

HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION

HIST 100 – 003 (Fall 2015)

3 credit hours

Big Ideas, Momentous Events, and Important People of Western Civilization

Instructor: Professor Chris Elzey

Location: Exploratory Hall L004

Day: M/W/F

Time: 11:30 a.m.-12:20 p.m.

Office: Robinson B 226A

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

Office Hours: M/W 10:30-11:15 a.m., 1:30-2:30 p.m. (also by appointment)

Teaching Assistants:

- Dan Curry (dcurry3@masonlive.gmu.edu)
 - Sara Collini (scolli16@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. “Big Ideas, Momentous Events, and Important People of Western Civilization” 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*, 3rd 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 pictures – and devote a small amount of class time to these.

There are three examinations. Each consists 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, 1"-margins) 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 will say it again: **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: SEPTEMBER 25 (FOR THE NAKED OLYMPICS), OCTOBER 28 (FOR A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS) AND DECEMBER 11 (FOR MAUS I AND MAUS II).** Please spend time thinking about your response, as well as writing the paper. 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* (SEPTEMBER 18 OR 21), AND *MAUS I* AND *MAUS II* (DECEMBER 2 OR 4. I WILL DIVIDE THE CLASS INTO TWO GROUPS FOR DISCUSSION DAYS. YOU WILL TAKE ONE OF THE TWO QUIZZES GIVEN OVER EACH BOOK).** 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 REGULARLY.**

There is one announced assignment. Toward the end of the semester, I would like you to watch **ONE** of two movies: *The Grand Budapest Hotel* or *Goodbye Lenin*. You are to write a one-page response on the following question: How does knowing the History of Western Civilization help me better 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+	88-89.9	C+	78-79.9	D	60-69.9
A-	90-92.9	B	83-87.9	C	73-77.9	F	0-59.9
		B-	80-82.9	C-	70-72.9		

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.

Since the size of the class is rather large, the discussion days devoted to *The Naked Olympics* and *Maus I* and *II* will be arranged somewhat unusually. The class will be divided into two groups: the Spartans and the Athenians. On the day that the Spartans discuss the book, the Athenians are not required to come, and vice versa for the following class. That means you are excused from two classes during the semester. Make good use of your time off!

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: If you score higher on your third exam than you do on the first, I will divide the difference by three and add it to the score of your first exam. Say, for example, you score 80 on the first exam, 84 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 first exam and calculate your final grade using that score.

Improvement credit only applies to the difference in scores between your first and third exams.

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 complies with the George Mason's Diversity Statement: "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." For the full statement, see <http://ctfe.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement/>

Important Drop/Add Dates

- September 8 is the final day you can drop the course and incur no financial penalty
- September 8 is the final day you can add the course
- October 2 is the last day you can drop the course (not using a selective withdrawal), but with a financial penalty
- October 30 is the last day for selective withdrawal

Course Schedule

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

August 31: Introduction; The Rule of Law and Writing in Mesopotamia and Egypt

September 2: Mesopotamia and Egypt (cont.)

Read: pp. 5-31, 35-47 (**ALL PAGES REFER TO FRANKFORTER AND SPELLMAN UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED**) (**QUIZ**)

September 4: Moses and Monotheism

Read: pp. 53-61

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

*Primary Documents

September 7: No class (Labor Day)

September 9: Homer: Let Me Tell You a Story

Read: pp. 67-82; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 1-5

September 11: Sparta and Athens

Read: pp. 82-93, 97-106

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

September 14: Sparta vs. Athens (cont.)

Read: pp. 107-113; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 6-10

September 16: Let Me Ask You Something: The Socratic Method

Read: pp. 113-122, 125-135; *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 11-15

September 18: *Naked Olympics*, Discussion—**SPARTANS (quiz)**

Read: *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 16-18

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

*Primary Documents

September 21: *Naked Olympics*, Discussion—**ATHENIANS (quiz)**

Read: *The Naked Olympics*, chapters 16-18

September 23: La Dolce Vita?: Life in Rome

Read: pp. 135-145

September 25: Life in Rome (cont.)

