

George Mason University
HIST 100: History of Western Civilization
Fall Term 2012

Course: Western Civilization 100 (020)
Time: Wednesday 7pm – 10:20pm
Location: Lecture Hall 2
Instructor: Dr. Jessica Legnini
Office: Rob B375C
Office Hours: By Appointment
Contact: jlegnini@gmu.edu

Course Description and Objectives:

The aim of this course is to enable students to gain a more thorough understanding of “the West” from its Mediterranean origins to its role in producing the “Modern World.” The course will begin with a consideration of pre-Enlightenment Europe in relation to the intellectual changes ushered in by the Enlightenment of the 1700s. The course will revolve around four specific, but chronological, topics: Modernity; Industrialization, Nation, and Empire; War, Violence, and the Nation-State; and Mass Culture, Globalization and the “Post-Modern.” The class will fulfill four specific objectives: students will gain a basic chronological understanding of Western history; they will be able to contextualize and gain a deeper understanding of key problems faced by “the West” since the 1700s; they will be introduced to the fundamentals of historical analysis through the extensive use of primary source materials; and they will be introduced to recent critiques of the idea of “western civilization.” Emphasis will be placed upon the application of history as a means for gaining a more meaningful conception of current political and social developments.

Required Text:

Patrick O’Brien, ed., *Atlas of World History*, 2nd Edition (Oxford: Oxford UP, 2010). ISBN: 978-0-19-974653-8.

- Course readings are available on Blackboard. It is your responsibility to print a copy of each in-class reading and bring it with you to class. Alternatively, you may choose to have electronic access to the reading during class.

Classroom Expectations:

- Please do not arrive late to class and please turn off the ringer on your cell phone.
- For a complete list of university-wide policies see: “Student Rights and Responsibilities” at <http://catalog.gmu.edu/content.php?catoid=19&navoid=4108>

Attendance:

Due to the nature of the course regular attendance is expected. Students who fail to attend class regularly will be unable to keep up with the course’s progression and, therefore, can expect their grade to suffer.

Course Requirements:

There will be four in-class reflection assignments (40%) and a final assessment (40%). Class participation will count for 20% of the overall grade. Grades will be given according to the following grading scale:

A+ : 98-100	B+ : 87-89	C- : 70-72	D+ : 67-69	F : 0-59
A : 93-97	B : 83-86	C+ : 77 -79	D : 63-66	
A- : 90-92	B- : 80-82	C : 73-76	D- : 60-62	

- Due to the nature of the course, assessments can only be made up in extreme circumstances and will be dealt with on a case-by-case basis.

Important Dates:

Classes Begin:	August 27
Labor Day (No Classes):	September 3
Columbus Day Recess:	October 8
Thanksgiving Break:	November 21-25
Classes End:	December 8
Final Exams:	December 11-19

Weekly Schedule**Topic I: Becoming “Modern”**

For Topic 1 Read: O’Brien, *Atlas of World History*, 58-63; 66-71; 74-79; 90-97; 100-107; 112-135; 146-159; 160-167.

Week 1: Wednesday – 8/29: Introduction/The Pre-Enlightenment World (Part 1)

- Early Civilizations and the Classical Era.
 - Ancient Art and Classical Art.

In-Class Reading:

- ❖ Plato, “The Nature of the Ideal State,” excerpt from *The Republic* (360 BCE).

Week 2: Wednesday – 9/5: The Pre-Enlightenment World (Part 2)

- The Post-Classical and Early-Modern Eras.
 - *Madonna and Child* (13th Century) and Michelangelo’s *Pietà* (1499).
 - Raphael, *The School of Athens* (1509/10).

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Thomas Aquinas, excerpt from *Summa Theologica* (1265-1274).
- ❖ John Locke, excerpt from *Second Treatise of Civil Government* (1690).

Week 3: Wednesday -9/12: The Enlightenment and its Effects

- The American and French Revolutions.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Immanuel Kant, “What is Enlightenment?” (1784).
- ❖ *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* (26 August 1789).
- ❖ Excerpts from Jean-Jacques Rousseau “The Social Contract” (1762).

