History 240 Writing Assignment #1: The Romans

GE Focus Areas: Communication; Civic Discourse-Historical Awareness

The Roman era, from its founding in 509 BCE to the fall of the western empire in 476 CE, spans the entirety of the Classic Period (500BCE-500CE) and bought about many changes to the western world. Write a 3-4 page (750-1000 word) paper discussing a historical figure or an aspect of Roman life and culture. Your paper should include an analysis of the significance of your subject in Roman and/or the history of western civilization.

Questions you might consider include: What contributions did a person make to Roman/human society? What innovations were made in a particular field? Were the changes/innovations/impacts short-term and unique to the Roman Empire, or were they broad and long-lasting?

On the day the papers are due, be prepared to give a snapshot (2 minute) report to the class focusing on what you learned in your research.

Essay topics must be approved in advance. You may choose from the topics below or come up with your own. Only one student per topic.

Possible topics include:

**LEADERS:**
- Gaius Marius
- Marcus Antonius
- Julius Caesar
- Augustus
- Tiberius
- Caligula
- Claudius
- Nero
- Vespasian
- Trajan
- Titus
- Hadrian
- Marcus Aurelius
- Caracalla
- Constantine I

**ROMAN LIFE & CULTURE:**
- Architecture
- Roman Legion
- Roman (pagan) Religion
- Gladiator Games
- Slaves and Slavery
- Roman Baths
- Public works (roads, aqueducts)
- Art & Music
- Persecution of Christians
- Roman Law
- Political institutions
- Technological advances
- War & Warfare
- Education
- Women in Roman Society

**WRITERS:**
- Ovid
- Virgil
- Horace
- Lucretius
- Cicero
- Augustine of Hippo

**WARS:**
- Punic Wars
- Parthian Wars
- War of the Roman Republic
- Year of the Four Emperors
- Macedonian Wars
- Barbarian Invasions

Notes on format and mechanics:
1. Margins are to be no wider than 1”
2. Use a standard 12-point font (Times New Roman, Courier, Arial)
3. Papers are to be written in your own words and should contain few, if any, direct quotes from the text or other sources
4. Proofread your paper for spelling, punctuation and grammatical errors before submitting
5. Use MLA or APA for citations and format
6. Include a bibliography of all sources consulted, whether cited or not
7. The Writing Rubric, MLA Basics and other resources can be found in the “Writing Resources” folder under the Course Info section of Blackboard