

## **NCLC 275-002: *Our Integrative World* (4 credits)**

**Fall 2013    Tuesday/Thursday 9:00-10:15 am  
IN 215G**

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Enterprise 407

Office Hours by appointment

*"I don't know much about history, and I wouldn't give a nickel for all the history in the world. It means nothing to me. History is more or less bunk."*

Henry Ford, Interview in *Chicago Tribune* (1916)

Almost a century later, many people still agree with Ford, seeing world history as irrelevant. But with twenty-first century globalization, it is imperative we examine connections between different eras and diverse cultures to better understand the commonality of human experience. Humans have an integrative history that transcends the histories of particular regions, nations, or ethnic groups. The complex interaction of world cultures necessitates a shared sense of humanity—of “global citizenship”. This course will follow the story of humanity from the Stone Age to the twenty-first century: from humankind’s adoption of agriculture, to the birth of cities, to the advent of globalization. We will take an interdisciplinary route on our journey, exploring history, philosophy, religion, economics, literature, and technology.

*"... there can be no common peace and prosperity without common historical ideas. Without such ideas to hold them together in harmonious co-operation, with nothing but narrow, selfish, and conflicting nationalist traditions, races and peoples are bound to drift towards conflict and destruction."*

H.G. Wells, *The Outline of History* (1920)

\*This course includes 1 credit of Experiential Learning and fulfills the World History **or** Global Understanding general education requirement for Integrative Studies students.

### **COURSE LEARNING OBJECTIVES:**

- Demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of world history by examining crucial turning points in the history of humanity.
- Demonstrate an understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the history of the world.
- Develop understanding of global patterns and processes and their interaction with society.
- Demonstrate understanding of the interconnectedness, difference, and diversity of a global society.
- Identify, evaluate, and appropriately cite online and print resources.
- Exhibit college-level oral and written communication skills.
- Apply skills that will facilitate collaborative learning.

### **REQUIRED TEXTS**

- *This Fleeting World: A Short History of Humanity*, David Christian
- *The Eater Reader*, James Miller
- *A History of the World in 6 Glasses*, Tom Standage

### **COURSE ASSESSMENT:**

- |                           |     |
|---------------------------|-----|
| • Participation           | 15% |
| • Tests                   | 30% |
| • Active Research Project | 40% |
| • Final Reflective Essay  | 15% |

**PARTICIPATION** = 15%. Collaborative learning is an important feature of a learning community. Students are expected to attend class (arriving on time and remaining until the end of the session), to participate actively and

responsibly, and to hand in all assignments when due. Students are expected to read and be prepared to discuss the assigned texts. There will be two written assignments included in this component, worth 5% of your final grade.

**TESTS = 30%.** There will be an in-class test on prior material covered in *This Fleeting World: A Short History of Humanity* by David Christian, and a second in-class test on material covered in *A History of the World in 6 Glasses* by Tom Standage. Each test is worth 15% of your final grade.

**ACTIVE RESEARCH PROJECT = 40%.** You will investigate how food is important to all of us in terms of identity, history, and globalization.

**Part One = 20% (Due October 29)**

You will interview 12 people, males and females of varying ages, asking them to name a food dish that has personal significance to them—based on their identity, heritage, culture and/or personal history—and then explain why this food was chosen. Your interview group should include people from different geographical areas (nationally and internationally). Included in your interview group should be someone:

- Between the ages of 19 - 30
- Between the ages of 46 – 59
- Between the ages of 31 - 45
- Over the age of 60

You need to list each interviewee (do not give full name) and include the gender, age, and geographical/cultural self-identifier. Then you should give the food dish named, followed by the person's explanation for why it was chosen.

Upon conducting all 12 interviews, you will write a 3-4 page summary and analysis of the entire interview process. In this, you will reflect on the interviews themselves:

- Discuss how you chose your participants and each person's comfort-level during the interview.
- What was difficult, what was easy, what was surprising, what was expected, etc.?
- What similarities and differences do you see among all answers given?
- Can you detect any patterns, and if so, what are they and what do you think produced them?
- How did this exercise connect to course topics and/or texts?
- What did you learn from this exercise?

**Part Two = 20% (Due November 21)**

You will investigate a food dish that **you** feel is tied to **your** identity, heritage, culture and/or personal history. In a 4-5 page essay discuss:

- Why is this dish important and why have you chosen it?
- Explain the connections between your dish and yourself (and/or family).
- Consider the rituals involved in obtaining, preparing, and eating the dish.
- Examine the history of your dish and how it came to be a part of your culture.
- Consider any migrations and adaptations of your dish throughout history.
- Where and how are the main ingredients of the dish produced?
- Is the production sustainable (environmentally, economically, equitably)?

This essay must include research using at least three appropriate sources, which should be properly cited.

Appropriate sources are:

- academic books
- articles from peer-reviewed and peer-edited journals (print and/or online)
- articles from popular print periodicals (newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- reliable (i.e. fully-sourced) websites (Wikipedia will **NOT** be accepted as a credible source)

**FINAL REFLECTIVE ESSAY = 15%.** The final assignment will demonstrate integrative learning and should include analysis of your learning in the course using textual evidence. A detailed description of requirements will be given out and the assignment will be due by noon on **December 12**.

