

History of Western Civilization, Fall 2012

George Mason University
Department of History
MWF 9:30 am - 10:20 am
Lecture Hall 2

Dr. Megan Myers

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Office hours: Monday, Wednesday, and Friday 10:30 am -12:00 pm and by appointment
Robinson B 373B

Course Description:

This course will examine the history of Europe from ancient times to the present. You will gain an understanding of the tools of a historian through the examination of selected themes and events. In particular, the course will focus on the evolution of the modern state, the idea of citizenship, the role of communication as a political force, and the contest for power between various groups. We will not cover every detail, but look instead at significant historical moments and trends that affected European history and its role in the world. Through lectures, discussions, and readings students will come away with a stronger appreciation of European history, the tools of the historical trade, an understanding of how history shapes our modern world, and skills that will benefit students pursuing any discipline.

Course Aims:

Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of Western Civilization.

Students will be able to explain long-term changes and continuities in Western Civilization.

Students will analyze primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, etc.) and use these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.

Students will communicate effectively— orally and in writing—their understanding of patterns, processes, and themes in the history of western civilization.

Request for Accommodation:

Students with documented learning disabilities are asked to consult me by the week of class with the appropriate paper work.

Communication:

You must check your emails from me. I will communicate vital class information this way and you will be held accountable for anything sent over email to your GMU account. Check your Blackboard page and MyHistoryLab for readings and vital course material as the course progresses.

Classroom Etiquette:

You may feel invisible and unidentifiable in the crowd but please do your best to behave politely and consider this as training for future professional behavior. Please turn off your cell phones, blackberries, and other communication devices during class—these are distracting for all of us. If you need to take a call, step outside, otherwise you may be asked to leave. Do not talk to other students during lectures or arrive late to class. I do not encourage laptop use, but I will allow it under certain circumstances. The condition for laptop use is it that you must email me your notes at the close of class each day's class and on demand with the appropriate timestamp. Failing to comply will mean you will lose the right to use a laptop in class.

Participation:

Course attendance is an area in which you can affect your own grade on a daily basis. You will be graded on your participation. You should prepare questions and comments about the reading for each class. Throughout the semester I might call on you to analyze the readings or describe their contents and/or lead discussion of the group readings. Your grade will reflect the extent to which you demonstrate that you have done the reading, attended lecture, and thought about the issues with which we are engaging. There will be some quizzes on documents that we read on the MyHistoryLab website. These grades will also be counted toward your participation grade.

Reading:

The reading is due at the beginning of each class. Some of the readings will be discussed in lectures and you need to be able to answer questions about it.

Exams:

You will complete six exams on Blackboard. These are open note/open book exams but the time limit will prohibit you from reading while taking the exam. You should prepare in advance. Do not share the questions or answers or discuss the exams with your classmates. **The exam will shut down at midnight on the day that it is due.** After this time you will be locked out of the exam and will only be able to take it with a serious documented excuse such as hospitalization or a death in your immediate circle.

Written Work:

You will demonstrate your analytical and writing skills through the completion of film reviews and a written assignment based on primary sources. More information on the specific assignments and general tips on writing a paper will be posted on Blackboard. You will need to use 1-inch margins, double spacing, 12 pt. font, and footnotes. Additionally, be very careful to cite all ideas, theories, and writing that were not originally your own. **Late papers will be graded down a letter grade per day late and must be submitted on Blackboard.**

Writing Center:

If you need some assistance in writing your paper or would like to attend study skills workshops, please do not hesitate to take advantage of the resources on campus. The Writing Center is in Robinson Hall A room 114. Academic Workshop schedules can be found in Student Union I room 354. You are always welcome to make an appointment with me to go over your progress in class or request assistance with your papers.

Plagiarism/Honor Code:

Abiding by the GMU Honor Code is essential if you plan on passing this course. The Honor Code states: *"To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.**"* Plagiarism, or putting forward someone else's thoughts, ideas, or work as your own, is a serious offense. It is crucial to prepare your own original work and to properly cite the writing and thought process of others. We will go over proper source citation multiple times in preparation for the course paper. Please take this issue seriously.

Feedback:

If you have a question about a grade or would like further feedback, you must first read through my comments and then submit your paper/test to me with your questions in writing and set up an appointment at office hours to discuss the matter.

Reading:

Blackboard Readings

A. Daniel Frankforter and M. Spellman, *The West: A Narrative History*, Vol. 2, 3rd edition, (Pearson Education, Inc., 2013)

You must purchase the code to access MyHistoryLab. You may purchase the MyHistoryLab with Pearson eText. You are expected to access both MyHistoryLab and Blackboard on a regular basis.

