

Introduction to World History

HIST 125 - 005
Spring 2019

T: 7:20 – 10:00pm
Planetary Hall 120
Instructor: Benjamin M. Schneider
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Office Hours: After class or Skype by appointment

What is This Course About?

This course is an overview of the history of the world from the 14th century until the end of the 20th. That's quite a lot of ground to cover, so clearly we won't get to everything. Our focus will largely be on international relations, that is to say how peoples from different regions of the world interact with each other, whether through politics, trade, war, or culture, emphasizing the connections and interactions of major regions throughout the period. Beginning in a world ruled by kings and feudal lords, we will chart the emergence of modern states, new ideas about the exercise of political power, and sweeping changes in technology, economics, culture, and domestic life that produced the modern era. Major topics include the worldwide implications of contact with Native American societies, the unrest of industrialization, the rise and fall of the European empires, and the global cataclysm of the World Wars.

What am I Supposed to Be Learning?

This course is designed to teach you the basics of historical thinking and methods. While I expect you to master the content of the course, that is to say the names, dates, events, and places that we will discuss, this is actually not the most important information we will cover. More important are the ability to ask historical questions (thing like “Why did the Industrial Revolution happen?” or “Was the Cold War inevitable?”) and to formulate a clear answer supported by evidence. You will learn to express these ideas both orally and in writing. You will also learn how historians know what they know about the past; what sort of documents, photographs, and films can tell us about the past, and what they can't.

What Do I Need for this Class?

You will need regular access to the internet. This course uses *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History with Sources Vol. 2* (3rd ed.) for most of the readings. The text is available at the bookstore. Some weeks will have additional materials available either online. You will also need a copy of J. Samuel Walker's *Prompt and Utter Destruction: Truman and the Use of Atomic Bombs Against Japan*, 3rd Ed. While you can use older editions, the 3rd Edition is generally cheaper. Other readings are linked through this syllabus and available online, or are available on Black Board.

What Do I Need to Do?

Lectures are held every Tuesday from 7:20 – 10:00 in Planetary Hall 120. You will need to do the textbook reading in time for each lecture, as well as any additional readings. You should be prepared for regular reading quizzes, as well as questions, assignments, and general engagement with the week's readings whenever we meet.

Over the semester you will need to do:

Section Attendance/Participation (Weekly)

Reading Quizzes (Weekly) – These will be done each week in lecture. They will be short, either 5-10 multiple choice questions, identifications, or short answers. They are not designed to be particularly difficult, but instead to ensure you do the reading. They also serve as a study guide.

Midterm (March 5th) – A test covering the first half of the semester's material.

Essay (April 9th) – A 4-6pg paper on *Prompt and Utter Destruction*, arguing for or against the necessity, usefulness, or morality of dropping the Atomic Bombs. A handout detailing the parameters of this assignment will be handed out before the midterm.

Final (May 7th) – A comprehensive test covering the material from the entire semester, as well as the readings.

Extra Credit Essay (Optional) (April 30th) – Students may submit an additional 2-3 page essay for extra credit if they so desire. A handout detailing the parameters of this assignment will be handed out before the midterm. No other extra credit is available.

When Do I Need To Do It?

1/22 : Introductions: Syllabus and Course Expectations

1/29 : Before the Modern World

WotW: Chapter 12

[Why Study History?](#) William H. McNeill

[Why Study History?](#) Peter H. Stearns

[How to Read a Primary Source](#) Patrick Rael

[How to Read a Secondary Source](#) Patrick Rael

2/5: The Conquest of the Americas

WotW: Chapter 13

The Spanish and the Aztecs: From Encounter to Conquest, BlackBoard.

[Feeding the Gods](#), Lizzie Wade, *Science Magazine* 2018.

[Human Sacrifice in Aztec Culture](#), David Carrasco, *Serious Science*.

2/12: Slaves, Silver, and the Remaking of the World Economy

WotW: Chapter 14

Voices from the Slave Trade, BlackBoard.

2/19: The Atlantic Revolutions and Enlightenment Thought

WotW: Chapter 16

[Declaration of Independence](#), 1776.

[Declaration of the Rights of Man](#), 1789.

[Toussaint's Constitution](#), 1801. Titles II, III, IV, VIII

[Address at the Congress of Angostura](#), 1819.

2/26: The Industrial Revolution and the Rise of Socialism

WotW: Chapter 17

Voices of European Socialism, *Ways of the World* pgs. 775 – 784.

