

**Introduction to World History**  
HIST 125-001  
Lectures on Thursdays, 12:00-1:15 pm  
Planetary Hall 131

**Dr. Jane Hooper**

[jhooper3@gmu.edu](mailto:jhooper3@gmu.edu)

Office: Robinson B 369A

Office Hours: Tuesdays 1:30-2:30 pm, Thursdays 10:30-11:30 am, or by appointment

**Recitation Sections:**

HIST 125-301

Dr. Jane Hooper

Tuesdays, 12:00-1:15 pm

Robinson B 108

HIST 125-302

Dan Curry

Tuesdays, 1:30-2:45 pm

Robinson B442

HIST 125-303

Dan Curry

Tuesdays, 10:30-11:45 am

Robinson A 245

HIST 125-307

Dan Curry

Tuesdays, 12:00-1:15 pm

Robinson B 202

HIST 125-308

Jefferson Byrd

Tuesdays, 12:00-1:15 pm

Robinson B 442

HIST 125-309

Jefferson Byrd

Tuesdays, 1:30-2:45 pm

Robinson A 245

**Instructors:**

Dan Curry

[dcurry3@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:dcurry3@masonlive.gmu.edu)

Office hours: Thursdays, 1:30-2:30,

Robinson B 369

Jefferson Byrd

[jbyrd12@gmu.edu](mailto:jbyrd12@gmu.edu)

Office hours:

**Research Librarian:**

**Dr. George Oberle**

[goberle@gmu.edu](mailto:goberle@gmu.edu)

Office: 2211 Fenwick Library

Email with research questions or to schedule a meeting

<http://infoguides.gmu.edu/hist125>

**Note: The entire class will meet on Thursdays to discuss important events in world history on which you will be tested during the mid-term and final exams. You will also meet with your discussion section on Tuesdays to work on research projects that relate to concepts covered during the lecture. These projects will also be graded. Your weekly attendance and full participation in both sessions will be necessary for your success in this course.**

**Course Description:**

In this class we will examine major events and relationships that have transformed our world from about 1400 to the twenty-first century. Throughout the semester, you will use online databases to conduct three primary source research projects about early connections in the pre-modern world, American slavery and resistance, and twentieth-century global consumption. At the end of each module, you will submit a paper describing their findings.

During the lectures, our focus will be on global interactions, balanced with a careful consideration of local developments and influences. Topics will include the development of political and economic systems (e.g., democracy, liberalism, nationalism, fascism, colonialism, capitalism, socialism), changing conceptions of culture and identity (e.g., race, gender, ethnicity), and the conflicts and opportunities born of this transformation (e.g., anti-colonial movements, social revolutions, world wars, international organizations, globalization, religious and cultural conflicts).

By the end of the semester, you will be able to provide thoughtful answers to the following questions: Why is economic and military power largely concentrated in the hands of Western leaders and countries? What separates a “developing” country from a “developed” one? Why are some areas of the world resource-rich but their communities poor? Why is warfare seemingly endemic in some parts of the world? What do we mean by the term “modern world”? While we cannot come up with simple answers to these questions, we can use history to understand how modern systems of political, economic, and social meaning, including the emergence of Western economic dominance, developed.

**Course objectives:**

1. You will be able to understand major events in the making of the modern world and gain knowledge about the complexity of human experience from a historical perspective. (Mason Core Course learning outcome 1)
2. You will develop concepts of time, continuity, and change in order to understand and reconstruct the past. (Mason Core Course learning outcome 2)
3. You will develop a perspective of a world beyond your own personal location in order to understand other people, places and environments, providing you with a new perspective on the world. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1 and 2)
4. You will gain an understanding about how individual development and identity are affected by culture, groups, and institutions, and about how institutions (social, economic, religious, governmental) are formed and operate. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1 and 2)
5. You will understand the historical development of power, authority, and governance as they relate to the functions of governmental institutions, the exercise of power, and individual rights. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1 and 2)
6. You will understand global connections that lead to interdependence. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1 and 2)

