

HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS

HIST 100--014

Instructor: Vadim Staklo

Location:

David King Jr. Hall 2053

T 7:20 pm - 10:00 pm

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Teaching Assistant: Eric Gonzaba

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Course description

The History of Western Civilization course explores the events, personalities, and complex social, political, and cultural changes that have contributed to the genesis of today's world. It follows the great civilizations of Greece and Rome, the Middle Ages, the advent of the Renaissance and the emergence of modern democracy, the rise of the Industrial Age and the collapse of old empires and political systems in the course of the great wars and revolutions. It will also touch upon the key terms, concepts and methods that historians use in their work.

The goal of this course is to gain a better understand the western tradition as you learn about primary and secondary sources, historical methodology, periodization, major economic and social developments, and sharpen your analytical, presentation and writing skills.

Required text:

Frankforter, Daniel and William Spellman, *The West: A Narrative History*, 3rd edition

Additional reading will be posted on Blackboard.

(it is best to read the assigned chapters and primary sources before the lecture)

Course requirements

We will read the textbook and the primary source documents assigned for every class.

Lectures will supplement that and will help identify the most important events and concepts.

Attendance is required, and participation is essential to your grade—10%

The midterm exam will consist of short answer questions and short essays—25%

The final exam, similar in format to the midterm, will focus primarily on the second half of the course but may have questions of a general nature—25%

One analytical paper, 4-5 double-spaced pages, on one of the in-class movies, or on a contemporary important issue of your choice from a historical perspective--20% (see me or Eric for the approval if you decide to explore your own subject).

Quizzes. Surprise quizzes will test your knowledge of the previous week's material and will mostly consist of multiple-choice or short identification questions. I will drop the lowest quiz score when calculating the final grade—20%

All written assignments and tests will be evaluated based on their thesis/argument, use of evidence, and grammar/style. Please submit the analytical paper in hard copy personally in class before the deadline AND submit a digital copy on Blackboard. Note that the digital copy is for filing purposes only, and by itself does not represent the official submission.

Late papers will result in a 5-point final grade deduction for each day past the deadline. We understand real life emergencies, but please provide a letter from a doctor or some other form of proof. If you are forced to miss a midterm or a final, let me know immediately and we will arrange for a make-up. Quizzes cannot be retaken.

Please be considerate of others and turn off and put away cell phones and other electronic devices, unless you are emergency response personnel. It is OK to use your laptops, but only to take notes, and with WiFi turned off.

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at 993-2474, <http://ods.gmu.edu>. All academic accommodations must be arranged through the ODS.

The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that: (1) all work submitted be your own; (2) when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and (3) if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification. No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct. Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited, using MLA or APA format. A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting. If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism, please see me.

CLASS SCHEDULE

- Week 1 Introduction
- Week 2 Early civilizations
Read: Frankforter, pp. 1-63
- Week 3 Greece
Read: Frankforter, pp. 66-123
- Week 4 Rome
Read: Frankforter, pp. 124-185
- Week 5 The Emergence of Europe and the “Middle Ages”
Read: Frankforter, pp. 219-299
Movie: *The Man for All Seasons* 1/2
- Week 6 Renaissance and Reformation
Read: Frankforter, pp. 339-415
Movie: *The Man for All Seasons* 2/2
- Week 7 **Midterm exam**
- Week 8 Spring break
- Week 9 The Age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution
Read: Frankforter, pp. 475-525
Movie: *Danton* 1/2
Paper due: *The Man for All Seasons*
- Week 10 Napoleonic Era, Industrialization, and the Revolutions of 1848
Read: Frankforter, pp. 517-576
Movie: *Danton* 2/2
- Week 11 Nationalism, Imperialism and World War I
Read: Frankforter, pp. 586-675
- Week 12 Marxism and the Russian Revolutions
Read: Frankforter, pp. 577-584; 664-669; 698-701
- Week 13 Interwar Years: The Rise of Authoritarianism
Read: Frankforter, pp. 679-698
Paper due: *Danton* or Your topic
- Week 14 World War II
Read: Frankforter, pp. 707-733
- Week 15 The Cold War and Beyond

Read: Frankforter, pp. 736-805

Week 16 **Final exam**

Tue. 5/10 7:30 pm – 10:15 pm