

UMBC UGC New Course Request: ARCH 325: Life and Death in Pompeii

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Proposed Effective Date: Fall 2016

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COURSE INFORMATION:

Course Number(s)	325
Formal Title	Life and Death in Pompeii
Transcript Title (≤30c)	
Recommended Course Preparation	ARCH 201 or ANCS 202
Prerequisite NOTE: Unless otherwise indicated, a prerequisite is assumed to be passed with a "D" or better.	
Credits	3
Repeatable?	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No
Max. Total Credits	3 This should be equal to the number of credits for courses that cannot be repeated for credit. For courses that may be repeated for credit, enter the maximum total number of credits a student can receive from this course. E.g., enter 6 credits for a 3 credit course that may be taken a second time for credit, but not for a third time. Please note that this does NOT refer to how many times a class may be retaken for a higher grade.
Grading Method(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Reg (A-F) <input type="checkbox"/> Audit <input type="checkbox"/> Pass-Fail

PROPOSED CATALOG DESCRIPTION (no longer than 75 words):

The town of Pompeii, buried by the eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, has yielded enormous insight into Roman social life. This course will investigate the people who lived and died at Pompeii through the houses, streets, tombs, skeletons, food, and objects they left behind. It will also interrogate *how* we come by this knowledge, examining the long history of excavation and tourism that makes Pompeii a window onto our relationship with the past.

RATIONALE FOR NEW COURSE:

- a) This course has run successfully as a special topics course under the designation ARCH 350. Pompeii is a topic of strong general interest, but also one of the most—perhaps *the* most—important sites for material evidence about the Roman world. The class gives non-majors a paradigmatic glimpse of Roman material culture, while it offers majors a chance to delve deeply into a single archaeological site and to evaluate excavation methodologies across historical time periods. Both majors specializing in language or history and those specializing in archaeology gain a deeper sense of exactly *how* knowledge about Roman material culture (and the past more broadly) takes shape.
- b) This course will be taught once every two semesters.
- c) ARCH 325 expands the upper-level course offerings for Ancient Studies majors and minors. In particular, it expands the archaeology offerings, offering students a specialized case study and an in-depth examination of methodologies.
- d) This course will serve Ancient Studies majors and minors. This course will also be submitted for inclusion in the GEP offering upper-level A/H and C credit.
- e) This course is offered at the 300-level because it assumes students will be able to process and discuss a substantial amount of reading, as well as complete a final project that requires significant creative engagement and 10 pages of writing.

f) Students will be most successful in the course with some prior background in Roman civilization, whether history or archaeology. Students without such background may still succeed, but will tend to need to devote more extra work and time.

g) Much of the course will center on discussion, and students must be fully engaged to participate. Auditors or students taking the course p/f would have less incentive to complete the readings and contribute in discussion. Hence the course is offered for a letter grade only.

h) N/A

ATTACH COURSE OUTLINE (mandatory):

See separate file for Course Outline for ARCH 350, the Topics Course on Pompeii offered in F 2015, which we are applying to add to the curriculum as ARCH 325.

Life and Death in Pompeii

ARCH 350

Dr. Melissa Bailey (mabailey@umbc.edu)

Mon-Wed 4-5:15

Performing Arts & Humanities 441

Office Hours: MWF 2-3:30 and by appointment (PAHB 446)

Description

The Roman town of Pompeii, buried by the volcanic eruption of Mount Vesuvius in 79 CE, is extraordinarily well preserved. It provides a wealth of information about ancient Roman social life and urban organization; in this one town, we gain enormous insight into political life, social relations, commerce, religion, housing, art, and death. Its long and tangled history of excavation, publication, and tourism also makes Pompeii an incredible window onto our varied relationship to the past: how we use different kinds of historical and archaeological evidence to reconstruct stories, how we have tried to draw moral lessons or contrasts and comparisons with ourselves. From Pompeii's importance as a stopping point on the Grand Tour to the creation of plaster casts of dead bodies, from "secret cabinets" of material seen as sexually explicit to the collapsing buildings and financial problems of the present day, Pompeii has always served as a twisted mirror to modern preoccupations. We will spend this semester interrogating this town that is so deceptively familiar and yet so distant.

Objectives

To understand how an archaeological excavation is conducted and to pose your own archaeological questions about Pompeii; to gain a thorough knowledge of Pompeii's history of excavation, layout, monuments; to evaluate the changing nature of knowledge about the past; to creatively and yet seriously engage with the details of everyday life in the past; to synthesize, discuss, debate, and lucidly write about social and historical themes.

