

Dr. Alex Cushing
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Education

- Ph.D., Classics, University of Toronto 2020
Collaborative Programme in Ancient History (ColPAH)
Dissertation: *The Economic Relationship between Patron and Freedman in Italy in the Early Roman Empire*.
Supervisor: Christer Bruun (Toronto). Examiners: Koenraad Verboven (Ghent), Katherine Blouin (Toronto), Seth Bernard (Toronto), Andreas Bendlin (Toronto)
- M.A., Classics, University of Toronto 2009
Minor Field Thesis: *Prohibitions and the Enslaved in Ancient Greek Sacred Inscriptions*
Supervisor: Ephraim Lytle (Toronto)
- B. A., Hons., Classics and Classical Civilization, University of Toronto 2007

Employment

- University of Rochester (Rochester, NY) 2023-present
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Religion and Classics
- Loyola University Maryland (Baltimore, MD) 2022 - 2023
Visiting Assistant Professor, Department of Classics
- Carleton University (Ottawa, ON) 2022
Visiting Instructor, Greek and Roman Studies
- University of Toronto (Toronto, ON) 2012 - 2020
Course Instructor and Lead Writing Teaching Assistant,
Department of Classics

Research Interests

Enslaved and Freed Labour in the Roman Mediterranean; Latin Epigraphy; Roman Law and Legal status; Roman Social History; Cultural Identities, Migration, and Mobility in the Roman World.

Publications

- 2025, "Enslaved Workers and Affective Labour in Ancient Rome and the Antebellum South: Agency and Strategies" in D. James and S. Harrison (eds.) *Illuminating Mediterranean Antiquity through Comparative History*, Liverpool University Press, 59-81.
- Forthcoming, "The Concept of *beneficium manumissionis* and its (Non-)Appearance on Freedperson Epitaphs" in J. Edmonson, J. Sickinger, and G. Tsolakis (eds.) *Epigraphy and Civic Life in the Graeco-Roman World*, Brill.

Works in Progress

- Roman Manumission and Ideology* (monograph)
- "Manumission Trends and Roman Attitudes towards *Dispensatores*" (article length manuscript)
- "Ironic Compassion and Manumission in Petronius' *Satyricon*" (article length manuscript)
- "Some Comments on Freed and Enslaved Agents in the *Alimenta* Table from Veleia" (article length manuscript)

Conference Papers and Scholarly Presentations

- "*eum nobis amicum quam servum esse maluisti*: Affective Labour, Manumission, and Enslaved Scribal Workers in the Roman World", AIA/SCS, Scribal Cultures in the Ancient World. January 2026

