

CX251-30 The Hellenistic World 323 - 31BC

23/24

Department

Classics & Ancient History

Level

Undergraduate Level 2

Module leader

Clare Rowan

Credit value

30

Module duration

21 weeks

Assessment

50% coursework, 50% exam

Study location

University of Warwick main campus, Coventry

Description

Introductory description

This module covers aspects of the history and archaeology of the eastern Mediterranean and the Middle East between the reign of Alexander the Great and the death of Cleopatra VII (323-30 BC). Throughout this module we will explore political histories, power structures, cultural developments, economics and shifting ideologies associated with the major Hellenistic kingdoms, ending with the Roman conquest of the eastern Mediterranean region.

[Module web page](#)

Module aims

The dramatic reign of Alexander the Great (336-323) transformed the Greek world, which had now expanded to stretch from Afghanistan to Egypt and Italy. The empire of Alexander rapidly fragmented into four major kingdoms, which competed at a religious and cultural level as well as in the more obvious military conflicts. This module investigates the development of these Successor States, paying attention to artistic, literary and intellectual developments as well as to the economic and political organisation of the different units, and the gradual encroachment of the barbarian Roman conquerors from the west. Students are encouraged to develop their skills in

analysing and interpreting ancient evidence.

Outline syllabus

This is an indicative module outline only to give an indication of the sort of topics that may be covered. Actual sessions held may differ.

Autumn Term (indicative syllabus)

Week 1 Introduction, sources, and context/Storytelling

Week 2 Alexander

Week 3 After Alexander: Settlements and Kingdoms

Week 4 Ptolemaic Egypt

Week 5 Seleucid Asia

Week 6 Reading Week

Week 7 Seminar 1 – Digital Storytelling

Week 8 Antigonid Greece

Week 9 Seminar 2 – Digital Storytelling

Week 10 Attalid Pergamon

Spring Term

Week 1 The Romans and the Twilight of the Hellenistic World

Week 2 Hellenistic Rulers and Kingship

Week 3 Seminar 3 – Hellenistic Coinage

Week 4 Hellenistic Athens § Week 5 Seminar 4 – Nationalism and the Tombs at Vergina

Week 6 Reading Week

Week 7 Hellenistic Religion

Week 8 Hellenistic Art and Architecture

Week 9 From Epic to Epigram

Week 10 The Hellenistic West

Summer Term

Week 1 The Hellenistic World Review

Week 2 Exam Preparation

Learning outcomes

By the end of the module, students should be able to:

- Students will gain an understanding of the complex and diverse nature of the evidence from which the study of Hellenistic culture and history is constructed, and an appreciation of how the Hellenistic world helped shape the Roman world and beyond. The main themes are history, literature, art, archaeology, religion and philosophy.
- Students will gain an ability to analyse and critically assess a range of primary and secondary source material.

Indicative reading list

Background Reading:

The Hellenistic world is a complex and chaotic period. Students are encouraged to obtain a general overview of historical developments before the academic year begins, since we won't be

able to cover everything in detail. Good overviews of the history and culture of this period can be found in:

- Austin, M. 2006. *The Hellenistic World from Alexander to the Roman Conquest. A Selection of Ancient Sources in Translation* (2nd edition). Wiley.
- Bugh, G.R. (ed.). 2006. *The Cambridge Companion to the Hellenistic World*. Cambridge.
- Chaniotis, A. 2018. *Age of Conquests: The Greek World from Alexander to Hadrian (336 BC – AD 138)*. Profile.
- Errington, M. 2008. *A History of the Hellenistic World, 323-30 BC*. London.
- Erskine, A. (ed.). 2003. *A Companion to the Hellenistic World*. Malden.
- Green, P. 1993. *From Alexander to Actium: The Historical Evolution of the Hellenistic Age*. Oakland.
- Pollitt, J.J. 1986. *Art in the Hellenistic Age*. Cambridge.
- Shipley, G. 2000. *The Greek World after Alexander 323-30 BC*. Routledge.
- Thonemann, P. 2016. *The Hellenistic Age*. Oxford.
- Walbank, F.W., A.E. Astin, M.W. Frederiksen and R.M. Ogilvie eds. 1984. *Cambridge Ancient History Volume 7.1 The Hellenistic World*. Cambridge.
- Walbank, F.W., A.E. Astin, M.W. Frederiksen and R.M. Ogilvie eds. 1988. *Cambridge Ancient History Volume 7.2 The Rise of Roman to 220BC*. Cambridge.
- Walbank, F.W. 1992. *The Hellenistic World* (3rd edition) Fontana Press.
- Waterfield, R. 2011. *Dividing the Spoils. The War for Alexander's Empire*. Oxford.

