

HIS 390  
**Rabbis, Bishops and Emperors: Jews & Christians  
under Roman Rule**

T/Th, 3:30-4:50pm

Satisfies: GLO

Thematic Categories: "Empires, Violence & Global Connections,"  
"Law, Politics & Social Justice," "Race, Religion, Gender & Sexualities"

Professor Eric Miller

This course examines the relationship between the Roman Empire and the Jewish and Christian communities in the lands under its rule. The relationship between the Roman government and the emerging rabbinic movement will be explored, as well as the transition of Rome from a power that persecuted Christians to a power that accepted and then adopted the Christian faith will also be examined in detail. The impact of this change on Jewish communities in the fourth century C.E. led to surprising developments, many of which are not commonly understood. The course will examine some of the many forms of Christianity and Judaism that developed until there was a clear separation between the two religions, both of which underwent continual revisions of group identity during these formative centuries. The course will cover material from the second century C.E. through the fifth century C.E., examining the evidence from Jewish and Christian texts as well as other historical documents and material remains. The focus in the readings will be on certain prominent figures and their writings. The class lectures will fill in much of the surrounding context and history, which makes attendance in class all the more essential. The class is in lecture format with class discussions.