

**HIST 356 | A History of Ancient Macedonia from the Archaic Period to the Death of Alexander the Great
Spring Semester 2025**

Course Instructor: Dr. John Karavas

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Course Description

Through the study of the available primary evidence – literary, epigraphic and archaeological – this course seeks to familiarize students with particular aspects of the history, culture and civilization of Ancient Macedon up to the age of Alexander the Great. Following a detailed examination of the main social, political and economic conditions and institutions that developed in Ancient Macedon during the Archaic and Classical periods, it then attempts to explore the main factors that led to the emergence of the Macedon State as the undisputed leader in Greek affairs by the 4th century BC. Special emphasis will be placed on the careers of Alexander I and of Philip II and their profound impact on the consolidation of Macedon power over Greece. The second part of the course will deal exclusively with the reign of Alexander the Great. Through the use of primary sources, the course will closely follow Alexander's campaigns in the East, with a detailed reference to certain aspects of his multi-faceted personality and to an assessment of his achievement and long lasting legacy. Special emphasis is given to topics that are central to modern political and intellectual debate.

Course Requirements

Assignments:

Students will be expected to write one research paper, not more than 2.500 words, on subjects/topics relevant to this course. Details will be provided on the first day of classes. Assignments for topics will be decided by lot, one month before the deadline for the submission of essays. Papers must be properly documented and should include an appended bibliography. Credit will be given for originality, i.e. illustrations, maps etc, personal observation and evidence of independent reading-research. Unless otherwise specified, all submitted work must be your own, original work. Any excerpts from the work of others must be clearly identified as a quotation, and a proper citation provided. (Check Student handbook, pg 9).

Students who wish to turn in rough drafts of their essays for consultation are certainly welcomed to do so.

Title proposals and general outlines must be handed in at least three weeks before the respective deadline.

The deadline for the submission of the final essay is Friday, May 16. No extensions will be granted.

Exams:

Midterm: Wednesday, March 12

Final: TBA

Class Attendance - Absences

Student attendance is mandatory. All absences must be excused by the administration and not the instructor. Each unexcused absence will result in a lowered participation grade.

Grading and Evaluation

The mid-term grade will be calculated on the basis of the mid-term exam (70%) and with regard to student's attendance of and participation in classes (30%).

The final grade will be an average of the grades assigned for the mid term-exam (25%), the final essay (25%), the grade assigned for the final exam (35%) and of that assigned for class participation and attendance over the course of the semester (15%).

Books, Course Materials, Moodle

Borza (1990): E. Borza, *E. In the Shadow of Mount Olympus* (1990).

Hammond (1980): N.G.L Hammond, *Alexander the Great. King, Commander and Statesman* (1980).

Hammond (1986): N.G.L Hammond, *A History of Greece* (1986).

Hammond (1989): N.G.L Hammond, *The Macedonian State* (1989).

Sealey (1976): M. Sealey, *A History of the Greek City States* (1976).

CAH= *The Cambridge Ancient History*, The 4th century B.C. (1994).

Arrian, *Anabasis of Alexander* (Penguin edition).
Plutarch, *Life of Alexander*.

In addition, further background or specialist reading material, including passages from ancient sources (in translation) as well as epigraphic texts, will be introduced to students at the beginning of each separate thematic entity.

1. Monday, January 27

General Introduction.

A brief overview of the history of Ancient Macedon. Establishing the basic chronological brackets and objectives of this course. The nature of the available evidence and the problems usually associated in its interpretation.

2. Wednesday, January 29

Macedonia, The Land:

The general geography and the topographical realities of Ancient Macedon; its impact on the formation of the Macedon State. Their early system of government; economy and society in Macedonia the Archaic and early Classical period. The problems/struggles associated with the emergence of the early Macedon State.

3. Monday, February 3

Macedonia, the People

The origins of the Macedonian people and the question of their ethnic identity; the Macedonian "language"; social/cultural norms and customs.

E. Borza, Ch. 1-3

4. Wednesday, February 5

Ancient Macedon from the Archaic to the early Classical period.

The age of Macedonian expansion explored through prevailing political, social, economic and cultural conditions and institutions.

(Hammond (1989), 1-42; E-material: 15).

This bibliography accounts for classes 2-4.

5. Monday, February 10

"A Prince among barbarians and a barbarian among princes".

