

# History of Western Civilization

HIST 100-011

Autumn 2017

**Instructor:** Dr Douglas Whalin, [dwhalin@gmu.edu](mailto:dwhalin@gmu.edu)

**Course meets:** W 1630-1910, Planetary Hall (formerly Science & Tech I) 212

**Office hours:** M 1700-1900, Robinson B 369B (also by appointments)

**Office phone:** 703 993 1250

## Course Description:

History 100 serves as an introduction to the history of the western world from antiquity through the modern era. What comprises "the West," and according to whom? What events from the past are remembered as part of it, and what are forgotten? Because of the broad scope of the topic, this course will combine an overview of political history with thematic approaches -- economic, religious, intellectual, and technological -- to the past.

The course assumes that students have a basic familiarity with modern European and American history. Students must be comfortable approaching the history of religion from a historical perspective. Fulfills History Core requirement.

## Course Aims:

The course aims to ensure that students have a basic understanding of long-term historical processes which created the contemporary "West," as well as introduce them to the variety of ways the past can be studied.

As a result of this course, students should:

- Demonstrate familiarity with the basic chronology of defining political events in Western history.
- Demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in Western civilization or world history.
- Develop multiple historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, music) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.
- Gain familiar with a variety of theoretical and practical approaches to understanding people in the past.
- Utilize evidence to support historical arguments and interpretations through clear written communication demonstrating their understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the history of Western civilization or the world.

## Format:

Classes meet weekly during term. Each meeting will generally begin with a short lecture touching on the principal people and events for the period covered in that week's reading. These lectures are, by design, a brief supplement to your reading and not replace it. It will be followed by a focused discussion on the weekly theme. Each theme looks at a different body of source material, introducing

a different way that people think about and study the past. The themes are designed to cut across time, introducing you to different ways that we can think about change and continuity throughout human history.

### Evaluation:

The course is assessed by two quizzes, two midterms, and a three-hour final examination. The final grade is weighted: quizzes (5% each), midterms (15% each), final (60%).

You are required to take each exam when it is scheduled. If you miss an exam, I'll need to be presented with overwhelming evidence of extenuating circumstances (signed excuse from GMU Student Health Services, the head of a department or dean of a school) to consider allowing a make-up.

### Textbook:

Choose one of the following general introductory textbooks. Read the appropriate chapter(s) in advance of the lecture – the syllabus gives you the date range covered in class, match it up with each book's own scheme. **The midterms and final exams will require you to draw heavily on the information in your textbooks.** Many of these textbooks come in numerous editions. Save your money, rent or buy an older one if it's economical for you, because unlike science history doesn't change that much each year.

\*J. Cole and C. Symes, *Western Civilizations: Their History & Their Culture*, 2 Vols. [Nice pictures, great exercises for practicing source analysis, **highly recommended**]

R.R. Edgar, N.J. Hackett, G.F. Jewsbury, B.A. Molony, and M.S. Gordon, *Civilizations Past & Present*, 2 Vols.

A.D. Frankforter and W.M. Spellman, *The West: A Narrative History*, Combined Volume. [Pretty dull layout, but relatively brief]

D. Kagan, St. Ozmet, F.M. Turner, A. Frank, *The Western Heritage*. [Gorgeously illustrated, with multimedia addons]

J.P. McKay, C.H. Crowston *et al.*, *A History of Western Society*. [A bit thick, but nifty illustrations]

J.P. McKay, B.D. Hill *et al.*, *Understanding Western Society*. [Nicely illustrated, lots of maps]

M. Perry, M. Chase, J. Jacob, M. Jacob, and J.W. Daly, *Western Civilization: Ideas, Politics, and Society*, 2 Vols.

J.J. Spielvogel, *Western Civilization*, 2 Vols.

### Class Policies:

- Number one rule: Respect. Respect your colleagues, respect yourselves, respect my time and I will respect yours.
- There is no attendance policy. You are adults, and you are paying to be here.
- There are no restrictions concerning the use of laptops and tablets. However,
- There is zero tolerance for disruption – you don't have to be here. If you choose to disrupt your colleagues, you'll be told to leave. This includes if your cell phone or other electronic device becomes a distraction.

- Academic honesty is expected in all work. Any work that is not the product of the student's own efforts is considered dishonest. Students proven to have been dishonest in submitting or presenting their work will receive an F for the course and may be subject to further disciplinary action.

## Course Schedule

### WEEK 1 30 AUGUST

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Introduction

Overview: Civilization before History (BC 7,500 - 776)

Theme: Geography

### WEEK 2 6 SEPTEMBER

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#### MAP QUIZ

Overview: Archaic and Classical Greece (BC 776 – 336)

Theme: Calendars and Alphabets

### WEEK 3 13 SEPTEMBER

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Overview: Hellenistic Kingdoms and Republican Rome (BC 336 – BC 27)

Theme: Historiography

### WEEK 4 20 SEPTEMBER

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Overview: From Augustus to the end of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Century Crisis (BC 27 – AD 306)

Theme: Currency and Economy

### WEEK 5 27 SEPTEMBER

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#### MIDTERM 1: THE ANCIENT WORLD

### WEEK 6 4 OCTOBER

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Overview: Late Antiquity (AD 306 – 750)

Theme: Holy Men and Women

### WEEK 7 11 OCTOBER

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Overview: "Feudal" Europe (AD 750 – 1095)

Theme: Iconoclasm and *Ekphrasis*

### WEEK 8 18 OCTOBER

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#### CHRONOLOGY QUIZ

Overview: The Crusades (AD 1095 – 1348)

Theme: Cities, landscapes, and archaeology

### WEEK 9 25 OCTOBER

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Theme: Early Modern Europe (1348 – 1517)

Theme: Manuscripts, Paper, and Printing

WEEK 10 1 NOVEMBER

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**MIDTERM 2: THE MEDIEVAL AND EARLY MODERN WORLD**

WEEK 11 8 NOVEMBER

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Overview: Emergence of Nations (AD 1517 – 1648)

Theme: Law

WEEK 12 15 NOVEMBER

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Overview: Absolutism and Revolutions (AD 1648 – 1789)

Theme: Medicine and Science

WEEK 13 22 NOVEMBER

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**THANKSGIVING BREAK NO CLASS**

WEEK 14 29 NOVEMBER

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Overview: The Long 19<sup>th</sup> Century (AD 1789 – 1914)

Theme: Empire, Colonization and Democracy

WEEK 15 6 DECEMBER

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Overview: The Short 20<sup>th</sup> Century (AD 1914 – 1989)

Theme: Forgotten Histories

WEEK 16 13 DECEMBER

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**FINAL EXAM 1630 – 1915 (4.30 p.m. to 7.15 p.m.)**

**Other Important Dates**

5 September – Last day to add or drop classes without tuition penalty

19 September – Last day to drop with 33% tuition penalty

29 September – Final drop deadline (67% tuition penalty)

**Miscellaneous Policies**

- Per GMU policy: “If you are a transfer student, you may take upper-division history courses to satisfy the Mason Core requirement in Western Civilization and World History. For transfer students, HIST 387 or most European history courses (except Russian history) will meet the requirement, and the department recommends that you take these upper-level options instead of HIST 100.”
- per GMU policy: “If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact Disability Services (DS) at 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through DS.”