the continuities and changes with the earlier Roman Empire and role of Roman identity in the Christian east, especially in light of the rise of Islam. We will also discuss responses to invasion and plague, gender roles, and education. Students will learn how to analyse primary sources and how to use new technologies in research communication.

#### Academic Progress Requirements

Nil

#### Contact Hours

##### Callaghan Lecture

Face to Face On Campus  
1 hour(s) per week(s) for 12 week(s) starting Week 1

##### Tutorial

Face to Face On Campus  
1 hour(s) per week(s) for 11 week(s)

#### Unit Weighting Workload

10  
Students are required to spend on average 120-140 hours of effort (contact and non-contact) including assessments per 10 unit course.

# COURSE OUTLINE

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# CONTACTS

**Course Coordinator**     **Callaghan**  
Dr Ryan Strickler  
Ryan.Strickler@newcastle.edu.au  
Consultation: Wednesday 10:00-11:00 or by appointment.  
Note: My office is in W229 and access is limited. All consultations will require prior notification.

**Teaching Staff**             Other teaching staff will be advised on the course Canvas site.

**School Office**             **School of Humanities Creative Industries and Social Sciences**  
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# SYLLABUS

**Course Content**             This course will cover the following topics:

- The transformation of the Roman Empire in the Greek East
- Usurpers and struggles for imperial succession
- The impact of Christianity and controversies in politics
- Wars and Invasion
- The rise of courtly culture in Byzantium
- Imperial Women
- Education and Culture
- Religious conflict and the rise of Islam
- Introduction to using ancient or primary sources, including archaeological evidence
- Introduction and information on Digital Humanities and the study of Byzantium

**Course Learning Outcomes**             **On successful completion of this course, students will be able to:**

1. Evaluate the historical development of the Byzantine Empire.
2. Analyse major types of primary historical evidence, from written works to various forms of material culture.
3. Translate historical information on the Byzantine Empire into a digital format.
4. Construct arguments about the history of the Byzantine Empire that evince criticisms succinctly and accurately in written assessments.

**Course Materials**             **Required Text:**

- Kaldellis (2023), *The New Roman Empire: A history of Byzantium*, Oxford University Press.  
This will be the primary textbook for this course and is available for free as an ebook through the library.  
Other readings will be made available online through Canvas in the Course Readings.

# SCHEDULE

Week	Week Begins	Topic	Tutorial	Assessment Due
1	26 Feb	Introduction	No tutorial	No assessments due
2	4 Mar	Byzantium: Rome Reborn	How to do Research	Self Check Quiz: 8 March 11:59 PM
3	11 Mar	The Constantinian Dynasty	Imperial Presentations: How to Make Friends and Influence People	Discussion Forum: First Post: 14 March 11:59 PM Response: 16 March 11:59 PM
4	18 Mar	Julian: The Last "Pagan" Emperor	Julian the Comedian?	Discussion Forum: First Post: 21 March 11:59 PM Response: 23 March 11:59 PM
5	25 Mar	The Decline of Old Rome	Byzantine Object Presentation 1	Presentation (for those who sign up for Week 5)- due in tutorial
6	1 Apr	The Theodosians: Part 1 NOTE: Lecture Will Be Recorded due to public holiday.	Law and Society in Byzantium NOTE: Alternative arrangements will be necessary for 1-2 April tutorials. We will discuss this as a group.	Discussion Forum: First Post: 4 April 11:59 PM Response: 6 April 11:59 PM
7	8 Apr	The Theodosians Part 2	Byzantine Object Presentation 2	Presentations for those who sign up for Week 7
<b>Mid-Semester Recess</b>				
<b>Mid-Semester Recess</b>				
8	29 Apr	The Roaring Lion: Leo I and his Successors	Religion and Society in Byzantium	Discussion Forum: First Post: 2 May 11:59 PM Response: 4 May 11:59 PM  Byzantine Object Report: 3 May 11:59 PM
9	6 May	Justinian the "Great"? Restoration and Over Extension	The Secret History	Discussion Forum: First Post: 9 May 11:59 PM Response: 11 May 11:59 PM
10	13 May	Heraclius: The Emperor Who Lived Too Long	Writing Workshop	Discussion Forum: One post due: 16 May. No response necessary.  Digital Map: 17 May 11:59 PM
11	20 May	Islamic Expansion	Apocalypticism and other responses to Early Islam	Discussion Forum: First Post: 16 May 11:59 PM Response: 18 May 11:59 PM
12	27 May	The Great Debate: The Iconoclast Controversy	Byzantine Empresses	Discussion Forum: First Post: 30 May 11:59 PM Response: 1 June 11:59 PM
13	3 Jun	No Lecture	No tutorial	Final Essay 7 June 11:59 PM

# ASSESSMENTS

This course has 4 assessments. Each assessment is described in more detail in the sections below.