3/5: Midterm

3/12: Spring Break

Prompt and Utter Destruction

3/19: Colonies, Conquest, and the Age of High Imperialism

WotW: Chapter 18

[*On Empire and Education*](#), Thomas Macaulay, 1832.

[*The White Man's Burden*](#), Rudyard Kipling, 1899.

[*A Place in the Sun*](#), Kaiser Wilhelm II, 1901.

[*Imperialism of Decadence*](#), Francisco Garcia Calderon, 1913.

[*Shooting an Elephant*](#), George Orwell, 1936.

3/26: Asian Empires in Disarray

WotW: Chapter 19

Changing China, Ways of the World 863-871.

[*First Open Door Note*](#), John Hay, 1899.

[*Closed Country Edict and Exclusion of the Portugese*](#), Tokugawa Iemitsu, 1639.

[*Fifty Years of New Japan*](#), Okuma, 1910.

4/2: The Great War and the Death of the Old World

WotW: Chapter 20

[*Dulce et Decorum Est*](#), Wilfred Owen, 1918.

4/9: The Second World War and the Birth of the New World

Prompt and Utter Destruction Paper Due

4/16: The Cold War and Socialism's Fall

WotW: Chapter 21

[*The "X" Article*](#), George Kennan, 1947.

[*The Novikov Telegram*](#), Nikolai Novikov, 1946.

4/23: Decolonization and the End of European Dominance

WotW: Chapter 22

The End of History?, Francis Fukuyama, *The National Interest*, 1989.

The Clash of Civilizations?, Samuel P. Huntington, *Foreign Affairs*, 1993.

Both available on Blackboard or through JSTOR.

4/30: Review Week

Extra Credit Assignment Due

5/14: Final Exam

How Do I Do Well in This Course?

The formula for success is simple. Show up for and pay attention during lectures and discussions. Do the readings. Hand in your assignments on time, paying careful attention to the instructions. Start working on your assignments early. Do the same with studying for tests. If for whatever reason you think you're going to miss a deadline **let your instructor know ahead of time**. Most problems can be solved if addressed early – it is much harder to fix them days or weeks after the fact. Whenever you aren't sure about something, ask.

How Will I Be Graded?

Your final grade in the course will be based on your work, weighted as indicated below:

- 15% Attendance and Participation
- 15% Weekly Reading Quizzes (Lowest two scores dropped.)
- 20% Midterm
- 25% Essay
- 25% Final
- 5% Extra Credit Essay (Optional)

All assignments are due in class the week listed. Late work is accepted with a 10% penalty for each day past the deadline. Extensions are available in some circumstances provided they are requested in advance of the deadline. Talk to your instructor early if you think you may need an extension.

Is There Anything Else I Should Know?

Attendance and Absences: You are expected to attend lecture every week and to come prepared to participate in classroom activities. All students are allowed two absences without penalty. This is to allow for you to accommodate unexpected illnesses or other personal matters that may require your attention on short notice. You do not need to notify me ahead of time or explain your absence. As three absences constitute missing approximately 25% of classroom instruction, additional absences will be excused only in emergency circumstances. Missing more than 50% of class room meetings will result in a failing grade. Reading quizzes are given every week in lecture, as are study guides, handouts, and instructions for assignments. Missed reading quizzes receive zeroes regardless of circumstances, but your two lowest reading quiz scores will be dropped.

Technology: Phones should be silenced and put away at all times during lecture and discussion. Other devices are allowed for the purposes of note taking and accessing the readings. Students using devices used for other purposes or in a distracting manner will be forbidden from using them for the rest of that class, or in case of repeat offenders, for the duration of the semester. Inappropriate use of electronics during discussion sections will result in lowered participation grades.

Academic Honesty: It should go without saying that you are to do all of your own work in this class, and that presenting someone else's written work as your own constitutes plagiarism and will be harshly punished. A first offense will result in a zero on the assignment in question. If a student already has a pre-existing academic honesty violation at the time of an infraction (either in this class or another, and yes, the university keeps track) they will automatically receive an "F" in this class and may be recommended for further disciplinary action should the situation merit it.

This also means that all of your papers should include proper citations in *Chicago Manual of Style* format (you can find copies of the *Manual* in the library, or use a citation management system like Zotero which will do the formatting for you). Any direct quote in your paper, or even a paraphrase of someone else's ideas should have a citation. Learning proper citation style is part of what you're here for, and I will be happy to answer any and all questions on the topic.