7. You will be able to analyze and interpret primary and secondary sources of all kinds by employing techniques used by historians. The reading skills we will work on in the class will assist you in engaging with scholarship in the field of history and using sources as evidence to support your interpretations of world events. We will also use digital media to learn how historians communicate their research findings. (Mason Core Course learning outcome 4)

8. You will be able to clearly and concisely express yourself in writing and speaking. You will learn how to properly cite print and online material in your papers. In addition, you will be able to identify and grapple with major issues discussed by historians. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 4 and 5)

### **Grading and expectations:**

*Participation:* This class is participatory and, in order to get the most from class, you need to attend every class prepared and having thought about the assigned reading(s). You will be expected to spend about 5 hours per week outside of the classroom preparing for class and finishing assignments. If you have poor class participation due largely to absences, i.e., your non-presence during discussions, your final grade will fall dramatically. **If you are absent for more than four classes**, whether lecture or recitation, and do not provide an adequate excuse in a timely manner (i.e., notify the instructor after your second missed class), **you will receive a 0 for your participation**. Note: the instructors will not re-teach a missed class via email or during an office conference. (Mason Core Course learning outcome 5)

*Classroom Etiquette:* **You may not use cell phones, laptops, or any other electronic devices in the classroom** unless they are being used for a classroom activity as indicated by the instructor. Please arrive on time and pack up your things only when the lecture or discussion has completely finished. **Any violation of these rules will significantly lower your participation grade.**

*Weekly Papers:* You will complete short assignments that will assist you in completing the final papers for each module. The assignments will be posted on our course recitation blackboard sites. These papers are to be submitted through the course blackboard site to your recitation instructor **before midnight on the Monday prior to class**. You will receive a score of 1 (adequately addressed the assigned question) or 0 (did not fulfill the assignment) for each paper. You must provide proper footnote citations for each paper. Out of 10 weekly papers listed on the syllabus, you will be graded on 9 of these papers. Late weekly papers will not be accepted for any reason. These assignments will enable you to practice the analysis and citation of a variety of primary sources (such as texts and images) in support of arguments about change in world history. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 2, 3, 4, and 5)

*Presentation:* You will sign up and present one primary source during module #2. You will work with a partner on this presentation but you will be individually graded for your contribution

during the presentation. See the guide posted on blackboard for more details about this assignment. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 3, 4, and 5)

*Papers:* Throughout the semester you will submit three longer papers (3-5 pages) as the culmination of our work both in and out of class. The full assignments and due dates are posted on the blackboard site. You are expected to read each assignment description carefully at the start of each module and work on the papers throughout the module. Papers must include properly formatted citations. Papers will be submitted through the course blackboard site to your recitation instructor. Late papers will not be accepted without Dr. Hooper's advance permission.

**It is your responsibility to ensure papers are properly submitted and received on time by the instructor.** (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5)

*Mid-term and Final:* These exams will be comprehensive and deal with our readings, assignments, and discussions during the lectures. The exams will test your ability to analyze historical data and not just focus on the memorization of dates and events, although you will be responsible for this information as well. Guides will be distributed in advance of the exams. (Mason Core Course learning outcomes 1, 2, 4, and 5)

**Exam Rules and Deadlines:** In accordance with university regulations, professors in the Department of History and Art History re-schedule exams after receiving documentation of a medical emergency or family emergency; often this documentation must be verified by the Dean of Student Life. **Work-related or personal/family obligations are not adequate excuses for re-scheduling an exam or obtaining any kind of extension.** Note: September 5 is the last day to add classes or drop classes with no tuition penalty; September 29 is the last day to drop with a 67% tuition penalty. If you have questions about registering for this class, please speak with your academic advisor.