Grading:

10% Participation

60% Exams (six exams)

20% 1960s Assignment

10% Film Responses (2 Film Responses, 5% each)

Schedule of Lectures and Assignments

WEEK 1:

8/27: Introduction

8/29: Ancient World

Read: text pgs. 64-135

Documents:

Aristotle, *The Creation of the Democracy in Athens*

Pericles' *Funeral Oration*

Plato, *The Republic*

Watch: The Big Picture

8/31: Ancient World

WEEK 2:

9/3: Labor Day – NO CLASS

Attn: End Drop Period with no penalty

9/5: Ancient World

Read: text pgs. 135-186

Documents:

Augustus

Marcus Aurelius

9/7: Ancient World

WEEK 3:

9/10: The Medieval World

Complete: Ancient World Exam

Read: text pgs. 186-249

Documents: Augustine of Hippo

9/12: The Medieval World

Read: text pgs. 249-280

Watch: The World in 1000

Vikings (two segments)

9/14: The Medieval World

Read: text pgs. 280-338

Documents: Magna Carta

Watch: The World in 1200

The Plague

The Hundred Year's War

WEEK 4:

9/17: Renaissance

Read: text pgs. 338-378

Documents:

Erasmus, "Pope..."
Machiavelli, *The Prince*
More, *Utopia*

9/19: Renaissance

9/21: Reformation

Read: text pgs. 378-418

Documents:

95 Thesis
Peasants' Demands
Against the Robbing...

WEEK 5:

9/24: Reformation

9/26: Early Modern Empires

Read:

Documents:

Letters of Columbus
Smallpox Epidemic
Bartolome de las Casas

Watch: The World in 1491

Why Did Columbus Sail...

Complete: Medieval World, Reformation, and Renaissance Exam

9/28: Early Modern Empires

Watch: Columbian Exchange

Atlantic Connections

Trading Empires

WEEK 6:

10/1: The Atlantic Slave Trade

Watch: Africans in America, *The Terrible Transformation*

Assignment: Africans in America Response

10/3: Constitutionalism

Read: text 418-436

Documents:

Divine Right of Kings
Cromwell

10/5: Absolutism

See: Versailles

WEEK 7:

10/8: Columbus Day – No class Monday but rescheduled for Tuesday

10/9: Midterm Review

Complete: Atlantic World, Constitutionalism, and Absolutism Exam

10/10: Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment

Read: text 451-499

Documents: Diderot

10/12: Atlantic Revolutions

Read: text 499-526

Documents:

Paine

Declaration of Independence

Articles of Confederation

Bill of Rights

Watch: Slavery and the Constitution

WEEK 8:

10/15: Atlantic Revolutions

Read:

Documents:

Olympe de Gouges

Robespierre

Sieyes

Declaration of the Rights of Man

Rise of Napoleon

See: French Political Order

French Revolution

10/17: Atlantic Revolutions

Document: Haitian Constitution 1805 (on Blackboard)

10/19: Atlantic Revolutions

Attn: Midterm grades available/selective withdrawal

WEEK 9:

10/22: 19th Century

Read: text 528-556

Document: Sadler Report

Watch: 19th Century Industrialization

Railroads

Punching the Clock

Complete: Intellectual and Atlantic Revolutions Exam

10/24: 19th Century

Read: text 556-584

Documents:

Communist Manifesto

Chartist Movement

Self-Help

See: Great Exhibition

10/26: 19th Century

WEEK 10:

10/29: 19th Century

Read: text 584-588; 599-602; 611-617

10/31: Second Industrial Revolution/New Imperialism

Attn: Be prepared to discuss narrowed group topic and primary source selection.

11/2: New Imperialism/Suffrage Debates

Read: text 619-645

Documents:

Rudyard Kipling

Imperialism in Africa

John Stuart Mill

National Women Suffrage Association

Suffragist Speaking

Watch: Imperialism

Origins of Modern imperialism

WEEK 11:

11/5: The First World War

Read: text 646-677

Document: British Soldiers

Watch: Outbreak of WWI

Continuing Legacy

See: Schlieffen Plan

Complete: 19th century Exam

11/7: The First World War

11/9: Interwar Period

Read: text 678-705

Document:

Great Depression

Watch: Responding to the Great Depression

Prosperity in the 1920s

WEEK 12:

11/12: The Second World War

Read: text 706-735
Document: Churchill
Watch: Conformity and Opposition

11/14: The Second World War

Read: Document:
Hiroshima
Effects of Atomic Bombs

11/16: The Aftermath of the Second World War

Watch: The Big Three
Document: UN Charter

WEEK 13:

11/19: Decolonization

Read: text 736-769
Watch: Gandhi

11/21 – 11/23: Thanksgiving Holiday – NO CLASSES

WEEK 14:

11/26: The Cold War

Read: text 771-805
Document:
Iron Curtain Speech
Marshall Plan
Truman Doctrine
Kennan, Containment
Watch: The Cuban Missile Crisis
Cold War Connections

11/28: The Cold War

Document: Speech at the Brandenburg Gate
Mikhail Gorbachev
A Common Market
Watch: *Atomic Café* or *Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall* on reserve at the library
Assignment: *Atomic Café* or *Rise and Fall of the Berlin Wall* Response **(Due 12/3)**

11/30: The Cold War

See: Collapse of the Berlin Wall
Complete: World Wars and Postwar World Exam

WEEK 15:

12/3: The 1960s (Group Meetings for Primary Source Project)

12/5: The 1960s (Group Meetings for Primary Source Project)

12/7: The 1960s (Group Meetings for Primary Source Project)

Group Projects Due: December 11th 8:00 pm

Peer Review Due: December 13th 8:00 pm