

**HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION**  
HIST 100 – 020 (Spring 2015)  
3 credit hours

**Western Civilization's Big Ideas, Momentous  
Events, and Important People**

**Instructor:** Professor Chris Elzey

**Location:** Robinson B 201

**Day:** T/TH

**Time:** 12:00 - 1:15 p.m.

**Office:** Robinson B 226A

**Email:** celzey@gmu.edu (please use your MasonLive account when emailing)

**Office Hours:** T/TH 1:30-3:30 p.m. (also by appointment)

**Teaching Assistants:**

- Kasey Zronek (kzronek@masonlive.gmu.edu)
  - Nathan Michalewicz (nmichale@masonlive.gmu.edu)
- Both are available by appointment; please email.

**Prerequisites for the Course**

None

**Class Contacts**

1. Name and phone number/email:
2. Name and phone number/email:

**The Course**

The History of Western Civilization explores the great events, issues, individuals, and social and cultural movements that have impacted the history of the western world from antiquity to the present. "Western Civilization's Big Ideas, Momentous Events, and Important People" is the subtitle I have chosen for the course. Much of our time will be spent examining the ideas and events that changed the course of western history, as well as the people behind those ideas and events.

Why take a western civilization course? One reason is that it allows you to better understand the world in which you live. Much of what has been identified as the "modern" experience – democracy, religious diversity, enlightened thinking, humanism, egalitarianism – owes itself in large part to western civilization. Another reason is that it provides an intellectual foundation to appreciate the various artistic, philosophical, and literary movements that have informed the world around you.

**Course Objectives**

Understanding how and why the western world developed the way it did is one of the primary aims of the course. You will learn about western history's

momentous events and significant historical figures, and the myriad of ways the West impacted the rest of the world. You will also learn the fundamentals of the historian's craft: analyzing and synthesizing historical information gleaned from primary and secondary sources. An important part of such an endeavor is being able to express your ideas and thoughts in clear and concise, grammatically correct prose. Finally, upon completion of the class, you will have a better appreciation of how thousands of years of western history have influenced today's world.

### **Required Texts**

Frankforter, A. Daniel and William M. Spellman. *The West: A Narrative History*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition

Perrottet, Tony. *The Naked Olympics*

Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I: My Father Bleeds History* and *Maus II: And Here My Trouble Began*

\*Several primary and secondary source documents (Most will be posted on Blackboard)

A copy of each book will be kept on reserve at the Johnson Center's Gateway Library. You may check the books out for two hours at a time.

### **Course Requirements and Assignments**

We will be reading most of the textbook, *The West: A Narrative History*. Your reading assignments are listed in the course schedule. **YOU ARE TO COME TO CLASS HAVING COMPLETED THAT DAY'S READING ASSIGNMENT AS LISTED IN THE COURSE SCHEDULE.** (All page references in the course schedule refer to the textbook.) Some lectures in class will reinforce what you have read; others will not. You are expected to read all of *The Naked Olympics* and *Maus I* and *Maus II*. We will also read or look at several brief primary and secondary source documents (some are images), and devote a small amount of class time to these.

There will be three examinations. Each will consist of multiple-choice questions (which may or may not include questions about geography), identifications and short answer questions. A week or so before each exam, I will post a list of identification terms and short answer questions. From that list, I will choose a handful of identifications and short answer questions for the exam. The exams will cover all material from class and the readings. Each exam is worth one fifth of your grade.

You are also responsible for writing one paper (4-5 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) on either *The Naked Olympics* or *Maus I* and *II*, or the film, *A Man for All Seasons*, which we will watch in class. I repeat, **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WRITING ONLY ONE PAPER.** I will post the questions on Blackboard roughly two weeks before each paper is due. **THE DUE DATES ARE: FEBRUARY 10 (FOR THE NAKED OLYMPICS), MARCH 26 (FOR A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS) AND APRIL 30 (FOR MAUS I AND MAUS II).** Please spend time thinking about your response, as well as writing the paper. Trust me, your

work will reflect it. You will be graded on content, use of historical evidence, and persuasiveness (which means you should pay particular attention to grammar, punctuation, etc.). **NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL.** I repeat: **NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL.** The paper will count for one fifth of your grade.

The last requirement is several quizzes and out-of-class assignments. Quizzes will be scheduled as well as unannounced. **ONE OF THE FIRST WILL COVER THE SYLLABUS. IT WILL BE GIVEN ON THE SECOND DAY OF CLASS. SO BE PREPARED! TWO OTHER QUIZZES ARE ALSO SCHEDULED: THE NAKED OLYMPICS (FEBRUARY 5), AND MAUS I AND MAUS II (APRIL 28).** All unannounced quizzes will cover the reading or primary/secondary source documents for that particular day. Please bring paper and a pen/pencil to each class. Attendance and class participation – yes, I will record attendance – will also count for a quiz grade.