Grading

The class will have a **midterm** and a **final**. These will be built primarily around short answer and essay questions, along with some identification (maps of the town, plan of the forum, wall paintings, etc.). More details will be given a few weeks in advance of each exam. The final exam will not be cumulative (it will concentrate on the second half of class).

Two **writing assignments** will also be given. The **first (due 11/2)** will be a short essay that accomplishes two things. 1) Go to http://www.fastionline.org/data_view.php and look at the projects currently being done in Pompeii. Find one that seems especially interesting or noteworthy to you, briefly describe it, and make an argument for why you believe it is significant (articulate a reason you find it interesting—don't just restate what the project leaders themselves say). Make sure to look at as many projects as you can; don't just choose one from early in the list. 2) Then, drawing on what you learn from this website and what you've learned about the state of research at Pompeii from class, propose your own archaeological project at Pompeii. Discuss where you would excavate, the logistics involved, and what your rationale is for the necessity of this research. This essay should be 1500-1600

words (5 full pages double spaced, Times New Roman font). 5 pages is not terribly long, and the emphasis in grading will be on the clarity and logic of both your evaluation of ongoing work and your own project proposal.

For the **second writing assignment (due on the last day of class)**, you will be assigned an identity in Pompeii (occupation, social status) and will need to complete a piece of writing that 1) describes your life in detail—where you live and how (or if) the space is decorated, what you wear, what you eat, if you can read, what you do for work and leisure, what health problems (if any) you have, etc. and 2) what you do when the eruption comes (where in the city you go and what you do on your last day, what belongings you take with you or, if you don't or can't leave, why you stay and what you're holding in your last moments). Be creative, but also ground the assignment in actual sources. For your information on housing, food, objects, the progress of the eruption, and so on, cite class readings (by author, year, and page number) and, if you need them, outside sources (not websites, but books or peerreviewed articles). The final write-up should be about 3400-3800 words (at least 9 full, but no longer than 10 pages, double spaced, 12 pt. Times New Roman font, 1-inch margins), and should include a visual component: a plan of your residence, a map of your movements around the city, etc. You will also present your project (about 10 minutes) in class at the end of the course, describing your life and answering questions as your Pompeian self. You may simply answer questions accurately, or you may act the part through speech, mannerisms, costume, etc. You won't be counted off for doing a straightforward presentation (that is, you'll get an A if the research is high-quality), but extra creativity might help your overall grade on the assignment if help is needed.

Finally, **attendance and participation** are important parts of the class. 15% can easily make the difference in a letter grade. It's in your interests to prepare the reading so you won't be overwhelmed for the exam (and your final project!), but participation is also a grade. **Read the reading beforehand** and be ready to answer questions or offer opinions. I will call on you if you don't like to talk—I'm an introvert and I sympathize, but I am merciless nevertheless. Frequently there will be in-class written activities (usually in groups). I will collect these but will grade them on a completion basis and won't usually hand them back to you. If short assignments are given class-to-class, these will also be completion grades and will count towards participation.

You will be allowed **1 no-questions-asked absence**. Any more absences for any reason will count against you, unless you have a valid medical issue with a doctor's note. Notice that I have kindly given you the Wednesday before Thanksgiving off. So coming to all the other classes is doubly important!

Attendance and Participation 15%

Midterm 20%

Writing Assignment 1 15%

Presentation 10%

Writing Assignment 2 20%

Final 20%

Class Readings

Required (in bookstore):

Berry, J. 2007/2013. *The Complete Pompeii*. Thames and Hudson.

Beard, M. 2010. *The Fires of Vesuvius*. Belknap Press.

Most other readings will derive from Paul Zanker's *Pompeii: Public and Private Life* (2000, Harvard University Press), *Pompeii: A Sourcebook* (Cooley and Cooley, 2004, Routledge), and the edited volume *The World of Pompeii* (Dobbins and Foss, 2007, Routledge). These (and other readings with an asterisk *) will be scanned and posted under "Documents" on Blackboard.