[View reading list on Talis Aspire](#)

Subject specific skills

Upon completion of the module, students will be able to:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the chronology, geography, and institutional structures of the Hellenistic world.
- Demonstrate skills in the evaluation of primary source material and secondary literature.
- Individually, and as a member of a team, research, analyse and contextualise relevant information and evidence from primary and secondary sources in the form of a structured argument.

Transferable skills

- critical thinking
 - problem solving
 - active lifelong learning
 - communication
 - teamwork and working effectively with others
 - ICT literacy
 - Information literacy
 - professionalism
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Study

Study time

Type	Required
Lectures	42 sessions of 1 hour (14%)
Seminars	4 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Tutorials	2 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Practical classes	3 sessions of 1 hour (1%)
Private study	249 hours (83%)
Total	300 hours

Private study description

No private study requirements defined for this module.

Costs

No further costs have been identified for this module.

Assessment

You do not need to pass all assessment components to pass the module.

Students can register for this module without taking any assessment.

Assessment group C2

	Weighting	Study time
Object Study	25%	
One object study during the Autumn term of up to 2,500 words		
Essay or Digital Story	25%	
Students can choose between a 3,000-word written essay or a 3-minute piece of digital storytelling (along with a fully referenced and polished version of the written text), held in term 2.		
Digital Storytelling Assessment Criteria		

The intended assessment is for a second-year core module, and so the following criteria are for second year undergraduate students.

- Presentation: Marks will be awarded for good quality voice recording. Marks will be awarded

Weighting

Study time

for clear vocal recordings with appropriate pace and diction. Marks will be deducted for poor pace (e.g. too fast, too slow), or poor recording quality. Marks will be awarded for music use that stirs an emotional response that matches the storyline well; marks will be deducted for music that is inappropriate or distracting from the message. The visual transitions (from image to image) should match the recording; marks will be deducted if the visuals and the audio are out of sync. Marks will be awarded for correct presentation of image permissions at the end in the credits. Marks will be awarded for clear images of appropriate quality; marks will be deducted for images that are pixelated or appear blurry on the screen. Transitions and special effects should be used judiciously to enhance the message; marks will be deducted for inappropriate or excessive use.

- **Clarity of storytelling:** Marks will be awarded for work that establishes and maintains a clear focus, with an engaging and logical flow. Marks will be awarded for stories that have a strong 'hook' in the beginning and a compelling ending. Marks will be deducted for stories that are incoherent, disorganised in their arrangement, or which fail to synthesise information into a student's own voice. Marks will be awarded for word choice, which should be specific, appropriate, vivid and descriptive; marks will be deducted for word choice that is dull or trying too hard to impress with inappropriate words.
- **Primary data:** Marks will be awarded for good use of a range of ancient texts and other materials – inscriptions, images, coins, archaeology etc. Marks will be awarded for pertinent use of primary data, either mentioned in the story or showed visually on the screen. Marks will be awarded for stories that engage closely and critically with a piece of primary data (a text, or a piece of material culture); marks will be deducted for simplistic use of primary data, or displaying primary data on the screen if it doesn't relate to the story being told. All images used will be copyright compliant, with the relevant information presented in the credits.
- **Secondary material:** Students are expected to engage with secondary scholarship when creating their stories, and are asked to display 'Further Reading' which shows what they believe to be the three key secondary texts relevant to their story. Marks will be awarded for stories that go beyond secondary scholarship to present a story or object in a new and creative light. Marks will be deducted for stories that simply summarise one piece of secondary scholarship with little thought or creativity. All images, sound files, or other media used will be appropriately referenced in the credits, and will be copyright compliant.
- **Originality, Creativity and Sophistication:** Marks will be awarded for creativity, thoughtfulness and stories that engage the viewer. Marks will be awarded if the narrator or the visuals used in the story offer a new perspective or viewpoint.

Online Examination

50%

A 2-hour exam.

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- Online examination: No Answerbook required

Feedback on assessment

Individual tutorials (all) and Tabula feedback sheets (for assignments)

[Past exam papers for CX251](#)

Availability

Courses

This module is Core for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-VV16 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV17 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology (Part-Time)
- Year 2 of UCXA-VV18 Undergraduate Ancient History and Classical Archaeology with Study in Europe
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q820 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q821 Undergraduate Classical Civilisation with Study in Europe

This module is Optional for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-QQ37 Undergraduate Classics and English

This module is Core option list A for:

- Year 1 of UCXA-Q82P Undergraduate Classical Civilisation

This module is Option list A for:

- Year 2 of UCXA-Q800 BA in Classics
- Year 2 of UCXA-Q802 Undergraduate Classics (Latin) with Study in Europe