



## *Ancient History/Literature*

Yearlong (2020-2021)



### **ELIGIBLE STUDENTS:**

**Grades: 6-8th.**

**Prerequisites:** reads at or above a seventh-grade level, composes complete sentences and writes a focused paragraph, possesses basic computer skills, capable of clearly narrating or explaining a new passage he has just read, desires to walk the roads of the past and meet the men and women of our Western heritage.

**Class Dates:** September 8–May 28

**Class Times:** Monday & Wednesdays: (History) 2pm Eastern Time/ (Lit) 3:30pm Eastern Time

**Instructor:** Benjamin Whittington

**E-mail:** BTWhittington@icloud.com

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### **SCHEDULE**

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### **CLASS SESSIONS DATES:**

Classes will take place on Mondays & Wednesdays: 2:00 p.m. ET/3:30pm ET. for 32 weeks and 63 classes. Please see <https://scholeacademy.com/academic-calendar/> for specific dates and school holidays.

## **COURSE MAP:**

### **QUARTER 1: Ancient Greece**

1. Trojan War
2. Ancient Greece
3. Odysseus
4. Alexander the Great
5. Plato
6. Persia/Greece War
7. Ancient Israel

### **QUARTER 2: Ancient Rome I**

1. Founding of Rome
2. Roman Early Monarchy
3. Roman Republic

4. Julius Caesar

### **QUARTER 3: Ancient Rome II**

1. Roman Empire
2. First Century Christianity
3. Virgil

### **QUARTER 4 - Early Christianity**

1. Roman Empire and Christianity
2. Early Christianity
3. Heresies
4. Nicene Creed/Trinitarian Theology
5. Constantine

## **OFFICE HOURS:**

Please email/text to schedule a time to meet. I am generally open the following times:

Tuesday/Thursday: 9-5pm (Eastern)

I can make time outside of these hours if you require. I do work some other jobs during these hours so just give me at least a day notice that you wish to meet.

## COURSE TEXTS:

### History Books: (Price Estimate 30-50\$)

- 1) Mills, Dorothy. *The Book of the Ancient Romans*. Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2007. 1597313548
- 2) Mills, Dorothy. *The Book of the Ancient Greeks*. Brooklyn, NY: Angelico Press, 2007. 1597313564
- 3) Wright, N.T., and Michael Bird. *The New Testament in Its World: An Introduction to the History, Literature, and Theology of the First Christians*. Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2019. 0310499305 **(Optional, I can provide PDF's of sections used)**
- 4) Holland, Tom. *Rubicon*. New York: Anchor, 2005. 1400078970 **(Optional, I can provide PDF's of sections used)**
- 5) Bible (Any Translation)

### Literature Books: (Price Estimate: 40\$)

I would like the students to purchase the following books below. I try to use the [Oxford World Classic Editions](#) of books if possible because of their readability, scholarship, and availability online. Aside from the Hobbit (which you can have any edition of), I would highly prefer you purchase the editions below so we can all have the same access to introductions, notes, etc

1. Plato and David Gallup (Translator). *The Defense of Socrates, Euthyphro, Crito*. New York: Oxford World Classics, 2008. 0199540500
2. Homer and Anthony Verity (Translator), *The Odyssey*. New York: Oxford World Classics, 2017/2018. Paperback: 9780198736479 Hardback: 9780199669103  
-This book is available in both hardback and paperback. The picture below is the hardback. You may purchase either. The hardback is a nicer shelf book, but the paperback is more affordable. They contain the same material.
3. Virgil and Frederick Ahl. *The Aeneid*. New York: Oxford World Classic, 2008. 9780199231959
4. Lewis, C.S. *Til We Have Faces*. New York: HarperOne, 2017. 0062565419



## **COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

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This course introduces middle-school students to some of the classical texts or “Great Books” of the ancient Greek and Roman periods. Students will read and discuss the classic books from three dynamic eras in early human history: classical-era Athens, the Roman Republic/Empire, and early Christian writers. While studying these classics, students will explore the ideas, events, and cast of characters that molded the social, political, religious, scientific, economic, and technological history of Athens, Rome, and early Christians. These two classes are paired together, taught by the same teacher, and scheduled back-to-back with that course in a “block.” Students who take both courses receive a discount. Either course may also be taken as a standalone course.

