



ARIZONA STATE UNIVERSITY

GENERAL STUDIES COURSE PROPOSAL COVER FORM

Course information:

Copy and paste current course information from Class Search/Course Catalog.

College/School College of Liberal Arts and Sciences Department SILC
Prefix SLC Number 394 Title Pagens and Christians Units: 3

Is this a cross-listed course? Yes If yes, please identify course(s) LAT 394, REL 394

Is this a shared course? No If so, list all academic units offering this course

Note- For courses that are crosslisted and/or shared, a letter of support from the chair/director of each department that offers the course is required for each designation requested.

Is this a permanent numbered course with topics? No

If yes, all topics under this permanent numbered course must be taught in a manner that meets the criteria for the approved designation(s). It is the responsibility of the chair/director to ensure that all faculty teaching the course are aware of the General Studies designation(s) and adhere to the above guidelines. (Required)

Course description: Covers topics of immediate or special interest to a faculty member and students.

Requested designation: Literacy and Critical Inquiry-L Mandatory Review: (Choose one)

Note- a separate proposal is required for each designation.

Eligibility:

Permanent numbered courses must have completed the university's review and approval process. For the rules governing approval of omnibus courses, contact Phyllis.Lucie@asu.edu.

Submission deadlines dates are as follow:

For Fall 2016 Effective Date: October 1, 2015

For Spring 2017 Effective Date: March 10, 2016

Area(s) proposed course will serve:

A single course may be proposed for more than one core or awareness area. A course may satisfy a core area requirement and more than one awareness area requirements concurrently, but may not satisfy requirements in two core areas simultaneously, even if approved for those areas. With departmental consent, an approved General Studies course may be counted toward both the General Studies requirement and the major program of study.

Checklists for general studies designations:

- Complete and attach the appropriate checklist
Literacy and Critical Inquiry core courses (L)
Mathematics core courses (MA)
Computer/statistics/quantitative applications core courses (CS)
Humanities, Arts and Design core courses (HU)
Social-Behavioral Sciences core courses (SB)
Natural Sciences core courses (SQ/SG)
Cultural Diversity in the United States courses (C)
Global Awareness courses (G)
Historical Awareness courses (H)

A complete proposal should include:

- Signed course proposal cover form
Criteria checklist for General Studies designation(s) being requested
Course catalog description
Sample syllabus for the course
Copy of table of contents from the textbook and list of required readings/books

It is respectfully requested that proposals are submitted electronically with all files compiled into one PDF.

Contact information:

Name Almira Poudrier E-mail almira.poudrier@asu.edu Phone 602-738-5784

Department Chair/Director approval: (Required)

Chair/Director name (Typed): Nina Berman Date: 10/15/2016

Chair/Director (Signature): [Signature] 10.15.2016

**Arizona State University Criteria Checklist for**  
**LITERACY AND CRITICAL INQUIRY - [L]**

**Rationale and Objectives**

Literacy is here defined broadly as communicative competence—that is, competence in written and oral discourse. **Critical inquiry** involves the gathering, interpretation, and evaluation of evidence. Any field of university study may require unique critical skills that have little to do with language in the usual sense (words), but the analysis of written and spoken evidence pervades university study and everyday life. Thus, the General Studies requirements assume that all undergraduates should develop the ability to reason critically and communicate using the medium of language.

The requirement in Literacy and Critical Inquiry presumes, first, that training in literacy and critical inquiry must be sustained beyond traditional First Year English in order to create a habitual skill in every student; and, second, that the skill levels become more advanced, as well as more secure, as the student learns challenging subject matter. Thus, two courses beyond First Year English are required in order for students to meet the Literacy and Critical Inquiry requirement.

Most lower-level [L] courses are devoted primarily to the further development of critical skills in reading, writing, listening, speaking, or analysis of discourse. Upper-division [L] courses generally are courses in a particular discipline into which writing and critical thinking have been fully integrated as means of learning the content and, in most cases, demonstrating that it has been learned.

Notes:

1. ENG 101, 107 or ENG 105 must be prerequisites
2. Honors theses, XXX 493 meet [L] requirements
3. The list of criteria that must be satisfied for designation as a Literacy and Critical Inquiry [L] course is presented on the following page. This list will help you determine whether the current version of your course meets all of these requirements. If you decide to apply, please attach a current syllabus, or handouts, or other documentation that will provide sufficient information for the General Studies Council to make an informed decision regarding the status of your proposal.