	Assessment Name	Due Date	Involvement	Weighting	Learning Outcomes
1	Tutorial/ Laboratory Exercises	Self Check Quiz: 8 March 11:59 PM Forum Posts: Initial Post: Thursdays at 11:59 PM 2 Student Responses: Saturdays at 11:59 PM See Course Schedule for specific due dates.	Individual	10%	1, 2, 4
2	Write a report on a Byzantine Artefact with a presentation	Presentations: Week 5 and 7 in tutorial sessions Report: Friday 3 May 11:59 PM	Individual	30%	1, 2, 4
3	Create an argumentative essay using primary and secondary evidence	Friday 7 June 11:59 PM	Individual	40%	1, 2, 4
4	Creation of a digital map	Friday 17 May 11:59 PM	Individual	20%	1, 2, 3, 4

**Late Submissions** The mark for an assessment item submitted after the designated time on the due date, without an approved extension of time, will be reduced by 10% of the possible maximum mark for that assessment item for each day or part day that the assessment item is late. Note: this applies equally to week and weekend days.

## Assessment 1 - Tutorial/ Laboratory Exercises

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Tutorial / Laboratory Exercises
<b>Purpose</b>	Facilitate engagement with course material and constructive student interaction.
<b>Description</b>	Students must post responses to tutorial discussion after each tutorial session. These responses are to be based on at least two of the posted tutorial questions, given in each week's module. Students may opt instead, if they prefer, to post an observation that came up during in class discussion.
<b>Weighting</b>	10%
<b>Length</b>	ca. 100 words for forum posts, 50 for responses.
<b>Due Date</b>	Self Check Quiz: 8 March 11:59 PM Forum Posts: Initial Post: Thursdays at 11:59 PM 2 Student Responses: Saturdays at 11:59 PM See Course Schedule for specific due dates.
<b>Submission Method</b>	Canvas
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	Rubric provided on Canvas
<b>Return Method</b>	Online
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	Online - Canvas.

## Assessment 2 - Write a report on a Byzantine Artefact with a presentation

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Report
<b>Purpose</b>	This task tests research skills, problem solving, critical analysis and oral communication
<b>Description</b>	Students will research a Byzantine object. Some possible examples may include a statue, mosaic, fresco, building, coin, or other material object of historical significance. Students will provide a full report based on the published rubric. In addition to a written report, students will

provide a 3 minute presentation discussing the historical significance of the object for the study of Byzantine history. Presentations will take place in weeks 5 and 7, and reports will be due in week 8.

Note: Presentations will be worth 10%, reports will be worth 20% for a total of 30% of the course mark.

<b>Weighting</b>	30%
<b>Length</b>	3 minute presentation, 1000 word report
<b>Due Date</b>	Presentations: Week 6 and 7 in tutorial sessions Report: Friday 3 May 11:59 PM
<b>Submission Method</b>	In Class Online Presentations will take place in class. Reports will be submitted via TurnItIn
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	Presentation and Paper rubrics will be posted on Canvas
<b>Return Method</b>	Online - Canvas
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	Online - Canvas.

### Assessment 3 - Create an argumentative essay using primary and secondary evidence

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Essay
<b>Purpose</b>	This task examines organisational and structural writing skills, judgement, ideas and deep learning.
<b>Description</b>	Create an argumentative research essay in response to a choice of essay prompts using primary and secondary evidence. This task examines organisational and structural writing skills, judgement, ideas and deep learning. Students must employ the "How to Write an Essay" format as illustrated in class and in the handout available in the course resources module.
<b>Weighting</b>	40%
<b>Length</b>	1500 words (excludes bibliography and footnotes)
<b>Due Date</b>	Friday 7 June 11:59 PM
<b>Submission Method</b>	Online
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	Rubric available on Canvas
<b>Return Method</b>	Online – Canvas
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	Online - Canvas

### Assessment 4 - Creation of a digital map

<b>Assessment Type</b>	Online Learning Activity
<b>Purpose</b>	Demonstrate geographical and visual understanding of the Byzantine Empire and ability to communicate information to a public audience.
<b>Description</b>	Students will choose from a list of topics, including locations (ex. Urban Constantinople), journeys, and battle campaigns and create an interactive map. Maps will include pin pointing locations of significance and providing brief informative descriptions of the locations and events associated with the pin points. Descriptions must be based on scholarly research and geared toward a public audience. A bibliography must be submitted to accompany the map.
<b>Weighting</b>	20%
<b>Length</b>	Min 5 map points, 100 words per description
<b>Due Date</b>	Friday 17 May 11:59 PM
<b>Submission Method</b>	Google MyMaps link posted on Canvas Forums,
<b>Assessment Criteria</b>	Rubric available on Canvas
<b>Return Method</b>	Online – Canvas
<b>Feedback Provided</b>	Online - . Canvas

# ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

## Grading Scheme

This course is graded as follows:

Range of Marks	Grade	Description
85-100	High Distinction (HD)	Outstanding standard indicating comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an outstanding level of academic achievement; mastery of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
75-84	Distinction (D)	Excellent standard indicating a very high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a very high level of academic ability; sound development of skills*; and achievement of all assessment objectives.
65-74	Credit (C)	Good standard indicating a high level of knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of a high level of academic achievement; reasonable development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
50-64	Pass (P)	Satisfactory standard indicating an adequate knowledge and understanding of the relevant materials; demonstration of an adequate level of academic achievement; satisfactory development of skills*; and achievement of all learning outcomes.
0-49	Fail (FF)	Failure to satisfactorily achieve learning outcomes. If all compulsory course components are not completed the mark will be zero. A fail grade may also be awarded following disciplinary action.

## Attendance

\*Skills are those identified for the purposes of assessment task(s).

Attendance/participation will be recorded in the following components:

- Tutorial (Method of recording: Check in on MyUni app. Sign in sheets will also be distributed)

As a 1000 level class students must attend 80% of tutorial sessions.

## Communication Methods

Communication methods used in this course include:

- Canvas Course Site: Students will receive communications via the posting of content or announcements on the Canvas course site.
- Email: Students will receive communications via their student email account.

Students must check their university email accounts on a regular basis (at least twice a week). Important information, including variations of schedules and course updates will be posted via canvas and announcements will be sent via email.

individual communications to students will also be sent via email. If I need to reach you I will contact you via email, so it is important that you check your email frequently.

Non urgent questions about the course can be communicated on the Question Forum or by email. Urgent questions should be sent to the lecturer via email as this will be received quickly.

The lecturer will endeavour to respond to all emails within 48 hours on business days.

## Course Evaluation

Each year feedback is sought from students and other stakeholders about the courses offered in the University for the purposes of identifying areas of excellence and potential improvement.

Since this is the first offering of this course direct feedback through email is encouraged. A midsemester informal poll will be conducted to gauge the progress of the course and make potential corrections in place.

As a result of student feedback, the following changes have been made to this offering of the course:

- This is the first offering of this course, however feedback from other first year courses

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have been applied to improve the course experience. This includes better spacing of assessments and elimination of a marked glossary of terms.

**Oral Interviews (Vivas)** As part of the evaluation process of any assessment item in this course an oral examination (viva) may be conducted. The purpose of the oral examination is to verify the authorship of the material submitted in response to the assessment task. The oral examination will be conducted in accordance with the principles set out in the [Oral Examination \(viva\) Procedure](#). In cases where the oral examination reveals the assessment item may not be the student's own work the case will be dealt with under the [Student Conduct Rule](#).

**Academic Misconduct** All students are required to meet the academic integrity standards of the University. These standards reinforce the importance of integrity and honesty in an academic environment. Academic Integrity policies apply to all students of the University in all modes of study and in all locations. For the Student Academic Integrity Policy, refer to <https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=35>.

**Adverse Circumstances** The University acknowledges the right of students to seek consideration for the impact of allowable adverse circumstances that may affect their performance in assessment item(s). Applications for special consideration due to adverse circumstances will be made using the online Adverse Circumstances system where:

1. the assessment item is a major assessment item; or
2. the assessment item is a minor assessment item and the Course Co-ordinator has specified in the Course Outline that students may apply the online Adverse Circumstances system;
3. you are requesting a change of placement; or
4. the course has a compulsory attendance requirement.

Before applying you must refer to the Adverse Circumstance Affecting Assessment Items Procedure available at:  
<https://policies.newcastle.edu.au/document/view-current.php?id=236>

**Important Policy Information** The Help button in the Canvas Navigation menu contains helpful information for using the Learning Management System. Students should familiarise themselves with the policies and procedures at <https://www.newcastle.edu.au/current-students/respect-at-uni/policies-and-procedures> that support a safe and respectful environment at the University.

*This course outline was approved by the Head of School. No alteration of this course outline is permitted without Head of School approval. If a change is approved, students will be notified and an amended course outline will be provided in the same manner as the original.*

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