Ancient Mediterranean & Late Antique Near East

The Ancient History division focuses on the history of ancient Greece, ancient Rome, and Ancient and Late Antique Near East. The Ancient History division is enriched by fine programs in the Departments of Classics, Philosophy, and Art History, as well as in Near Eastern Studies and the Comparative Religion Program. Graduate students may take graduate courses offered by these Departments to enlarge their work in the Department of History. The generosity of a donor has established a fellowship for an entering M.A. student: the Roseman Fellowship.

The Department offers fields in most of the periods of Greek and Roman History from the Bronze Age to the later Roman Empire, as well as in ancient historiography. Graduate students may develop fields defined chronologically and thematically.

Students interested in the field of Late Antiquity may approach the field from a variety of angles, focusing on ancient or medieval history, with additional coursework in the departments of Classics, Near Eastern Languages and Civilization, Art History, or the Comparative Religion Program. At least one graduate field course is offered each year, sometimes co-taught with faculty from other departments. Recent courses have included: “Introduction to the Historiography of Late Antiquity (150-750)”; “Jerusalem and the Holy Land in Late Antiquity”; “The Age of Justinian”; and “Heresy and Orthodoxy in the Early Church.” Reading courses on Syriac literature and language, Sasanian history, and Anatolian archaeology can also be arranged. To study Late Antiquity as their primary field, students should be prepared to learn at least two ancient languages (e.g. Greek, Latin, Syriac), as well as the requisite modern European languages (in most cases, French and German). Study of Late Antiquity as a secondary field requires only one ancient and one modern language. The range of possible topics for a secondary field in Late Antiquity is also much larger, ranging from Late Roman North Africa to the historiography and consequences of the early Islamic conquests.

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