Revised April 2014

Proposer: Please complete the following section and attach appropriate documentation.

## ASU - [L] CRITERIA

TO QUALIFY FOR [L] DESIGNATION, THE COURSE DESIGN MUST PLACE A MAJOR EMPHASIS ON COMPLETING CRITICAL DISCOURSE--AS EVIDENCED BY THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>CRITERION 1:</b> At least 50 percent of the grade in the course should depend upon writing assignments (see Criterion 3). Group projects are acceptable only if each student gathers, interprets, and evaluates evidence, and prepares a summary report. <i>In-class essay exams may not be used for [L] designation.</i></p>	<p>Syllabus draft attached; all writing product will be individually evaluated. Final course grade will be predominantly based on the written assignments: short preliminary essays, proposal at midterm, draft before final, and final paper.</p>
<p>1. Please describe the assignments that are considered in the computation of course grades--and indicate the proportion of the final grade that is determined by each assignment.</p> <p>2. <b>Also:</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">Please <b>circle, underline, or otherwise mark</b> the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies <b>this description</b> of the grading process--and label this information "<b>C-1</b>".</p> </div> <p>C-1</p>			
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>CRITERION 2:</b> The writing assignments should involve gathering, interpreting, and evaluating evidence. They should reflect critical inquiry, extending beyond opinion and/or reflection.</p>	<p>Each student will pursue individual research in the history of late antique religion under my supervision. Papers will be evaluated for the quantity and quality of primary source materials used, the critical analysis in handling them, and the arguments built on them in written form.</p>
<p>1. Please describe the way(s) in which this criterion is addressed in the course design.</p> <p>2. <b>Also:</b></p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; padding: 5px;">Please <b>circle, underline, or otherwise mark</b> the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies <b>this description</b> of the grading process--and label this information "<b>C-2</b>".</p> </div> <p>C-2</p>			

## ASU - [L] CRITERIA

<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<b>CRITERION 3:</b> The syllabus should include a minimum of two writing and/or speaking assignments that are substantial in depth, quality, and quantity. Substantial writing assignments entail sustained in-depth engagement with the material. Examples include research papers, reports, articles, essays, or speeches that reflect critical inquiry and evaluation. Assignments such as brief reaction papers, opinion pieces, reflections, discussion posts, and impromptu presentations are not considered substantial writing/speaking assignments.	See above and see syllabus draft. Classes will be seminar-style and heavily emphasize student presentation and interaction.
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1. Please provide relatively detailed descriptions of two or more substantial writing or speaking tasks that are included in the course requirements

2. **Also:**

Please **circle, underline, or otherwise mark** the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies **this description** of the grading process--and label this information **"C-3"**.

C-3

## ASU - [L] CRITERIA

YES	NO		Identify Documentation Submitted
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<p><b>CRITERION 4:</b> These substantial writing or speaking assignments should be arranged so that the students will get timely feedback from the instructor on each assignment in time to help them do better on subsequent assignments. <i>Intervention at earlier stages in the writing process is especially welcomed.</i></p>	Class size limited to 30 will facilitate both in-class response/evaluation and written followup before the next class.
<p>1. Please describe the sequence of course assignments--and the nature of the feedback the current (or most recent) course instructor provides to help students do better on subsequent assignments</p>			
<p>2. Also:</p> <div style="border: 1px solid black; border-radius: 50%; padding: 20px; text-align: center; margin: 10px auto; width: 80%;"> <p style="background-color: yellow; display: inline-block; padding: 5px;">Please <b>circle, underline, or otherwise mark</b> the information presented in the most recent course syllabus (or other material you have submitted) that verifies <b>this description</b> of the grading process--and label this information "C-4".</p> </div> <p>C-4</p>			

Course Prefix	Number	Title	General Studies Designation
SLC	394	Pagans and Christians	L

Explain in detail which student activities correspond to the **specific** designation criteria.  
Please use the following organizer to explain how the criteria are being met.

