

CLT 3930 Fall 2017  
MWF Period 4 (10:40-11:30 am) LIT 207

## CONSPIRACIES ...

ANCIENT

AND

MODERN



### INSTRUCTOR

Dr. Victoria Pagán, Professor of Classics

*Contact Info:* vepagan@ufl.edu, 273-3696, 115C Dauer Hall—enter at 125 Dauer

*Office Hours:* MWF periods 3 and 5 and by appointment

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

Roman history is riddled with conspiracies. So are our newsfeeds and the pages of the *New York Times*. In this class, we will develop a method for understanding conspiracies and conspiracy theories. First we will examine conspiracy theory as a mode of discourse, a way of approaching the world, and a response to political life. Then we will apply our theories to individual test cases from ancient Roman history: the Catilinarian conspiracy, the Bacchanalian affair, and the Pisonian conspiracy. The course concludes with an examination of the assassination of Julius Caesar.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

Students are provided instruction in the philosophical, historical, and literary approaches to conspiracy and conspiracy theory.

- **Content Objectives:** The course content is comprised of Roman history from the first century BCE to the second century CE and twentieth-century American conspiracies and conspiracy theories.
- **Communication Objectives:** Students will take regular quizzes that express clearly definitions and analyses. A longer essay requires synthesis of material.
- **Critical Thinking Objectives:** Students are asked to question their assumptions about the value of conspiracy theory in a transparent, liberal democracy.

### COURSE FORMAT

Each day, students will be expected to participate actively in discussions drawn from reading. Our goal is to apply a critical apparatus to the primary source material in order to gain deeper insight into Roman political, social, and religious institutions. An essay on a conspiracy of the student's choice will apply what we have learned in class.

## TEXTBOOKS

- Fenster, Mark. 1999. *Conspiracy Theories: Secrecy and Power in American Culture*. Revised and Updated in 2008. Minneapolis: REQUIRED.
- Woolf, Greg. 2006. *Et tu Brute? The Murder of Caesar and Political Assassination*. London. ISBN: 9781861977410. REQUIRED. *A copy will be on reserve in the library.*
- Damon, Cynthia, trans. 2012. *Tacitus: Annals*. Penguin. or any approved translation
- Woodman, A. J., trans. 2007. *Sallust: Catiline's War, et al.* Penguin. or any approved translation
- PDFs of all other readings will be provided online.

## ASSIGNMENTS AND REQUIREMENTS

1. Five announced, scheduled, non-cumulative “quizzes” that are part identification of key terms and part short-answer, designed to take 30 minutes.
2. An Essay (2000-2500 words) **due in class on Monday, November 20.**
3. Participation and Attendance. Perfect attendance is expected, and you will receive credit for attending. Participation means I hear your voice at least once during class.

## GRADING SCALE AND ASSIGNMENT SUMMARY

Grade Proportion	Grade Scale	Grade Value
Quizzes: 30% (300 points: 5 @ 60)	930-1,000 = A	A = 4.0
Essay: 28% (280 points)	900-929 = A-	A- = 3.67
	870-899 = B+	B+ = 3.33
Participation: 21% (210 points: 42 @ 5)	830-869 = B	B = 3.00
Attendance: 21% (210 points: 42 @ 5)	790-829 = B-	B- = 2.67
	750-789 = C+	C+ = 2.33
	720-749 = C	C = 2.00
	690-719 = C-	C- = 1.67
	660-689 = D+	D+ = 1.33
	620-659 = D	D = 1.00
	600-619 = D-	D- = 0.67

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/grades.aspx>

*\*Please note: An earned grade of “C-” will not be a qualifying grade for major, minor, Gen. Ed., or basic distribution credit.*

## ACADEMIC HONESTY

UF students are bound by The Honor Pledge which states, “We, the members of the University of Florida community, pledge to hold ourselves and our peers to the highest standards of honor and integrity by abiding by the Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The Honor Code. On all work submitted for credit by students at the University of Florida, the following pledge is either required or implied: “On my honor, I have neither given nor received unauthorized aid in doing this assignment.” The [Honor Code](#) specifies a number of behaviors that are in violation of this code and the possible sanctions. Furthermore, you are obligated to report any condition that facilitates academic misconduct to appropriate personnel. If you have any questions or concerns, please consult with the instructor.

## STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drc>). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student, who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

## OTHER POLICIES, RULES, AND RESOURCES

1. **Combative courtesy:** Conspiracies have a tendency to cause arguments as people are challenged to open their minds to a variety of interpretive possibilities. Discussion requires honesty—students cannot hide their assumptions—and trust—that all students are operating by the same principles. Students may, if they wish, declare themselves travellers on one (and only one) conspiracy theory, which the class must respect. Students may NOT engage in unfounded criticism, ad hominem attacks, irrational or illogical argumentation. All the same, be prepared to argue.
2. *Attendance and Make-up Policy:* Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies:  
<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>
  - In the case of an absence due to participation in an official university activity, observance of a religious holiday, performance of a military duty, or any other university-approved absence (e.g., jury duty) which the student knows about in advance, the student is expected to notify the instructor of the conflict *before the assignment is due*, and if possible at the start of the semester.
  - If a student does not hand in the Essay on time and an extension has not been granted, the Essay will be marked down 1/3 grade (e.g., from B+ to B) for each 24 hour day it is late.
  - For all other assignments, the students will not be granted an extension or be permitted to make up the assignment without an acceptable reason, such as an illness or serious family emergencies, in accordance with [university policies](#) on absences.
3. *Common Courtesy:* Cell phones and other electronic devices must be set to vibrate mode during class. Students who receive or make calls or text messages during class will be asked to leave and marked absent for the day. Laptops or tablets are permitted for pdfs and notetaking. Any student found with applications open that do not pertain to class will be asked to leave and counted absent for the day.
4. *Counseling Resources* are available on-campus for students include the following:
  - a. University Counseling and Wellness Center, 3190 Radio Rd, 392-1575;
  - b. Student Health Care Center, 392-1161; and
  - c. Dean of Students Office, 202 Peabody Hall, 392-1261, [umatter.ufl.edu](mailto:umatter.ufl.edu).
5. *Course Evaluation:* Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at [evaluations.ufl.edu](https://evaluations.ufl.edu). Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

1	Monday	August 21	Introduction to Course
	Wednesday	August 23	Karl Popper, “The Open Society and its Enemies”
	Friday	August 25	Karl Popper, “The Open Society and its Enemies”
2	Monday	August 28	Richard Hofstadter, “The Paranoid Style”
	Wednesday	August 30	Richard Hofstadter, “The Paranoid Style”
	Friday	September 1	Richard Hofstadter, “The Paranoid Style”
3	Monday	September 4	LABOR DAY
	Wednesday	September 6	<b>QUIZ 1: two short essay questions on P and H</b>
	Friday	September 8	Fenster Introduction and Chapter 1
4	Monday	September 11	Fenster Chapter 2
	Wednesday	September 13	Fenster Chapters 3 and 4
	Friday	September 15	Fenster Chapter 5
5	Monday	September 18	Fenster Chapters 6-7
	Wednesday	September 20	Fenster Afterword
	Friday	September 22	<b>QUIZ 2: A 500 word book review of Fenster</b>

6	Monday Wednesday Friday	September 25 September 27 September 29	Keeley, "Of Conspiracy Theories" 1999 Basham, "Living with the Conspiracy" 2001 Clarke, "Conspiracy Theories and ..." 2002
7	Monday Wednesday Friday	October 2 October 4 October 6	Cody, "Conspiracy Theories and Official Stories" 2003 <b>QUIZ 3: identification of terms from articles</b> HOMECOMING
8	Monday Wednesday Friday	October 9 October 11 October 13	Livy 39.8-18, the Bacchanalian Affair Livy 39.8-18, the Bacchanalian Affair <a href="#"><u>Senatus Consultum de Bacchanalibus</u></a>
9	Monday Wednesday Friday	October 16 October 18 October 20	Sallust, <i>Catiline</i> Sallust, <i>Catiline</i> Cicero, four speeches <i>Against Catiline</i> (Loeb)
10	Monday Wednesday Friday	October 23 October 25 October 27	Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 2.69-84, death of Germanicus Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 3.1-19, trial of Piso <i>Senatus Consultum de Pisone Patre</i>
11	Monday Wednesday Friday	October 30 November 1 November 3	Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 15.38-47, the great fire of Rome Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 15.48-59, Pisonian Conspiracy Tacitus, <i>Annals</i> 15.60-74, aftermath of the conspiracy
12	Monday Wednesday Friday	November 6 November 8 November 10	<b>QUIZ 4: Essay Thesis and Outline</b> Sort into groups for workshopping essays VETERANS DAY
13	Monday Wednesday Friday	November 13 November 15 November 17	Workshop Essays in Class Workshop Essays in Class Workshop Essays in Class
14	Monday Wednesday Friday	November 20 November 22 November 24	<b>ESSAY DUE</b> THANKSGIVING THANKSGIVING
15	Monday Wednesday Friday	November 27 November 29 December 1	Woolf Chapter 1, "Then Fall, Caesar!" Woolf Chapter 2, "Talking Tyrannicide" Woolf Chapter 3, "Caesar's Murdered Heirs"
16	Monday Wednesday	December 4 December 6	Woolf Chapter 4, "Aftershocks" <b>QUIZ 5: 300 word book review of Woolf</b>