### **History:**

While this course primarily features historical study, it will also incorporate some study from ancient literature, helping students to see and enjoy the integration of both history and literature. As a middle-school course, this class introduces students to ancient history by means of a deep study of a few seminal and primary works. Students will also read a survey text to gain a clear contextual understanding of the ancient period. The course is therefore a blend of “surveying the landscape” (considering the whole) and deep dives into great books from ancient history.

Students are asked to consider and engage carefully crafted questions as their window into “the Great Conversation.” Occasionally, the teacher will present historical context through brief lectures, but all other classes are seminar-style discussions on the classical texts. Students are assessed for their curiosity, participation, and diligence during discussions, as well as by means of short response papers, essays, and occasional quizzes.

### **Literature:**

While this course primarily features literary study, it will also incorporate some study from ancient history, helping students to see and enjoy the integration of these two genres of history and literature. As a middle-school course, this class aims to introduce students to ancient literature by means of a deep study of a few seminal and primary works, while also providing students with the general historical context that will enable a better understanding of the literature and the ancient period.

## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS: EXECUTIVE FUNCTION SKILLS**

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Students are expected to have proficient reading and writing skills as well as the interest and capacity for engaging in discussion about history and literature. Students suited for this course will also be cultivating the following scholarship skills:

- Actively and independently engage in note-taking

- I expect student will need to grow in this skill as note-taking is not a very developed skill among rising college students today, but students should be generally aware of this skill and willing to flex this muscle.
- Apply teacher critiques
- Adhere to deadlines
- Be responsible for class and project preparedness
- Take initiative to ask questions for understanding and comprehension
- This is very important for discussions and classical learning. It can be daunting for students who are less outgoing. Regardless of where a students natural abilities are in this area, the student needs to have a willingness to develop this skill.

### **How much time will students spend on homework?**

I aim to give around 2 hours of homework every week for each class (so that would be 4 hours of homework for both history/literature). Most of this will be reading, annotating, short assignments, etc.

### **How is faith integrated with these courses?**

These seminar-style discussions unfold organically. One could approach the texts with a focus on defensive critiques of classical authors. By contrast, we seek to read charitably. We treat classic authors as if they were friends, gleaning every available truth while also examining them from a robustly Christian perspective.

At Scholé Academy, we have carefully considered how we should engage our contemporary culture as those who believe that Christ is the Truth (John 14:6), and that all truth has its source in him. We think it is important to provide our upper school students (in grades 7-12) with tools and opportunities for critically examining various cultural trends, issues and mores through the lens of orthodox, Christian beliefs. Being confident in the truth revealed to us in creation, the Scriptures, and the tradition of the church, we are not afraid to follow the truth and its implications nor to address error and falsehood. ... Read more about our [Faith & Culture](#).

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## **STUDENT EXPECTATIONS IN ACTION**

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Students are expected to read the said materials.

## STUDENT EVALUATION: GRADING

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While pursuing the *Medieval/Renaissance/Reformation History* through Scholé Academy will be “restful”, we also recognize the need to provide grades for students who will be using this course as part of their prepared college transcript. It’s a delicate balance to achieve both restful learning and excellent academic performance. Earning a specific grade should not overshadow achievement goals for mastery of this discipline. I use the point system which is what most colleges use. Here are the point values:

**A= 900-1000 Points**

**B= 800-899 Points**

**C= 700-799**

**F= 699 or lower**

Additionally: I can reward the students with the titles:

**Summa Cum Laude (970 or higher)**

**Magna Cum Laude (900-960)**

**Cum Laude (800-890)**

**Satis (700-799)**

Ideally, every average student working diligently should do praiseworthy work (*cum laude*). Those who excel beyond this expectation will be the *magna cum laude* students. Students who do adequate but not praiseworthy work be designated *satis*. *Non satis* means lacking sufficiency or adequacy.

Inasmuch as you might be fully on board with this grading method in theory, there will undoubtedly be the need to complete a college transcript with either a numeric or traditional letter grade. Traditional percentage grades will be provided and will be readily accessed on the Schoology page. Additionally, I will provide a transcript of that grade to the requesting parent at the end of the year.