### **Final Grade:**

Participation - 15% (based on the quantity and quality of your contributions in both lecture and recitation sections)

Weekly Papers (9 total) - 10%

Presentation - 5%

Paper #1- 10%

Paper #2 - 10%

Paper #3 - 10%

Mid-term - 15%

Final - 25%

\*Although grades for individual papers will be posted on blackboard, not all of your grades will appear there and blackboard will not be used in the final calculation of your grade. If you have questions about your grade for an assignment, please speak with your recitation instructor.

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

**Note about Communications:** Students must use their Mason email account to receive important University information. Blackboard will be used to post important messages, links for readings, and grades for papers.

**Other Important Campus Resources:**

The Writing Center: Robinson A114, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>

University Libraries: <http://library.gmu.edu/mudge/IM/IMRef.html>

Counseling and Psychological Services: 703-993-2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>

**Academic Honesty:**

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient. Plagiarism cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.

Student writers are often confused as to what should be cited. Some think that only direct quotations need to be credited; this is incorrect. While direct quotations do need citations, so do paraphrases and summaries of opinions or factual information formerly unknown to the writers or which the writers did not discover themselves. Exceptions to this rule include factual information which can be obtained from a variety of sources—what has been called common knowledge—or the writers' own insights or findings from their own field research. What constitutes common knowledge can sometimes be precarious; what is common knowledge for one audience may be so for another. In such situations, it is helpful to keep the reader in mind and to think of citations as being "reader friendly."

In other words, writers provide a citation for any piece of information that they think their readers might be unfamiliar with and want to investigate or debate further. Not only is this attitude considerate of readers, it will almost certainly ensure that writers will not be guilty of plagiarism.

Cheating means to get help on an assignment without permission. This includes asking another classmate to "see" their paper before writing your own paper OR hiring someone to "edit" your

paper. Allowing another student to see your work without permission from the instructor is also considered cheating. You must get permission from your instructor before asking anyone outside of your professors, writing center tutors, or teaching assistants for help on assignments. If you don't understand an assignment, you need to ask the professor for clarification rather than your classmates.

In this course, you will be expected to adhere to the Honor Code at George Mason. It is your responsibility to read and understand the policy (available at <http://oai.gmu.edu/the-mason-honor-code-2/>). We will discuss the use of citations and quotations throughout the semester. If you have any questions on how to cite a source, please see the professor or instructor.

**You will also be required to complete an online course called *Avoiding Plagiarism* before submitting your first module paper. You must send your instructor the completion certificate before you submit the paper on September 26. See link and instructions on blackboard for more information.**

**Texts Available for Purchase in the Bookstore:**

James Carter and Richard Warren, *Forging the Modern World: a History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2016).

All other readings on the syllabus are found in links given on blackboard, the course library website, or on course reserves. It is your responsibility to locate all assigned readings or contact the professor if you have difficulty in doing so.

**Always bring our textbook, *Forging the Modern World*, with you to lecture classes. We frequently consult the assigned readings during recitation classes; bring either printed copies or download a copy onto your computer to access them during class.**

# Course Schedule

For important links, see <http://infoguides.gmu.edu/hist125>

\*This schedule is subject to change. Please consult the course blackboard site for updated course information.

\* All readings are to be completed before the class in which they will be discussed.

**August 29 (R)** – Introduction to the course and expectations.

**August 31 (L)** – Why do we study history?

*Readings:*

- William H. McNeill, “Why Study History,” available online at:  
<http://www.historians.org/about-aha-and-membership/aha-history-and-archives/archives/why-study-history-%281985%29>

*Suggested Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 1-17.

## Module 1

### Identifying and Analyzing Primary Sources: Early Modern Globalization

**September 5 (R)** – Using primary sources to uncover different perspectives on the world

*Reading:*

- Ibn Battuta, *Travels in Asia and Africa (1325-1354)*, 1-12 (see blackboard for document)
- Patrick Rael, “How to read a primary source,” in *Reading, Writing, & Researching for History: A Guide for College Students*, online at:  
<http://www.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/>

Weekly Paper #1 due

**September 7 (L)** – The world before 1492

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 19-43.