The age of Alexander I. Macedon during the Persian and Peloponnesian wars. The development of opposing cultural perceptions between Macedonia and the city states of Southern Greece (E-material: 14-15).

6. Wednesday, February 12

Greece in the 4th century BC:

The aftermath of the Peloponnesian Wars and the age of shifting hegemonies.

The rise of Sparta; the rise of Thebes. Ancient Macedon at the brink of collapse.

(Sealey, 386-396; 404-410; 423-437. E-material: 11-13).

7. Monday, February 17

The rise of Macedonia.

The accession of Philip II. The early years of his reign (359-357 BC).(Hammond (1986), 533-541; CAH, 723-736; E-material 16).

Monday, February 24

The expansion of Macedon under Philip (357-346 BC).

The Social war, the third sacred war, the Olynthian war.

(Hammond (1986), 542-551; CAH, 736-751; E-material 17).

9. Wednesday, February 26

The peace of Philocrates (346-338 BC).

The ever changing nature of the diplomatic and political relations between Macedon and the city states of Southern Greece.

(Hammond (1986), 551-563; CAH, 751-777; Sealey, 469-494).

10. Wednesday, March 5

The battle of Chaeronia and its immediate aftermath.

(Hammond (1986), 563-570; CAH, 777-789; E-material 18, 19).

11. Monday, March 10

The establishment of Macedonian rule/supremacy over Greece.

(Hammond (1986), 570-576; E-material, 23-25).

12. Wednesday, March 12

Mid-Term Exam

13. Monday, March 17

The Accession of Alexander

The prevailing political and economic conditions in Macedon and Greece at the time of his accession. The elimination of all internal political opposition. Greek perceptions towards the new king of Macedon. Sources for the reign of Alexander: an evaluation.

(1986), 598-601; Hammond (1980), 1-18

14. Monday, March 24

Challenges from the North: Alexander's campaigns in the Lower Danube area.

The submission of the Triballi, Getae and the Illyrian tribal confederations; the expansion of the Macedonian state.

Hammond (1980), 45-57; E-material 26

15. Wednesday, March 26

Alexander and Greece

The Greek "uprising" of 335 BC. The formation of an anti-Macedon alliance. The major players. Alexander's lightning campaign in Greece. The destruction of Thebes and its immediate aftermath.

Hammond (1980), 58-65; CAH, 794-797.

16. Monday, March 31

The war preparations for the expedition against Persia. Facts, numbers and objectives.

Class handouts.

17. Wednesday, April 2

Alexander in the East: The Conquest of Asia Minor (Part I)

Alexander crosses into Asia Minor. The strategic objectives. The battle of the Granicus River. The seizure of the Greek city states in Asia Minor and the shifting of the balance of power in Alexander's favour.

Hammond (1980), 66-82; Hammond (1986), 601-611; E-Material 29

18. Monday, April 7

The Conquest of Asia minor (Part II)

The battle of Issus and its aftermath. The conquest of Anatolia and the establishment of Macedonian rule.

Hammond (1980), 92-122; E-Material 29

19. Wednesday, April 9

The King of Egypt - The Son of Ammon.

The conquest of Egypt. The journeys of Alexander in the Egyptian heartland. Meeting Divinity: His visit to the Oracle of Ammon at Siwah.

Hammond (1986), 611-614; Hammond (1980), 123-132.

20. Wednesday, April 23

"Persia Capta".

Alexander in Mesopotamia. The battle at Gaugamela. The dissolution of the Persian empire and Alexander's proclamation as "King of Asia".

Hammond (1986), 611-620; Hammond (1980), 132-150; CAH 805-818.

21. Monday, April 28

The Journey Continues

Alexander's offensives In Afghanistan. The conquest of Bactria. The crossing of the Indus river and the attempted conquest of India.

Hammond (1986), 621-34; Hammond, (1980), 190-220; D.B. Nagle, The Cultural Context of Alexander's Speech at Opis, TAPA 126 (1996), p. 151-172.

22. Wednesday, April 30

The Final chapter

The last years of Alexander's reign. The conquest of Southern Asia and the long journey home.

Hammond (1980), 221-245.

23. Monday, May 5

Alexander the Great: A fitting Epitaph

The achievement of Alexander: An assessment (Discussion in Class).

Hammond (1980), 246-273; Hammond (1986), 634-642; E-Material 30

24. Wednesday, May 7

The Legacy of Alexander