

HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATIONS

HIST-100-009 (Spring 2023)

Instructor: Vadim Staklo

TA:

Location: BL 129 Fairfax

Time: Monday, 19:20-22:00

e-mail: Please use Blackboard for communication

Office hours: by appointment

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 Ancient Middle East, 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 understanding of the western tradition as you learn about primary and secondary sources, historical methodology, periodization, major economic and social developments; and to sharpen your independent study, analytical and writing skills.

Required text:

Frankforter, Daniel and William Spellman, *The West: A Narrative History*, 3rd edition (ISBN 978-0205180950). You can use either a two-volume, a combined volume, or a digital version.

Additional weekly reading will be posted on Blackboard. Please pay special attention to these primary sources, and be ready to compare and analyze them; they will be part of the exams.

It is best to read the assigned chapters and primary sources before listening to the lecture.

Course requirements

This course requires mostly independent work by students. You will not be supervised in the way you organize your time and learning. We will read the textbook and the primary source documents assigned for every class. It is your responsibility to keep up with the readings and lectures as we have no dedicated recitations. Lectures will supplement your reading and will help identify the most important events and concepts.

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. No audio or video recording, please.

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 from the previous period—25%

Four quizzes will test your knowledge of the previous weeks' material and will mostly consist of multiple-choice or short identification questions—25%

Two film responses—15%

All quizzes and exams will be conducted online, and are time-limited.

We understand real life emergencies, but please provide a letter from a doctor or some other form of proof if you are missing a class or a test. 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.

This course meets the following Mason Core learning outcomes for Western Civilizations/World History courses:

1. Demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of Western civilization or world history.
2. Demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in Western civilization or world history.
3. 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.
4. Communicate effectively— through speech, writing, and use of digital media— your understanding of patterns, process, and themes in the history of Western civilization or the world.

Activities and assignments in this course will regularly use the Blackboard learning system. Students are required to have regular, reliable access to a computer with an updated operating

system and a stable broadband Internet connection with a consistent 1.5 Mbps download speed or higher.

All course materials posted to Blackboard or other course site are private to this class and should not be shared.

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.

As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1202. *If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact one of Mason’s confidential resources, such as Student Support and Advocacy Center (SSAC) at 703-993-3686 or Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) at 703-993-2380. You may also seek assistance or support measures from Mason’s Title IX Coordinator by calling 703-993-8730, or emailing titleix@gmu.edu.*

Other Resources and Support Services for undergraduate students:
<https://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/undergraduate/resources-and-support-services>

CLASS SCHEDULE

Lecture 1 (01/23) Introduction to History, Terms and Concepts

Read: Frankforter, pp. xxxvi-xlvi

Content) Strongly recommended: How to Read a Primary Source (see Course

Optional: Iceman documentary; videos on memory wars.

Lecture 2 (01/30) Early Civilizations

Read: Frankforter, pp. 1-63

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 3 (02/06) Greece

Read: Frankforter, pp. 66-123

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Quiz 1 (02/13)

Lecture 4 (02/13) Rome

Read: Frankforter, pp. 124-185

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 5 (02/20) The Emergence of Europe and the “Middle Ages”

Read: Frankforter, pp. 219-299 (optional: 186-335)

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 6 (02/27) Renaissance and Reformation

Read: Frankforter, pp. 339-415

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Quiz 2 (03/06)

Lecture 7 (03/06) The Age of Enlightenment and the French Revolution

Read: Frankforter, pp. 475-525 (optional: 421-525)

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 8 (03/20) Napoleonic Era, Industrialization, and the Revolutions of 1848

Read: Frankforter, pp. 528-576

Midterm exam (03/27)

Lecture 9 (03/27) Nationalism, Imperialism and World War I

Read: Frankforter, pp. 586-663; 670-675

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Quiz 3 (04/03)

Lecture 10 (04/03) Marxism and the Russian Revolutions

Read: Frankforter, pp. 577-584; 664-669; 698-701

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 11 (04/10) Interwar Years: The Rise of Authoritarianism

Read: Frankforter, pp. 679-698

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 12 (04/17) World War II

Read: Frankforter, pp. 707-733

Quiz 4 (04/24)

Lecture 13 (04/24) The Cold War and Beyond

Read: Frankforter, pp. 736-805

Primary sources on Blackboard/Course content

Lecture 14 (05/01) Course review, Q&A

Final exam (05/15/22)