Criteria (from checklist)	How course meets spirit (contextualize specific examples in next column)	Please provide detailed evidence of how course meets criteria (i.e., where in syllabus)
1	My expectation is that all students will come to the class thinking they know something about Christianity and some will think they know a lot. My goal is to have them discover under my guidance how much more they have to understand; and to do serious and responsible work at understanding pieces of it. The collaborative work of groups in the class and of the class as a whole is meant to give them experience beyond their own personal work of the complexity and difficulty of the issues raised and some strategies for facing those issues.	The formal expectation is that they will write a really good research paper and go through the stages necessary to get from limited knowledge to formulating a good question to working that question to beginning to express the results to expressing those results in a polished way.
2	We will do in-class readings of short, exemplary primary sources, designed to model for them and rehearse them in the behaviors of appropriate critical analysis of ancient sources. Their own work will take them much further.	<p>The success of the course will depend on how well we navigate weeks 2-6, when they are finding their feet, framing their inquiry, and getting their work solidly under way. Those classes will be divided approx. 50% common work, 50% individual/subgroup. As the students find their feet and voices, the percentage of time spent on student presentations and student-led discussion will increase to fill most of the time.</p> <p>A selected set of short in-class readings (e.g., passages from Jewish, Christian, and Islamic scriptures, from traditionalist observers of ancient religion such as Lucian and Apuleius, and from historical and legal texts, e.g., the Theodosian Code) will be used to focus attention on key points and model and rehearse key skills. These reading exercises will offer opportunity for informal assessment of capacity to undertake the more sophisticated work and thus will contribute to my working with them to design work plans that will challenge but that can be realistically undertaken.</p> <p>My supervision of their individual work will complete the task of meeting this criterion. In that work, students will have individual</p>

		<p>topics that engage them with important primary sources. Paper proposals will be graded 50% content, 50% writing. They will be evaluated on (a) choice of sources (20%), (b) critical analysis of sources (40%), and (c) clarity and coherence of expression of an argument based on their investigations (40%). (Where the syllabus speaks of group work, I mean teams working congruent subjects -- e.g., one of three working on Plutarch's treatise on Isis, another one of three working on Apuleius's 'conversion' to Isis worship, and the third working on the city of Alexandria and the great temple/library dedicated to Isis and Serapis.</p>
<p>3</p>	<p>This cannot be a class in which I tell them what to think; but it also cannot be a class in which they go away thinking whatever they please. The design of the course is intended to put responsibility on them in two ways: responsibility just to do the work, but responsibility to do the work in a way that withstands scrutiny from the classmates and from me as representative of professional standards.</p>	<p>One of my most important contributions to the class will be in approving topics and teams. Some of the teams will work very closely together, others more loosely. My goal will be both to create good mixes of people who learn from and with each other and at the same time to have all the parts add up to a whole that covers a wide range of the topics a traditional lecture course might undertake on these subjects.</p>
<p>4</p>	<p>I have a lot of experience at getting students to take responsibility for getting beyond their first self-indulgent drafts to writing with clarity and accuracy. A short video expresses my ambitions:  <a href="https://vimeo.com/channels/acls/119682525">https://vimeo.com/channels/acls/119682525</a></p>	<p>Informal responses throughout, but the particularly important moments for feedback will be about mid-term when they frame their proposals and near term-end when they submit drafts. It's on me to be ready to give them that time then.</p>



*Pagans and Christians*  
REL/SLC/HIST/LAT\* 394  
J. O'Donnell  
jod@asu.edu  
MW 3:05-4:20  
LL247

### The Official Stuff

This is a course for people who want to understand what ancient religion was like and how Christianity came to establish itself as the dominant religion over all of Europe and much of the middle east, while reaching all the way to China and India. The focus of the course will be the period 100-700 AD. You will spend the semester in teamwork with classmates, where each of you frames the questions you most want answered, pursuing those questions, collecting evidence and forming arguments based on that evidence, and writing an appropriate and persuasive research paper summarizing what you learn. C2

That means that each week, we will have two 75-minute classes where we meet to read and discuss short texts together and where you will work on your own research under supervision. The exact schedule of topics and readings will be developed after we meet. They will include some mix of these main areas:

1. Conceptual understanding: what do we mean by “pagan” and “Christian”?
2. What communities, practices, and beliefs are associated with each name? How do they resemble and differ from each other?
3. What social forces shaped these communities, beliefs, and practices? How did these communities, beliefs, and practices affect in turn empires, armies, cities, families, and individuals?
4. What sources of information about these movements do we have and what problems are there in using them to understand the past?
5. How does studying this history affect the way we understand religion and society in the contemporary world?