Week 1: Introduction

8/26 Intro to Pompeii

(Berry, p. 6-15)

Week 2: The Eruption...and the story of Pompeii

8/31 The Eruption

(Berry, p. 16-33)

9/2 Earliest Pompeii

(Berry, p. 64-83

Beard, p. 26-37

*Zanker, *Pompeii: Public and Private Life*, p. 27-60)

Week 3: Colonial Pompeii

9/7 NO CLASS: LABOR DAY

9/9 Colonial Pompeii

(Berry, p. 84-85

Beard, 37-43

*Zanker 61-77)

Week 4: Pompeii in the Age of Augustus and After

9/14 Augustan Pompeii

(Beard, 43-52

*Zanker 78-124)

9/16 Pompeii in the first century CE

(Berry, Ch. 9

*Zanker, 124-133)

Week 5: The Urban Fabric: Streets, Water, Space

9/21 Streets

(Beard, Ch. 2, "Street Life"

*Ling, "A Stranger in Town: Finding the Way in an Ancient City"

*Pohler, "Directionality of Pompeii's Urban Streets")

9/23 Water and Construction

(*World of Pompeii, ch. 16: "The Water System," pp. 257-266

*World of Pompeii, ch. 8: "Building Materials," pp. 98-116)

Week 6: Houses of the Rich

9/28 "The Roman House" and the *paterfamilias*

(Berry, Ch. 6, 154-167, 178-185

*Wallace-Hadrill, Ch. 3)

9/30 Decorating your rich house

(Berry, 168-177

Beard, Ch. 4, "Painting and Decorating," p. 120-151)

Week 7: Politics....and the margins?

10/5 Politics

(Berry, p. 120-133

Beard Ch. 6, "Who Ran the City?" pp. 188-215

*Sourcebook, Ch. 6, "Politics and Public Life," pp. 111-136)

10/7 Women and Slaves

(Berry, p. 86-91, 102-105, 112-119

*World, ch. 34: "Pompeian Women," pp. 526-537

*World, ch. 35: "The Lives of Slaves," pp. 538-549)

Week 8: Roman Hairdressing (yes, really)

10/12 MIDTERM

10/14 Attend Ancient Studies Week Keynote Address:

"In Comis Veritas: The Principles of Ancient Roman Hairdressing"

Library and Gallery, Albin O. Kuhn

4:00-5:00 pm

ATTENDANCE REQUIRED

Week 9: Interlude: Excavation and Discovery of Pompeii

10/19 How do you conduct an archaeological excavation?

*Renfrew, 2010, *Archaeology Essentials*, Ch. 3, p. 60-102

10/21 Early excavation at Pompeii

(Berry, p. 34-51

*Sourcebook, ch. 9, "Excavation Reports," p. 192-206)

Week 10: Excavation to the Present Day

10/26 Later Excavation

(Berry, p. 52-63

*Sourcebook, ch. 9, "Excavation Reports," p. 206-217)

10/28 Return to Domestic Space: problems of the evidence

(Beard, p. 88-103

*World, Ch. 17, "Domestic Spaces and Activities," p. 269-278)

Week 11: Pleasures of the Body

11/2 FIRST WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE

Erotic Pompeii

(Berry, 106-111

Beard, 216-240)

11/4 Bathing

(Berry, p. 150-153

Beard, p. 241-250

*World, Ch. 15, "The City Baths of Pompeii and Herculaneum," 224-256)

Week 12: Economy and Death

11/9 Economy

(Berry, p. 210-229

Beard Ch. 5, "Earning a Living," p. 152-187

*World, Ch. 29, "Shops and Industries," p. 457-473)

11/11 Tombs

(Berry, 92-101

*World, Ch. 37, "The Tombs at Pompeii," pp. 585-606

*Sourcebook, Ch. 7, "Tombs," pp. 137-156

*Geller, "Remnants of Ritual")

Week 13: Public Entertainment

11/16 Taverns and Renting

(Berry, 230-233

Beard, 105-115 (renting) 251-259 (games)

*Toner, *Leisure and Ancient Rome*, Ch. 7, "Goodbye to Gravititas," p. 65-88)

11/18 The Amphitheater

(Berry, 134-149

Beard, 259-275

*Sourcebook, Ch. 4, "Leisure," p. 44-82)

Week 14: Religion

11/23 Religion

(Berry, Ch. 7, "Gods, Temples and Cults," 186-209

Beard. Ch. 9, 276-308

*Sourcebook, ch. 5, "Religion," pp. 83-110)

11/25 NO CLASS

Week 15: Presentations

11/30 Skeletons

*Lazer, *Resurrecting Pompeii*, "General Health and Lifestyle Indicators," p. 167-220

12/2 Presentations

Week 16: Presentations

12/7 Presentations

SECOND WRITING ASSIGNMENT DUE

FINAL EXAM: Monday, Dec. 14, 3:30-5:30 pm