➔ **Late Work.** Papers and other assignments are to be turned in to the instructors at the beginning of class on the day due. **Late work will be reduced one letter grade per day that it is late** (including Saturday & Sunday). No work will be accepted over one week late without a valid written medical excuse or notice of death in the family. Please do not plan to turn work in to your instructor's mailbox unless you have specific permission to do so. Unless otherwise stipulated, work should be submitted in hard copy format; emailed and faxed material is not acceptable.

### **Disability Services**

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services at 703-993-2474 or [ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu). All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. The need for accommodations must be identified at the beginning of the semester.

### **Honor Code**

"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the University Community have set forth this: Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to **cheat, plagiarize, steal, and/or lie** in matters related to academic work."

All George Mason University students have agreed to abide by the letter and the spirit of the Honor Code. All violations of the Honor Code will be reported to the Honor Committee for review.

### **Commitment to Diversity:**

New Century College is an intentionally inclusive community that celebrates diversity and strives to have faculty, staff and students that reflect the diversity of our plural society. We do not discriminate on the basis of race, class, linguistic background, religion, gender identity, sex, sexual orientation, ethnicity, age, or physical ability.

## **COMPETENCIES**

A Competency-Based Education: what does the ability to use these skills contribute to a degree in Integrative Studies? New Century College believes that a successful undergraduate education requires more than an ability to master complex bodies of knowledge. Throughout their years as undergraduates, Integrative Studies students pursue excellence in eight competencies, each one essential to the transfer of knowledge from classroom practice to real-life problems. Students demonstrate their growing mastery of the competencies through assignments, projects, reflection, self-assessment and the creation of portfolios.

### **1. Communication**

Communication is the process of creating and sharing meaning through human interaction. A competent communicator will be able to:

- Speak, read, write and listen effectively, with attention to audience, purpose and context.
- Use appropriate language, nonverbal and visual symbols.
- Organize ideas and information strategically.
- Design, revise and produce work tailored to diverse audiences.

### **2. Critical Thinking**

Critical thinking is a habit of mind characterized by the comprehensive exploration of issues, ideas, artifacts, and events before accepting or formulating a judgment or conclusion. Someone who is a good critical thinker will be able to:

- Explore the issues and identify any problems to be solved.
- Identify and evaluate relevant, valid information and evidence.
- Understand the influence of context and assumptions.
- Summarize and synthesize key issues.
- Articulate his or her own position using evidence-based arguments.
- Design and implement problem solving plans.

### **3. Group Collaboration**

Group collaboration is the process of working toward a shared agenda and/or common purpose while capitalizing on the diversity within the group. Effective group collaboration means that students should be able to:

- Create shared expectations and a common purpose.
- Understand and choose roles and tasks.
- Make decisions and track progress collaboratively.
- Facilitate constructive consensus-building, compromise and conflict.
- Integrate individual talents and strengths toward the accomplishment of goals and tasks.
- Be inclusive and value the diversity of the group.

### **4. Global Understanding**

Global Understanding is the respect for and appreciation of the interconnections among biocultural systems. Global understanding includes the ability to:

- Appreciate and apply diverse perspectives, ways of knowing, and values.
- Analyze the complexity of the interconnectedness of local and global communities politically, economically, socially, and culturally.
- Understand and respect various life forms and the environment.
- Recognize and address the global implications of human, environmental, and economic exploitation.

## **5. Civic Engagement**

Civic engagement is practice based on an informed understanding of communities and the roles and responsibilities of individuals within those communities. Students will:

- Develop the ability to examine contemporary issues and their historical contexts.
- Recognize and value multiple perspectives in civic life.
- Understand how actions are shaped by multiple forces, including values, and economic and social inequity.
- Make informed choices regarding personal community involvement, social justice issues and leadership roles.
- Work collaboratively with diverse partners to solve problems for a common good

## **6. Digital Literacy**

As information and communication technologies permeate more and more aspects of personal, professional and civic life, students need to be able to apply and critique existing and emerging technologies. Competence in digital literacy requires that students will be able to:

- Research, evaluate and apply the digital information and communication tools and platforms appropriate to each activity undertaken.
- Demonstrate a readiness to learn new information communication technology (ICT) confidently and independently in the creation of original digital work.
- Integrate existing personal and networked ICTs with emerging tools and platforms.
- Understand and ethically resolve the privacy, security, accessibility and identity-management issues associated with the integration of digital literacy into everyday life.

## **7. Aesthetic Awareness**

Aesthetic awareness encourages individual to develop intellectual and emotional responses to nature or human creativity. An aesthetically aware person can:

- Understand the historical, social, political, environmental or gendered contexts of specific created works.
- Appreciate the complex processes of creative expression in multiple forms and media.
- Recognize and explore the transformative potential of creativity in effecting societal change.
- Value creative expression and the natural world to enrich everyday life.