### Books required for purchase:

- G. Vermes, *Christian Beginnings: From Nazareth to Nicea*  
a standard survey – the official history, so to speak
- R. MacMullen, *The Second Church*  
one of the most distinguished living ancient historians writes to kick the official history to shreds
- J. O'Donnell, *Pagans*  
the course instructor's version

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\* The course is listed separately for History, SILC, Religion, and Latin – max. enrollment 30, so if you have trouble getting the course under one listing, try another. If the exact listing is important to you, we can work it out later.



Estimated total purchase price for new paperbacks for those three volumes is about \$40. Students should also equip themselves with a Bible of their choice or at least a New Testament. One good choice is Levine-Brettler, *The Jewish Annotated New Testament*, but the choice really should be yours.

### Course requirements:

1. Attendance and participation (20%)
2. By mid-term, a 3-6 page outline/proposal for the final paper you intend to write (30%)
3. Final research paper, 15-30 pages (50%)
  - a. Draft for submission 14 days before final due date
  - b. Final version due on last possible day of term C1, C2

Working together with other students is strongly recommended; with instructor's permission, groups of 2 or more students may collaborate on a common project with clearly designated roles for each. (I need to be able to work with each of you on your own writing and work.)

I will grade using whole letter grades only (A B C D F).

### Expected Classroom Behavior

Some faculty discourage laptop use in class; I encourage it. Our class is a community, our classroom a safe and welcoming space for all who participate in our work. Your classmates and I will have zero toleration for any disruptive behavior, which includes tardiness, ringing cell phones, inappropriate talking and moving about, and digital devices used in a distracting way. If I put you on notice for such disruption, any recurrence will result in an automatic markdown of your grade

### **Schedule of important dates**

The typical class will be divided between a group reading and discussion of a short ancient or modern text for the first half and then group work and discussion on topics of common interest, developing towards quite specific discussion of your work on your papers by later in the term. The fixed dates in the schedule are:

January 9	First class
January 30	Quiz on one of the three assigned books (Vermes, MacMullen, O'Donnell): each student to select one
March 15	Submission of 3-6 page proposal for final paper; graded C1, C2, C3 50% on content, 50% on writing – worth 30% of final course grade <b>All papers submitted electronically in MS Word</b>

April 14 Draft of paper due C4

May 6 Final papers due: graded 20% on evidence gathered; 40% C1, C2, C3 on critical analysis of evidence; 40% on clarity and effectiveness of written expression – worth 50% of final course grade

All writing assignments must be submitted on the due date: no exceptions without a recommendation from physician or advising dean.

### Academic Integrity

All work submitted must be your own work and must not have been submitted for any other academic course. Academic honesty is expected of all students in all examinations, papers, and laboratory work, academic transactions and records. The possible sanctions include, but are not limited to, appropriate grade penalties, course failure (indicated on the transcript as a grade of E), course failure due to academic dishonesty (indicated on the transcript as a grade of XE), loss of registration privileges, disqualification and dismissal. For more information, see <http://provost.asu.edu/academicintegrity>

### **So What Does This All Mean?**

In 100 AD, nobody should have bet on the Christians. Renegade Jews, marginal troublemakers, too few to count: a group that was clearly going nowhere. Three hundred years later, emperors had declared that all traditional ancient religious practices were henceforth and forever banned. A reasonable person might look at this and say, “Whaaaa?” This course is designed to help you form and answer a few more articulate questions than that.

The first class will begin by reviewing *your* questions. I want to find out what the people who actually take the course know and want to know. Dig deeper into what the ancient practices and beliefs were? Try to get a handle on how many different versions of Christianity there were and do a deep dive into one or two of them? Track the social history of Christians and public officials? Watch Jews and Christ-followers eye each other warily and gradually and carefully edge apart from one another? Look closely at the history of women or Samaritans or Africans or soldiers and how they approached religion? Figure out how the Christian church became rich, powerful, and intolerant of competition? Look for Christians whose way of practicing their religion was condemned and ridden out of town by other Christians? Look for the first hints of the rise of Islam as a competitor with Judaism and Christianity in the family of followers of the patriarch Abraham? Study one or two famous individuals? Explore the ancient roots of contemporary controversies over issues like sexual morality, social justice, or Christians in politics? The possibilities will be endless. How you choose to spend your time will be up to you.

In class, you will share your curiosity and discoveries with your fellow classmates. What we *all* learn will be the sum of what you as individuals learn and share with your colleagues. My job as teacher will be to help you shape your questions, pursue their answers, bring you together with your colleagues to add up the parts into a coherent whole, and fill in the gaps with in-class readings and informal lectures.

