This course offers an opportunity to study the origins of Western historical writing. In reading and discussing the works of Herodotus, Thucydides, Polybius, Sallust, and Tacitus, we will learn a great deal about ancient history, but our chief concern will be with how and why these writers wrote what they did. What did they think was the value of learning about the past? Why did a prose history seem to them the most effective way of realizing this value? What conclusions—about politics, about human nature, about the historian’s responsibilities—did they intend their readers to derive from their work?