## **8. Well-Being**

Well-being is the life-long experience of life satisfaction, happiness, and purpose. Students will:

- Develop insights and habits of regularly assessing one's own quality of life.
- Develop self-efficacy and control over one's own life.
- Effectively self-manage stress and anxiety.
- Find equanimity, peacefulness, and resiliency in the face of adversity.
- Develop imaginative and inclusive ways to solve problems.
- Create and sustain positive relationships and social support.
- Demonstrate pro-social behaviors and emotions (e.g., compassion, gratitude, cooperation).

## WRITTEN ASSIGNMENT GRADING STANDARDS

All assignments are due at the beginning of class as noted in the daily schedule and must be typed using 11 or 12 point font and one-inch margins, double-spaced, and stapled. You must correctly and consistently use a recognized citation style, such as MLA or APA.

### Score of A: Superior

- Addresses the topic fully and explores the issue thoughtfully.
- Shows substantial depth, fullness and complexity of thought.
- Demonstrates clear, focused, coherent, and logical organization.
- Is fully developed and detailed. The point is clear and well stated.
- Good introduction with clear thesis statement, and an effective conclusion.
- Evidences superior control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition between paragraphs; only a few minor flaws.
- Integrates evidence from texts to support ideas and arguments.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

### Score of B: Strong

- Clearly addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows some depth and complexity of thought.
- Is effectively organized. Easy to follow and understand.
- Is well developed, with supporting detail. Logically coherent.
- Demonstrates control of diction, syntactic variety, and transition; may have a few minor mechanical flaws.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

### Score of C: Competent

- Adequately addresses the topic and explores the issue.
- Shows clarity of thought but may lack complexity.
- Is organized. Can be followed with some difficulty.
- Is adequately developed, with some detail. Some logical fallacies or incoherent sentences/paragraphs.
- Demonstrates competent writing; shows some flaws in syntax and grammar.
- Proper citation of texts using a standard citation method.

### Score of D: Weak

- May distort or neglect parts of the topic.
- May be simplistic or stereotyped in thought.
- May demonstrate problems in organization.
- May have generalizations without supporting detail or detail without generalizations; may be undeveloped. Logically flawed; several incoherencies.
- May reveal patterns of flaws in language, syntax or mechanics.
- Improper citation method.

### Score of F: Inadequate

- Demonstrates serious inadequacy in addressing the topic.
- Fails in its attempts to discuss the topic. Illogical.
- May be deliberately off-topic. Extremely difficult to follow.
- Is so incompletely developed as to suggest or demonstrate incompetency.
- Is wholly incompetent mechanically.
- Improper citation method.

## WEEKLY SCHEDULE

*As in any course, some adjustments to the schedule may be made during the semester. It is the responsibility of students to come to class regularly and frequently monitor their Mason email account in order to stay informed about possible changes in activities or assignments.*

Tues August 27	<p>Course overview / Review syllabus</p> <p><b>Assignment:</b> Why are you pursuing a bachelor's degree? What are your goals while at Mason? What is a liberal arts education? (1-2 page essay)</p>
Thurs August 29	<p>History of Higher Education</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What is a liberal arts education? What is integrative studies?</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignment due</b></p>
Tues Sept 3	Christian, <i>Introduction, Prequel, and Beginnings</i>
Thurs Sept 5	Christian, <i>Acceleration</i>
Tues Sept 10	Christian, <i>Our World</i>
Thurs Sept 12	Christian wrap-up
Tues Sept 17	<b>Test</b>
Thurs Sept 19	Standage, Introduction and Chapter 1 & 2
Tues Sept 24	Standage, Chapters 3 & 4
Thurs Sept 26	Standage, Chapter 4 & 5
Tues Oct 1	Standage, Chapter 6 & 7
Thurs Oct 3	Standage, Chapter 7 & 8
Tues Oct 8	Standage Chapters 9 & 10
Thurs Oct 10	Standage Chapters 11 & 12 and Epilogue
Tues Oct 15	<b>No Class</b>
Thurs Oct 17	<b>No Class</b>
Tues Oct 22	<p><b>Test</b></p> <p><b>Assignment:</b> Draft Spring 2014 schedule. Research your concentration (goal, requirements, possible careers, graduate school opportunities).</p>
Thurs Oct 24	<p>Registration Prep</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The four divisions of your degree: general education, concentration, learning communities &amp; experiential learning</li> </ul> <p><b>Assignment due</b></p>
Tues Oct 29	<b>Active Research Project Part I due</b>
Thurs Oct 31	Miller Chapter 1

Tues Nov 5	Miller Chapter 2
Thurs Nov 7	Miller Chapter 3
Tues Nov 12	Miller Chapter 4
Thurs Nov 14	Miller Chapter 5
Tues Nov 19	Miller Chapter 6
Thurs Nov 21	<b>Active Research Project Part II due</b>
Tues Nov 26	<i>No Class</i>
Thurs Nov 28	<i>Thanksgiving Break</i>
Tues Dec 3	Miller Chapter 7
Thurs Dec 5	Course wrap-up & evaluations
Thursday Dec 12	<b>Final Reflective Essay due by noon</b>

**Last Day to Add = September 3, 2013**

**Last Day to Drop = September 27, 2013**

**Elective Withdrawal Period = September 30 - October 25, 2013**