Assignments may consist of a short opinion piece on primary or secondary source documents or identifying countries on a map. I will announce these assignments in class and/or on Blackboard. **SO PLEASE CHECK BLACKBOARD FREQUENTLY.**

There is one announced assignment. Toward the end of the semester, I would like you to watch **ONE** of three movies: *The Grand Budapest Hotel*; *The Pianist*; or *Goodbye, Lenin*. You are to write a one-pager on the following question: How does knowing the History of Western Civilization help me understand the movie? **YOU ARE TO HAND IN THE ASSIGNMENT ON THE DAY OF EXAM #3.** The assignment will count as a quiz. A copy of each movie will be on reserve in Gateway Library in the Johnson Center.

At the end of the semester, I will drop the two lowest quiz scores and calculate the average. The score will count for the final fifth of your grade. **AS WITH THE PAPERS, NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED ELECTRONICALLY.**

Grades for each assignment will be posted on Grade Center on Blackboard.

**\*\*\*Note:** Blackboard may include an average for your cumulative score. Disregard it. It does not calculate the scores according to the weighted values I've assigned for the course. I will keep a separate grade book and I will consult it when I determine your final grade.

### **Grade Breakdown**

Exams (3)	60%
Paper	20%
Quizzes (average)	20%

## Grading Scale

A	93-100	B+	88-89	C+	78-79	D	60-69
A-	90-92	B	83-87	C	73-77	F	0-59
		B-	80-82	C-	70-72		

## Late Papers and Missed Exams and Quizzes

Make it easy on yourself – turn your paper in on time. Each day the paper is late (Saturdays and Sundays count as well), I will deduct 5 points from the final score. Only an emergency situation can invalidate the 5-point-deduction policy, provided you bring in a doctor's note or other documentation. In this case, if you miss an exam, a makeup will be given (most likely an essay exam). **THERE ARE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES.** Let me say it again: **THERE ARE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES.** I'll say it one more time: **THERE ARE NO MAKEUP QUIZZES.** But I will drop your two lowest quiz scores. These scores will not count towards your overall quiz grade.

## Attendance and Participation

You are expected to come to class. Your attendance will be recorded. Knowing that certain emergencies will, inevitably, arise over the course of the semester, you are excused from missing two classes. Two classes will be devoted to discussion – one for *The Naked Olympics*, the other for *Maus I and II*. I expect you to participate.

## Extra Credit

There is no extra credit. However, I believe that if you show improvement on your exams during the course of the semester, you should be rewarded. Therefore, you can earn improvement credit. Here's how it works: I will take the lowest of your first two exam scores, and if your third exam score is higher, I will then divide the difference by three and add the amount to your lowest score. Say, for example, you score 84 on the first exam, 80 on the second, and 95 on the third. I would add 5 points ( $95-80=15$ ;  $15$  divided by  $3=5$ ) to the result of your second exam and calculate your final grade using that score.

## Electronic Devices

Cell phones, Smartphones, and other electronic devices that ring, beep, sing, whistle, creak, rattle, hiccup, yawn, hum, bark, meow, moo, play music, or make any kind of noise are not permitted. PCs and tablets are allowed, but only for note taking. Do not abuse this privilege. It is distracting to those around you. **IF YOU ARE SEEN USING YOUR PC OR TABLET FOR SOMETHING OTHER THAN NOTE TAKING, YOU WILL FORFEIT YOUR RIGHT TO USE THE DEVICE IN CLASS.**

## Academic Integrity

You are expected to do your own work. For all exams. For all quizzes. For the paper assignment. Period. Students who violate the Honor Code will be dealt with severely. Information on the Honor Code and what constitutes a violation can be found at the website for the Office of Academic Integrity (<http://oai.gmu.edu>)

## Students with Disabilities

Accommodations for students with disabilities are available. See the Office of Disability Services' webpage (<http://ods.gmu.edu>) or call 993-2474 for more information. You can also visit the ODS office. It is located in SUB I, rm. 4205.

## Diversity

The course adheres to George Mason's Diversity Statement. The statement begins, "George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth." The website for the full statement is:

<http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>

## Important Drop/Add Dates

- January 27 is the final day you can drop the course and incur no financial penalty
- February 20 is the last day you can drop the course (not using a selective withdrawal), but you will incur a financial penalty
- Last day for selective withdrawal is March 27.