Read: pp. 145-152, 155-183

TURN IN PAPER ON THE NAKED OLYMPICS

Week 5: Unification: The Frankish World of Charlemagne

*Primary Documents

September 28: The Long and Winding Via Appia: Pax Romana to Empire's End

Read: pp. 189-201, 205-215, 219-337

September 30: Qui Était Charlemagne?

Read: pp. 237-246, 249-264 (stop at paragraph discussing Investiture Controversy), 267-279, 297-299 (stop at paragraph discussing Richard I)

October 2: **EXAM #1**

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

October 5: The Church in Turmoil: the Avignon Papacy

Read: pp. 264-267, 281-297

October 7: Really? It Lasted That Long?: The Hundred Years' War

Read: pp. 299-305 (start at paragraph discussing Richard I), 311-335

October 9: A Plague on All Your Houses: The Black Death

Read: pp. 340-356

Week 7: The Power of Conviction: Religiosity and Exploration

October 13 (Tuesday): Jean d'Arc, the Maid Who Became a Saint

Read: pp. 357-368

October 14: Ferdinand Magellan: Round the World in...Three Years"

Read: pp. 368-375

October 16: The Three Reformers: Luther, Calvin and Henry VIII

Read: pp. 380-395

Week 8: I Protest: The Reformation

*Primary Documents

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

Read: pp. 395-399

October 21: Film: *A Man for All Seasons* (cont.)

October 23: Finish *A Man for All Seasons*

Read: pp. 399-403

Week 9: Protestants vs. Catholics: The Religious Wars

October 26: There Blew a Protestant Wind: the Defeat of the Spanish Armada

Read: pp. 403-405

October 28: To Defenestrate: the Start of the Thirty Years' War

Read: pp. 405-415

TURN IN PAPER ON *A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS*

October 30: Louis XIV: Le Roi du Soleil

Read: pp. 421-439

Week 10: "L'etat, C'est Moi": Absolutism Absolutely

November 2: **EXAM #2**

November 4: The Enlightenment: Reason Over Faith

Read: pp. 451-471, 475-496

November 6: The Start of the French Revolution

Read: pp. 500-513

Week 11: “You Say You Want a Revolution”: France and Napoleon

*Primary Documents

November 9: Terror!

Read: pp. 514-516

November 11: “Europe Was at My Feet”: the Napoleonic Era

Read: pp. 517-524

November 13: Here We Go Again: the Revolutions of 1848

Read: pp. 531-555, 560-584

Week 12 and 13: “Iron and Blood”: Nationalism and Imperialism

November 16: “When the World Went Mad”: WWI

Read: pp. 588-606, 611-615, 620-642

November 18: WWI (cont.)

Read: pp. 651-675

November 20: “Revolution in Manners and Morals”: the U.S. in the 1920s

Read: pp. 680-684

November 23: Schicklgruber or Hitler? A Psycho History

Read: pp. 684-697; start *Maus I* and *II*

November 25 and 27 (No class, Thanksgiving Break)

Week 14: “Arbeit Macht Frei”: Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust

November 30: The Nazis’ Rise to Power

Read: pp. 697-702, 708-733; continue *Maus I* and *II*

December 2: The Nazis’ Rise to Power (cont.)

Read: continue *Maus I* and *II*, second half

December 4: *Maus I* and *II*—Discussion, **ATHENIANS (QUIZ)**

Read: Finish *Maus I* and *II*, Second half

Week 15: Us against Them: The Cold War

December 7: *Maus I* and *II*—Discussion, **SPARTANS (QUIZ)**

Read: pp. 739-761; finish *Maus I* and *II*

December 9: “An Iron Curtain...across the Continent”: the Cold War Begins

Read: pp. 762-767, 772-785

December 11: The Tragic Games: The 1972 Munich Olympics

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

December 18: **EXAM #3** (starts at 10:30 a.m.)

**TURN IN ONE-PAGE PAPER ON *THE GRAND BUDAPEST HOTEL* OR
GOODBYE LENIN (ASSIGNMENT PROMPT ON PAGE 3 OF SYLLABUS)**