“ <i>quis libellos meos sic amabit?</i> : Enslaved and Freed Literary Work as Emotional Labour and Affective Product”. Labor Invisus: The World of Work. Symposium Vesuvianum, Villa Vergiliana.	October 2024
“The Concept of <i>beneficium manumissionis</i> and its (Non-)Appearance on Freedperson Epitaphs”, Fourth North American Congress of Greek and Latin Epigraphy	January 2024
“It’s Who You Know: Co-Freedmen Networks and Legal Knowledge in the Campanian Wax Tablets”, AIA/SCS, Law and Epigraphy in the Greco-Roman World (ASGLE Joint Session)	January 2024
“Pliny the Elder and the Ethical Consumption of Enslaved Labour”, Reading Pliny the Elder in the Twenty-First Century, Symposium Vesuvianum, Villa Vergiliana.	October 2023
“The Patron-Freedperson Relationship as Social Safety Net?: Roman Manumission, Poverty, and Vulnerability”, Poverty and Vulnerability in Classical Antiquity: Gendered and Life-Cycle Approaches, Manchester Centre for Youth Studies/History Research Centre, Manchester Metropolitan University	April 2023
“Access to Law and Roman Freedpersons: A Legal Capabilities Approach”, Association of Ancient Historians Annual Meeting	April 2023
“Slavery in Ancient Rome and Antebellum Maryland”, Loyola University Maryland Classics Department Public Lecture	January 2023
“Affective Labour and Manumission in Roman Egypt: Relationships, Emotional Expression, and Freeing the Enslaved in the Papyri”, AIA/SCS, Culture and Society in Greek, Roman, and Byzantine Egypt (Organized by The American Society of Papyrologists)	January 2023
“Enslaved Labour and Emotional Expression in the Letters of Pliny the Younger”, CAAS annual meeting, Paper Session 2: Enslavement and Interactions with North Africa in Imperial Latin Literature	October 2022
“Enslaved Workers and Affective Labour in Ancient Rome and the Antebellum South: Agency and Strategies”, Illuminating Mediterranean Antiquity through Comparative History: Theorising ‘Soft’ Approaches (Swansea University/Online)	July 2022
“Empathy for the Enslaved?: The <i>Senatus Consultum Silanianum</i> and Popular Protest in 61 CE”, AIA/SCS, Activisms Ancient and Modern Joint AIA/SCS Panel (Organized by Classics and Social Justice)	January 2022
“Trumpian Bureaucracy in 62 CE: Junian Latins, Wax Tablets, and Procedural Barriers to Citizenship”, AIA/SCS, Herculaneum Studies: The Next Generation (Organized by The American Friends of Herculaneum)	January 2022
“Fettered by Faithfulness: Manumission and the Demands of Affective Labour on Roman Freedpeople”, Affect, Intensity, Antiquity (St. Andrews/Online Conference)	August 2021
“The Selection and Recruitment of Freed Agricultural <i>Procuratores</i> in Roman Italy”, Specialized Labor in Classical Antiquity (Princeton and Rutgers Joint Conference)	May 2021
“ <i>Obligati tam grandi beneficio</i> : The Satirization of Compassionate Manumission in the <i>Satyricon</i> ”, CAMWS	April 2021
“The Recruitment of Private Procurators from among Domestic Slaves in the Early Empire”, CAC, Quebec City	May 2016
“ <i>Dispensatoris nobile cernis opus</i> : Manumission and Roman Attitudes towards Household Slave Accountants”, CAC, Toronto	May 2015
“The Veleian Tablets and the role of freedmen <i>procuratores</i> in Italian agriculture”, ColPAH York University/University of Toronto seminar, Toronto	February 2015
“Slave prohibitions in Ancient Greek Sacred Laws”, Graduate Conference of the Joint Collaborative Program in Ancient History (York University/University of Toronto)	April 2011

Research Experience

Research Assistant (Christer Bruun, Supervisor)

Fall 2011 – Spring 2014

Department of Classics, University of Toronto

Duties included research, proofreading, and editorial assistance working on various projects, including the Oxford Handbook of Roman Epigraphy (2014) and other scholarly articles.

Additional Professional Experience

Digital Humanities Certification, Digital Humanities: Developing Individual Projects International Workshop, Global Institute for Research, Education, and Scholarship December 9th 2021 – January 20th 2022

Completed a six-week workshop that developed diverse digital humanities skills, including data structuring and database creation, data and social network visualization, and geographical annotations and visualizations.

Grade 11 Teacher, World Literature

Fall 2020 – Spring 2021

Richard Wright Public Charter School, Washington, DC

Duties included teaching a variety of authors and literature from Asia, the African diaspora, and Antiquity as well as writing instruction based on Humanities research.

Departmental Lead Writing Teaching Assistant

Fall 2015 – Spring 2018

Department of Classics, University of Toronto

Duties included the development and implementation of initiatives and writing assignments for writing-intensive courses across the Department, as well as the development and implementation of training sessions for TAs in writing instruction in tutorials, assessment modelling, and provision of feedback.

Scholarships and Awards

Dean's Supplemental Research and Travel Grant (Office of the Dean, College of Arts and Humanities, Loyola University Maryland)	2022
Centre for the Humanities Affiliate Faculty Research Grant (Centre for the Humanities, Loyola University Maryland)	2022
Doctoral Completion Grant (School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto)	2015-2016
Doctoral Completion Grant (School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto)	2014-2015
Rene Efrain Memorial Scholarship for Roman History Graduate Studies (Department of Classics, University of Toronto)	2012
Rene Efrain Memorial Scholarship for Roman History Graduate Studies (Department of Classics, University of Toronto)	2011
Rene Efrain Memorial Scholarship for Roman History Graduate Studies (Department of Classics, University of Toronto)	2010
Graduate Admission Award (School of Graduate Studies, University of Toronto)	2007
Graham Campbell Fellowship in Memory of Maurice Hutton in Classics	2007