

**CLAS 3730: THE ROMAN TO MEDIEVAL NEAR
EAST: THE CAESAREA EXCAVATIONS,
ISRAEL
Maymester 2018**

Joseph L. Rife (Classical and Mediterranean
Studies) Phillip Lieberman (Jewish Studies,
History, and Law)

DATES May 9-June 1 (23 days/nights)

CREDITS 3

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course introduces students to the history and archaeology of the Near East from Roman times to the Middle Ages (ca. 1st century B.C.E.-12th century C.E.) by working and living at the ancient city of Caesarea Maritima on the west coast of Israel during the month of May. Caesarea was the lavish port of Herod the Great, the Roman provincial capital, a thriving commercial center during the Roman and Byzantine eras, a leading marketplace and stronghold during the Islamic caliphates, and a Crusader fortress: a vibrant melting pot of cultures and religions throughout its history. Students participate in on-site archaeological research at Caesarea, attend practical seminars and lectures on the kibbutz where they lodge, and visit sites and museums in central to northern Israel.

The Caesarea Excavations, directed by Rife and Lieberman under exclusive license from the Israeli Antiquities Authority, furnish a unique opportunity for students at the introductory level to join in a major interdisciplinary research program at a spectacular Mediterranean site of prime importance. The 2018 season of the Caesarea Excavations, our inaugural campaign, will involve intensive excavation of the north side of Temple Platform and the south-central district of the *decumanus maximus*, an area first occupied by Herod's great Temple to Roma and Augustus and a dense adjacent neighborhood, then by the episcopal complex surrounding the Octagon, perhaps by the lost Great Mosque, and finally by a Fatimid souk. Through daily tasks students will learn the basic skills of archaeological fieldwork: techniques of digging, architectural and geospatial recording, and the collection, identification, conservation, and documentation of artifactual and biological remains.

An essential feature of this course is the experience of living and learning in situ. The schedule entails a daily routine of excavation and finds-processing punctuated by afternoon lectures or practica; occasional excursions to other regions; and the weekly day of rest. Apart from learning methodology, students will examine the religious, cultural, social, and economic history of the Roman to Medieval eras as it is reflected in the region's archaeological record. Finally, the course introduces students to the customs,

rhythms, and spaces of life in modern Israel while they stay on a kibbutz but travel to the nation's three largest cities: Tel Aviv, Haifa, and Jerusalem.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- To gain practical experience in archaeological fieldwork through the stages of data-collection and recording to analysis and interpretation
- To build appreciation for and understanding of interdisciplinary research
- To develop basic knowledge of the variety of material culture in the Roman to Medieval Near East
- To learn about long-term developments in the region's history
- To gain understanding of and respect for modern Israeli society

CURRICULUM

The activities of the course—participation in excavation, visits to sites and museums, and involvement in lectures/seminars/practica—will be organized as follows:

1) Students will be junior team members of the Caesarea Excavations. They will work on a regular schedule of digging and finds-processing, rotating through two field stations, under the supervision of the senior staff and specialists affiliated with the project.

2) Students will attend lectures and seminars or practica, all illustrated and engaging discussion, that provide practical knowledge but also contextualize the fieldwork. These include, e.g., an on-site introduction to the archaeology of harbors, a laboratory exercise on ceramic finds (as well as glass, stone, metal, bone, etc), and lectures on the textual and material evidence for life under Islamic and Crusader rule.

3) Students visit major sites in central to northern Israel that not only elucidate our work at Caesarea but also provide a broader context for understanding its place in the history and archaeology of the Roman to Medieval Near East. On these trips students will examine monuments, finds, and exhibits while discussing long-term developments and interpretive themes relevant to each site. These excursions will involve both guided activities and free-time for individual exploration. The tentative roster of sites introduces students to coastal urbanism and important communities of Romans, Jews, Christians, Arabs, and Crusaders: Joffa; Tiberias and Capernaum on the Sea of Galilee; Bet She'an; Haifa; Akko; Jerusalem.

FEES: Cost per student is \$8,250. Fees include tuition, room and board, in-Israel travel, and admissions to sites and museums. **Fees do NOT include:** flight to and from Israel, meals while on excursions (four lunches plus one dinner), and incidental expenses.

Fees and dates are subject to change. Accepted Students must commit by February 12th in the GEO application - Studio Abroad to retain their place on the course roster. We anticipate a wait list of students wishing to join this course, thus the importance of committing as soon as you are accepted. This course being offered is contingent upon enrolling at least 14 qualified students by the end of January 2018.

Maymester 2018

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SCHEDULE

Wed, May 9	Arrival at Ben Gurion Airport, Tel Aviv, and transport to Caesarea District Orientation to Sdot Yam Kibbutz Welcome party
Thurs, May 10	Introduction to Caesarea <i>Morning:</i> Introductory lecture on history and archaeology <i>Afternoon:</i> Hike around site <i>Evening:</i> Life in Israel
Fri, May 11	Field preparation: <i>Morning:</i> Practicum: introduction to digging equipment and methods <i>Afternoon:</i> Practicum: introduction to finds processing <i>Late afternoon:</i> Discussion of goals; quiz on geography and chronology
Sat, May 12	DAY OF REST Optional excursion to Tel Aviv/Jaffa

Sun, May 13	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation begins
Mon, May 14	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds
Tues, May 15	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Lecture/practicum: "Artifacts and assemblages"
Wed, May 16	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Lecture/practicum: "The archaeology of harbors"
Thurs, May 17	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Lecture: "Jews, Christians, and Romans"
Fri, May 18	Excursion: Galilee (Capernaum, Tiberias, Bet She'an)
Sat, May 19	DAY OF REST Optional excursion to Tel Aviv/Jaffa

Sun, May 20	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Lecture: “Medieval Islam”
Mon, May 21	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Student Presentations I
Tues, May 22	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing finds <i>Evening:</i> Lecture: “The Latins in the Levant”
Wed, May 23	Excursion: Haifa and Akko
Thurs, May 24	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing <i>Evening:</i> Student Presentations II
Fri, May 25	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing
Sat, May 26	DAY OF REST Optional excursion to Tel Aviv/Jaffa

Sun, May 27	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing
Mon, May 28	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing <i>Evening:</i> Student Presentations III (if needed)
Tues, May 29	<i>Morning-afternoon:</i> Excavation/processing <i>Evening:</i> Lecture: “Modern Israel”
Wed, May 30	Excursion: Jerusalem
Thurs, May 31	Excursion: Jerusalem
Fri, June 1	<i>Morning:</i> Final trench tour and conclusions <i>Afternoon:</i> Final exam Farewell dinner
Sat, June 2	Departures