## STUDENT EVALUATION: MASTERY PORTRAIT

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Mastery portrait: Students who are prepared to take this class are typically early to late teens, adolescents approaching young-adulthood. This developmental stage is an interesting one, brimming with lots of new characteristics. Students tend to be transition from a “logic” stage to a “rhetoric” stage during this time period, whereas logic students can identify, categorize, and provide information, rhetoric students can take the information and critically invent it in new ways. Logic students tend to be able to tell you character X did Y in Chapter 1, Rhetoric students can answer (on their own) the significant “why” questions associated with character X. In this regard,

I will continually push students toward Rhetoric level question while recognizing that they are not fully developed in those skills.

- At the completion of this course *cum laude* students will be able to name the major people involved in the time period studied, as well as be able to explain their significance and major deeds. Apart from people, *cum laude* students should be able to discuss the major themes of the period and large topics that are discussed and read about in class.
- Additionally, students should be able to consistently improve in their reading ability (comprehension, speed, annotation skills, etc), note-taking ability, and critical thinking ability (especially in a verbal communal setting)
- Students will be guided in truth, goodness, and beauty throughout the course. It is expected that students will be able to see the various topic both in their own light, and in the greater context of Christianity.

### **STUDENT EVALUATION: ASSIGNMENTS, TYPES & WEIGHTS**

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Professor Whittington will communicate with students regarding assignment feedback and grading through the free online grading system, Schoology. The teacher will provide students with more detailed information and access to the Medieval History course page.

Student's grades will be comprised of:

- 1. Exams: 300 points**
- 2. Class Participation: 350 points**
  1. This includes consistent reading quizzes, reading logs, and discussion grades. This is not a free grade.
- 3. Homework & Response Papers: 150 points**
  1. Not including reading quizzes/reading logs
- 4. Final Paper (including drafts): 200 points**

### **STUDENT EVALUATION: ACADEMIC DISHONESTY**

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Students will often take assessment tests and/or quizzes privately at home. Students are on their honor to abide by [Scholé Academy's Learning Philosophy](#) which assumes the personal cultivation of Student-Virtues described in the Student-Parent Handbook.

Additionally, plagiarism is a serious and punishable offense. Proper citation of all sources is essential to the academic endeavor. Remember to cite any source if the information is not common knowledge or is an opinion obtained through any source. A plagiarized assignment will result in a failing grade. Students should consult their chosen style manual (see Student Expectations above) for specific direction on obtaining, quoting and paraphrasing sources.

## THE VIRTUAL CLASSROOM:

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We will be using the free online “virtual classroom” software provided by Zoom, one of the leading companies that provides such software. The virtual classroom will provide students with interactive audio, text chat and an interactive whiteboard in which texts, diagrams, video and other media can be displayed and analyzed. We will provide students with a link (via email) that will enable students to join the virtual classroom.

Specific information regarding the technology used by Scholé Academy (including required technology) can be found by visiting the [Technology in the Classroom](#) section of the Student Parent Handbook.

Students will submit documents by scanning and uploading them to their personal computer, then attaching those files as .pdfs to an email. They will submit their work to the Schoology assignment page (access granted after enrollment is secured).

## ABOUT THE INSTRUCTOR:

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**Ben Whittington** received his B.S. in Religion and a M.A. in Philosophy from Liberty University, and is currently finishing his Ph.D. in Philosophy at the University of Birmingham (U.K.). While at LU, he served as the Coordinator for the Center for Apologetics under Joshua Chatraw. During that time, he published his first work as a contributing author in Sean McDowell’s “New Evidence That Demands a Verdict” (2017). In addition to spending the past two years as a Latin/Omnibus Teacher at an ACCS school, he has spent the past several years as an Adjunct Professor teaching Philosophy courses (residentially and online) at the College of DuPage, Ivy Tech Community College, and Volunteer State Community College.

Ben and his wife Emily reside in the Nashville area, and are active in the Church of the City. He has two little girls: Hadassah (3) and Eila (1). They love TV shows such as The Office and Friends, but their real TV love is Survivor. Ben’s favorite books are Lord of the Rings and Lewis’s Space Trilogy.