## About the Instructor



I have a lot of hats in my closet. I've been a professor of ancient Greek and Latin for a long time, with a special interest in the history and culture of "late antiquity" (200-700 AD). In addition to *Pagans*, I have recent books on *The Ruin of the Roman Empire* and *Augustine: A New Biography*. I also know a lot about the history of books and communication, down to the present, and wrote a book called *Avatars of the Word: From Papyrus to Cyberspace* to talk about that history. I started an online scholarly journal when there were almost no others like it and I taught the first MOOC – in 1994, about Saint Augustine. I've come to ASU since early 1995 to serve as University Librarian. I welcome email from students at all times at [jod@asu.edu](mailto:jod@asu.edu), but between about 10 p.m. and 6 p.m. my response time slows noticeably.

## Learning Outcomes (or, What You Will Get Out of It)

You will get out of this course what you put into it. And it will be fun.

*Historical knowledge and context:* You'll learn a lot about religious history in ancient times. This will mean you will learn both about people, places, and events but also about the challenges of thinking analytically about what it means to study other people's religious beliefs and practices. And it means you will learn to think about the relative place of religious phenomena in the economics, culture, and politics of a complex society.

*Discovery and critical analysis of historical and literary evidence:* You'll get experience in the hard work of doing historical investigation with some of the most challenging and fascinating historical primary sources there are. You will be pushed to engage directly with primary documents, to think carefully and independently about what they mean. C2

*Formation of and defense of argument:* You'll learn to make arguments based on your research and to defend those arguments in lively conversation with your classmates and myself. C2

*Clear and persuasive written presentation of evidence and expression of argument:* You will express the results of your inquiry in writing, culminating in a final paper. But you will have shorter writing exercises through the first half of the term and then buckle down to prepare a draft version of the paper for review, before finishing it for final grade. C1, C2, C3, C4

*Enhanced social-cultural awareness of the part religion has played in history and plays in the contemporary world:* My guess is you'll learn that contemporary discussions of Christianity are often sadly crippled by an ignorance of history and by a tendency to appeal to half-true history to justify very modern ideas as though they were ancient. You'll come away better able to think about the place of religion in the contemporary world.

And above all, you'll come to recognize the complexity of the issues these topics raise and to respect the way other people in history, in our time, and in our classroom have come to deal

with them. Mutual respect for the beliefs and commitments of everyone in our group will be the foundation for our work.

So remember that the purpose of this course is to study another culture, primarily through its religions. The ancient Romans are one of the foundation societies of Western culture, and many aspects of their language and society may seem familiar to us today; but many aspects of Roman culture, and especially Roman religion, are also alien and even offensive in today's society. If you are troubled by any of what we read and discuss, by all means raise your concerns in class, but please also feel free to discuss them with me privately, with my faculty colleagues in Classics, or the director of SILC. All of us may be contacted in person or by email.

### **Important Additional Policies You Should Know**

#### *Absences*

I expect attendance except when excused for religious observances/practices that are in accordance with ACD 304–04 “Accommodations for Religious Practices” and university-sanctioned activities that are in accord with ACD 304–02 “Missed Classes Due to University-Sanctioned Activities.” Medical excuses should be verified by a medical professional or faculty/administrative advisor.

#### *Accommodations*

Students who feel they will need disability accommodations in this class but have not registered with the Disability Resource Center (DRC) should contact DRC immediately. The DRC Tempe office is located on the first floor of the Matthews Center Building. DRC staff can also be reached at: (480) 965-1234 (V) or (480) 965-9000 (TTY). For additional information, visit: [www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc](http://www.asu.edu/studentaffairs/ed/drc).

#### *Policy against threatening behavior*

All incidents and allegations of violent or threatening conduct by an ASU student (whether on-or off campus) must be reported to the ASU Police Department (ASU PD) and the Office of the Dean of Students. If either office determines that the behavior poses or has posed a serious threat to personal safety or to the welfare of the campus, the student will not be permitted to return to campus or reside in any ASU residence hall until an appropriate threat assessment has been completed and, if necessary, conditions for return are imposed. ASU PD, the Office of the Dean of Students, and other appropriate offices will coordinate the assessment in light of the relevant circumstances. If you have any questions, please refer to ACD-304-10 Course Syllabus or contact P.F. Lengel or Jenny Smith in the CLAS Dean's Office at (480) 965-6506.