In-Class Written Reflection: To Be Announced.

Topic 2: Industrialization, Nation and Empire

For Topic 2 Read: O’Brien, *Atlas of World History*, 168 -171; 172 – 193; 194 – 211

Week 4: Wednesday – 9/19: Industrialization

- Industrialization.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Friedrich Engels, excerpt from *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1844).
- ❖ Charles Darwin, excerpt from *On the Origin of Species By Means of Natural Selection* (1859) and Herbert Spencer on “Social Darwinism” (1857).

Week 5: Wednesday – 9/26: The Liberal-National State

- Liberalism.

In-Class Reading:

- ❖ Excerpt, John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859).

Week 6: Wednesday – 10/3: Empire

- European Imperialism.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Rudyard Kipling, “The White Man’s Burden” (1899).
- ❖ Edward D. Morel, “The Black Man’s Burden” (1903).

Week 7: Wednesday – 10/10: Modernism and the Challenge to Positivism/Reason

- Modernism.
 - Impressionism, Cubism, Expressionism and Futurism.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Auguste Comte “A General View of Positivism” (1856)
- ❖ Excerpt from Friedrich Nietzsche, *Beyond Good and Evil* (1885).

In-Class Written Reflection: To be announced.

Topic 3: War, Violence and the Nation-State

For Topic 3 Read: O’Brien, *Atlas of World History*, 222 – 223; 228 – 231; 232 – 235.

Week 8: Wednesday – 10/17: The Socialist Challenge

- The Russian Revolution.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Excerpt from Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party* (1848).
- ❖ Excerpt from Vladimir Lenin, *The State and Revolution*, “The ‘Withering Away’ of the State, and Violent Revolution” (1917).

Week 9: Wednesday – 10/24: Fascism

- Fascism.

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Benito Mussolini, “What is Fascism?” (1932).
- ❖ Excerpt from *Triumph of the Will* (1934).

Week 10: Wednesday- 10/31: “Total War” and Civil Violence

- WWI and WWII
- Genocide.

In-Class Reading:

- ❖ Excerpts from *The Journal of Private Frasier*, 1915-1916.
- ❖ Adolf Hitler, excerpt from *Mein Kampf* (1926).

In-Class Written Reflection: To be announced.

Topic 4: Mass Culture and Globalization

For Topic 4 Read: O'Brien, *Atlas of World History*, 236-247; 262-283.

Week 11: Wednesday – 11/7: Cold War and the Rise of US Hegemony

- The Cold War, Globalization and Consumerism.
 - <http://www.worldofcoca-cola.com/>

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Excerpts from George Kennan, "The Long Telegram," (1946) and excerpt from Walter Lippmann, *The Cold War: A Study in U.S. Foreign Policy* (1947).
- ❖ Dwight D. Eisenhower, excerpt from the Military Industrial Complex speech.

Week 12: Wednesday – 11/14: The Sixties

- The 1960s

In-Class Readings:

- ❖ Malvina Reynolds, "Little Boxes," (1962).
- ❖ John Lennon, "Working-Class Hero" at <http://www.johnlennon.com/videos/working-class-hero>
- ❖ Bob Dylan, "Times They Are a Changing," <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vCWdCKPtnYE>
- ❖ Timothy Leary, "The Declaration of Evolution."

Week 13: Wednesday – 11/21: THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)**Week 14: Wednesday – 11/28: Challenges to the "Modern"**

- Faith and Modernity.
- The Postmodern Turn.

Week 15: Wednesday – 12/5: Putting It All Together

- Review and Prepare for Final Assessment.

Week 16: Wednesday – 12/12: Final Assessment**Honor Code**

Plagiarism, cheating, or any act of dishonesty in matters related to academic work is a serious offense. Students will abide by the University's Academic Honor Code. Failure to do so will result in a failing grade and possible dismissal from the student's academic program. For more information visit the website of George Mason's Office of Academic Integrity at <http://academicintegrity.gmu.edu/>