## Course Schedule

### Week 1: Creating Law and Order (and I Don't Mean the TV Series)

January 20: Introduction; The Rule of Law and Writing in Mesopotamia and Egypt

January 22: Mesopotamia and Egypt (cont.); Moses and Monotheism

Read: pp. xl-xlvi, 2-61 (**ALL PAGES REFER TO FRANKFORTER AND SPELLMAN UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**) (**QUIZ**)

### Week 2: Democracy by the Polis (Not the One with Sting as Lead Singer)

#### \*Primary Documents

January 27: Moses and Monotheism (cont.); Homer: Let Me Tell You a Story  
Read: pp. 64-82; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 1-5

January 29: Sparta and Athens; Let Me Ask You Something: The Socratic Method

Read: pp. 82-106; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 6-10

### Week 3: Build Me an Empire: Ancient Greece and Alexander the Great

February 3: Socratic Method (cont.)

Read: pp. 107-122; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 11-14

February 5: *The Naked Olympics*, **DISCUSSION (QUIZ)**; *La Dolce Vita*: Life in Ancient Rome

Read: pp. 125-145; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 15-18

### Week 4: Expansionism; or, Welcome to the Empire: Ancient Rome

#### \*Primary Documents

February 10: Life in Ancient Rome (cont.); The Long and Winding Via Appia: *Pax Romana* to Empire's End

Read: 145-152

**TURN IN PAPER ON *THE NAKED OLYMPICS***

February 12: *Pax Romana* to Empire's End (cont.)

Read: pp.155-215

Week 5: Unification: The Frankish World of Charlemagne and Beyond

\*Primary Documents

February 17: Qui était Charlemagne?; The Norman Conquest and Its Aftermath

Read: pp. 219-246, 249-264 (stop at paragraph that discusses Investiture Controversy), 267-278, 297-299 (stop at paragraph that discusses Richard I)

February 19: **EXAM #1**

Week 6: "...placed within the grasp of the Evil One": The Calamitous 1300s

February 24: The Church in Turmoil: the Avignon Papacy; Really? It Lasted That Long?: The Hundred Years' War

Read: pp. 264-267, 281-297

February 26: Hundred Years' War (cont.); A Plague on All Your Houses: The Black Death

Read: pp. 299-305 (start at paragraph that discusses Richard I), 308-335

Week 7: The Power of Conviction: Religiosity and Exploration

March 3: A Plague (cont.); Jeanne d'Arc, the Maid Who Became a Saint

Read: pp. 339-362

March 5: Jeanne D'Arc (cont.); Ferdinand Magellan: Round the World in...Three Years"

Read: pp. 362-375

Week 8: Spring Break (Enjoy!)

March 10: No Class

March 12: No Class

Week 9: I Protest: The Reformation

\*Primary Documents

March 17: Magellan (cont.); The Three Reformers: Luther, Calvin and Henry VIII

Read: pp. 379-395

March 19: Film: *A Man for All Seasons*

Read: pp. 395-399

Week 10: Protestants vs. Catholics: The Religious Wars

March 24: Finish *A Man for All Seasons*

Read: pp. 399-403

March 26: There Blew a Protestant Wind: the Defeat of the Spanish Armada; To Defenestrate: the Start of the Thirty Years' War

Read: pp. 403-415

**TURN IN PAPER ON *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS***

Week 11: "L'etat, C'est Moi": Absolutism Absolutely

March 31: Thirty Years' War (cont.); Louis XIV: Le Roi du Soleil

Read: pp. 418-447

April 2: **EXAM #2**

Week 12: "You Say You Want a Revolution": France and Napoleon

\*Primary Documents

April 7: The Enlightenment: Reason Over Faith; The Start of the French Revolution

Read: pp. 451-471, 475-513

April 9: French Revolution (cont.); Terror!

Read: pp. 514-516

Week 13: "Iron and Blood": Nationalism and Imperialism

April 14: "Europe Was at My Feet": the Napoleonic Era; Here We Go Again: The Revolutions of 1848

Read: pp. 516-555

April 16: Revolutions of 1848 (cont.); "When the World Went Mad": WWI

Read: pp. 559-584, 587-615, 619-643, 646-653

Week 14: "Arbeit Macht Frei": Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust

April 21: WWI (cont.); "Revolution in Manners and Morals": the U.S. in the 1920s; Schicklgruber or Hitler?: A Psycho History

Read: pp. 653-675, 679-684

April 23: Schicklgruber or Hitler? (cont.); The Nazis' Rise to Power

Read: pp. 684-733; *Maus I*

Week 15: Us against Them: The Cold War

April 28: *Maus I* and *II*—**DISCUSSION (QUIZ)**; "An Iron Curtain... across the Continent": The Cold War Begins

Read: *Maus II*

April 30: the Cold War Begins (cont.); The Tragic Games: The 1972 Munich Olympics

Read: pp. 736-767, 771-805

**TURN IN PAPER ON MAUS I and II**

May 7: **EXAM #3** (starts at 10:30 a.m.)

**\*\*\*TURN IN ASSIGNMENT ON MOVIE**