

George Mason University  
Fall 2015

# HIST 125 DL1 History of World Civilizations (online)

Course No. 81550

Instructor: Dr. Gail Hook

Email: [ghook@gmu.edu](mailto:ghook@gmu.edu)



13<sup>th</sup> century terracotta sculpture from Djenné-Jeno, the oldest known city in sub-Saharan Africa

## COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is a survey of the development of the world from ancient times to the present. Major themes include the rise and fall of governments and empires, the evolution of cultures and society, philosophy, economics, and commerce, and in the end, globalization. We will examine these themes through a variety of venues including readings in the textbook, primary documents, articles, and film. **IMPORTANT: Students should possess college-level reading and writing skills. If you have a question about this, please see the instructor or your academic advisor.**

## COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of World Civilization.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in World Civilization.
- Students will develop historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, music) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.
- Students will communicate effectively—in writing and on discussion board—their understanding and response to patterns, processes, and themes in the history of world civilization.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- Robert W. Strayer, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History* (Boston & NY: Bedford/ St. Martin's, 2013), ISBN 978-0-312-44443-3 (combined edition)
- Tom Standage, *The History of the World in 6 Glasses* (Walker Publishing Company, 2006) ISBN-10: 0802715524 (or any edition)

## GRADING AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

A+ = 98-100; A = 93-97; A- = 90-92;

B+ = 87-89; B = 82-86; B- = 80-81;

C+ = 77-79; C = 72-76; C- = 70-71;

D+ = 67-69; D = 62-66; D- = 60-61; F = below 60

- Grades are based on weekly homework assignments (40%) and three response papers (20% each). See "Examination Policies" below.
- You will also be assessed on your participation in the class. You should submit a thoughtful comment or question on Discussion Board each week in order to receive full participation credit. Suggestions for discussion will be available on Blackboard each week. You do not receive points for the Discussion Board, but fewer than 12 submittals (only one per week counts toward the total) will result in a reduction in your final semester grade (1 point each).

**NOTE: Understanding your “Average to date” grade on Blackboard:**

Under “Grades” on Blackboard you may see an entry labeled “Average to date”. This shows your current course grade based on the work you have completed and I have graded so far. This lets you know how you have performed in this course so far. It does NOT say “this would be your grade if you stopped working now.” So use “Average to date” to know how you have performed so far and to inspire you to keep your work at a high quality for the rest of the semester!

**EXAMINATION POLICIES**

There are no formal exams for this course. Instead, three times during the semester you will be assigned an article or chapter to read and write a 700-900 word response paper related to that article or chapter. You will be given several questions to answer within the response paper about the article or chapter. The idea is to explain the thesis of the article or chapter and discuss (in your own words) how it relates to the class material that you studied in that section. The article or chapter and questions will be posted at the beginning of the week that it is due, and will be due at the end of that week. More information will be available on Blackboard.

**WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS**

If you choose to withdraw from this class, it is your responsibility to check the appropriate deadlines and proceed with the withdrawal process.

**ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

Students must be responsible for their own work. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. Any student found cheating, including plagiarism, will receive a grade of “0” for the assignment or exam and may also be referred to the Dean of Student Services for additional disciplinary action. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, you should read through this website: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

**MasonLive/EMAIL (GMU Email)**

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web.

**UNIVERSITY POLICIES**

Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>].

**RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTING**

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

**STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].

**WEEKLY SCHEDULE** (go to next page)**WEEKLY SCHEDULE**

NOTE: This schedule is an outline only and is subject to change during the semester. See Blackboard for weekly assignments and deadlines.

\*Each week begins on Monday, on this date

**WEEK 1**

\*August 31

Introduction to class / First Peoples: Populating the earth

**WEEK 2**

September 7

MONDAY: UNIVERSITY CLOSED FOR LABOR DAY HOLIDAY

*Read:* Strayer, Chapters 1-2; and Standage, Chapters 1-2, "Beer in Mesopotamia and Egypt"

*Study topics:* First civilizations: Cities, States and Empires

**WEEK 3**

September 14

*Read:* Strayer, Chapters 3-4, and Standage, Chapters 3-4, "Wine in Greece and Rome"

*Study topics:* Second-wave Empires and new religions

**WEEK 4**

September 21

*Read:* Strayer, Chapter 5

*Study topics:* Social hierarchies, 500 BCE – 500 CE: Caste System / Slavery

**WEEK 5**

September 28

*Read:* Strayer, Chapters 6

*Study topics:* Africa and the Americas, 500 B.C.E. – 1200 C.E.

**WEEK 6**

October 5

*Read:* Strayer, Chapters 7-8

*Study topics:* Commerce and Culture, 500-1500 C.E.: Silk Roads, Sea Roads, Desert Roads, American Roads / East Asian Connections 500-1300

**WEEK 7**

October 12

MONDAY: COLUMBUS DAY RECESS

No homework assignments this week

**RESPONSE PAPER #1 due Sunday, October 18.** See Blackboard.

**WEEK 8**

October 19

*Read:* Strayer, Chapters 9-10, and excerpts from *Marco Polo's Travels* on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Islam, 600-1500 / Christendom, 500-1300

**WEEK 9**

October 26

*Read:* Strayer, Chapter 11

*Study topics:* The Mongols 1200-1500

WEEK 10 November 2	<i>Read:</i> Strayer, Chapter 12-13, and Standage, Chapters 5-6: "High Spirits, High Seas" and "The Drinks that Built America" <i>Study topics:</i> Worlds of the Fifteenth Century: Comparing China and Europe / Islamic World / Americas / Empires and Encounters, 1450-1750
WEEK 11 November 9	No homework assignments this week <b>RESPONSE PAPER #2 due Sunday, November 15.</b> See Blackboard.
WEEK 12 November 16	<i>Read:</i> Strayer, Chapter 14; and Chapters 15-16 (only pages 512-522 and 541-551); and Standage, Chapter 8, "The Coffeehouse Internet" <i>Study topics:</i> Commerce, 1450-1750 / Science and the Enlightenment / National Revolutions
WEEK 13 <b>November 23</b>	<b>No Assignments</b> <b>THANKSGIVING RECESS November 25-29 (Wed.-Sun.)</b>
WEEK 14 November 30	<i>Read:</i> Strayer, Chapters 17-18; and Standage, Chapter 9, "Empires of Tea" <i>Study topics:</i> Industrial Revolution and Latin America, 1750-1914 / European Colonization 1759-1914
WEEK 15 December 7	<i>Read:</i> Strayer, Chapters 19-21; and Chapter 22, pages 755-764 <i>Study topics:</i> World War I and II / Rise and Fall of Communism / The Cold War / End of the Cold War / Decolonization in India and Africa  LAST DAY OF CLASSES IS DECEMBER 12
WEEK 16 December 14	EXAM PERIOD MONDAY DEC. 14-MONDAY DEC. 21 <b>RESPONSE PAPER #3 (Final) due Sunday, December 20</b>