\* Bring a copy of the textbook to class.

**September 12 (R)** – Writing research questions

*Readings:*

- Ibn Battuta, *Travels*, 13-37
- Rael, “How to read a secondary source,” “How to Ask Good Questions” and “What Makes a Question Good?”

Weekly Paper #2 due

\* Bring a laptop or tablet to class.

**September 14 (L)** – The newly connected worlds of Zheng He, Columbus, and Da Gama

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 45-65.
- \* Bring a copy of the textbook to class.

**September 19 (R)** – Writing thesis statements

*Readings:*

- Ibn Battuta, *Travels*, 38-50.
- Rael, “The Thesis”
- “Thesis Statements,” George Mason University Writing Center,  
<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/wc-quick-guides>

Weekly Paper #3 due

**September 21 (L)** – Empires in the Age of Gunpowder

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 66-89.

\*Bring a copy of the textbook to class

**September 26 (R)** – Papers for module #1 due by 10:30 am

## **Module #2**

### **Using Different Types of Primary Sources: Slavery and Resistance**

**September 28 (L)** – Global Trade: Silver, Sugar, and Slaves

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 91-115.

**October 3 (R)** – Trans-Atlantic slave trade

Weekly Paper #4 due

\*Bring laptop computer to class

\* Be prepared to sign up for presenting on October 24 or October 31

**October 5 (L)** – Midterm exam during class

**October 10 (R)** – No class

**October 12 (L)** – The Enlightenment and its Contradictions

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 143-171.

\* Bring a laptop computer to class.

**October 17 (R)** - An overview of American slavery

*Reading:*

- Ira Berlin, *Many Thousands Gone: The First Two Centuries of Slavery in North America* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 93-108.

Weekly Paper #5 due

**October 19 (L)** – Atlantic Revolutions

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 173-197.



**October 24 (R)** – Runaway slave advertisements

*Readings:*

- Amani Marshall, “‘They Will Endeavor to Pass for Free’: Enslaved Runaways' Performances of Freedom in Antebellum South Carolina,” *Slavery & Abolition* 31, no. 2 (2010): 161-180. (available through the library catalog)
- Rael, “Presenting Primary Sources in Your Paper”

Weekly paper #6 due

**October 26 (L)** – Industrialization in global context

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 173-197.

**October 31 (R)** – Images of slavery

*Reading:*

- “Outlining,” George Mason University Writing Center,  
<http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/wc-quick-guides>

Weekly paper #7 due

**November 2 (L)** – New Imperialism in Africa and Asia

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 198-253.

**November 7 (R)** – Papers for module #2 due by 10:30 am

**Module #3**

**The Twentieth Century and Global Consumption**

**November 9 (L)** – World War I and Aftermath

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 254-281.

**November 14 (R)** – Global twentieth-century consumption, part 1

*Reading:*

- Bridget María Chesterton and Timothy Yang, “The Global Origins of a ‘Paraguayan’ Sweetener: Ka’a He’e and Stevia in the Twentieth Century,” *Journal of World History* 27, no. 2 (2016): 255-279. (available through the library catalog)

Weekly paper #8 due

**November 16 (L)** – Ramifications of World War II

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 282-309.

**November 21 (R)** – Global twentieth-century consumption, part 2

*Reading:*

- Choose an article from the list provided through our library website.

Weekly paper #9 due

**November 23 (L)** – no class (Thanksgiving)

**November 28 (R)** – Developing a research project

*Reading:*

- “23 Revision Actions for Your Draft,” George Mason University Writing Center, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu/writing-resources/wc-quick-guides>

Weekly Paper #10 due

**November 30 (L)** – Independence Movements and the International World

*Reading:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 310-335.

**December 5 (R)** – Papers for module #3 due by 10:30 am

**December 7 (L)** – The global present

*Readings:*

- *Forging the Modern World*, 336-369.

**Final exams start December 13**