HISTORY OF WESTERN CIVILIZATION
HIST 100–001
Fall 2019
3 credit hours

Big Ideas, Momentous Events, and Important People of Western Civilization

Instructor: Professor Chris Elzey
Location: Exploratory Hall L004
Day: M/W/F
Time: 9:30-10:20 a.m.
Office: Robinson B 369B
Email: celzey@gmu.edu (please use your MasonLive account when emailing)
Office Hours: M/W 10:30-11:30 a.m. (also by appointment)
Teaching Assistants:
• Chester Pelsang (cpelsang@masonlive.gmu.edu)
• Adam Nubbe (anubbe@masonlive.gmu.edu)
• Available by appointment; please contact through email

Prerequisites for the Course
None

Class Contacts
1. Name and phone number/email:

2. Name and phone number/email:

The Course
The History of Western Civilization explores the great events, issues, historical figures, and social and cultural movements of the western world from antiquity to the present. We will spend much of our time examining the people, ideas, and events that changed the course of western history.

Why take HIST 100? For one, it allows you to better understand the world in which you live. Much of what has been identified as the “modern” experience—democracy, enlightened thinking, egalitarianism—owes itself in part to western civilization. Another reason is that it provides an intellectual foundation to appreciate the various artistic, cultural, philosophical, and literary movements that have helped inform the world around you.
Course Objectives
Understanding how and why the western world developed is one of the chief aims of the course. You will learn about western history’s important events and significant historical figures, and the ways the West has impacted the rest of the world. You will also learn the fundamentals of the historian’s craft: synthesizing and interpreting historical information from primary and secondary sources. An important part of that skill is being able to express your thoughts in clear prose. Finally, you will have a better appreciation of how more than two thousand years of western history have influenced today’s world.

Furthermore, History 100 fulfills the Mason Core requirement. As listed on GMU’s website for “Learning Outcomes” of Western Civilization, after completing the course you will be able to:

- “Demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of Western civilization”
- “Demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in Western civilization”
- “Develop multiple literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, music) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretations of historical events”

For more information on the Mason Core requirements, see: https://masoncore.gmu.edu/western-civilizationworld-history.

Required Texts
Achebe, Chinua. *Things Fall Apart*
Perrottet, Tony. *The Naked Olympics*
Spiegelman, Art. *Maus I: My Father Bleeds History* and *Maus II: And Here My Trouble Began*

In addition to the books, there are several primary and secondary source documents posted on Blackboard that you are required to read (some are pictures of art, architecture, Roman ruins, fashion, ancient coins, and the like). I will post these documents before the start of each week (for a full list of the documents, see the course schedule). The material is meant to supplement lectures and readings.

Occasionally, there may be an assignment associated with one or several documents. I will announce these assignments in class and on Blackboard. Each assignment is to be typed and handed in during class. Failure to type the assignment will result in points being deducted.

Recommended Text
Course Requirements and Assignments
There are three required texts for the class (see above). **YOU ARE TO COME TO CLASS HAVING COMPLETED THAT DAY’S READING ASSIGNMENT.** You are expected to read all of *The Naked Olympics*, *Things Fall Apart*, and *Maus I* and *Maus II*. *The Making of the West* is recommended, not required. The page references in the syllabus are for it. We will also read and/or look at several primary and secondary source documents, and perhaps devote a small amount of class time to them. Be sure you have read or looked at the documents **BEFORE FRIDAY** of the week they are listed (for week 5, you'll need to do it before Wednesday).

There are three exams. Each consists of multiple-choice questions, identifications, and short answer questions. At the start of each course unit, I will post a list of identification terms and short answer questions, which means you will have a majority of the questions weeks before each of the exams are given. For the exams, I will select a handful of identifications and short answer questions from the list. The exams will cover all material from class and the required readings. Each exam is worth one-fifth of your grade.

You are also responsible for writing one paper on *The Naked Olympics*, *Things Fall Apart*, or *Maus I* and *II*. I’ll repeat it: **YOU ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR WRITING ONLY ONE PAPER.** The length of the paper should be between 1,000 and 1,250 words. Please type the paper. Failure to do so, will result in points being taken off. I will post the questions on Blackboard—for the paper, you are to answer only one of the questions—several weeks before the paper is due. **THE DUE DATES ARE:**

- **SEPTEMBER 18 (FOR THE NAKED OLYMPICS)**
- **NOVEMBER 15 (FOR THINGS FALL APART)**
- **DECEMBER 6 (FOR MAUS I AND MAUS II)**

You will be graded on content, use of historical evidence, and persuasiveness (which means you should pay particular attention to grammar, punctuation, etc.). **NO PAPERS WILL BE ACCEPTED VIA EMAIL.** The paper will count for one-fifth of your grade.

Lastly, there are several quizzes and a handful of out-of-class assignments. Quizzes may be announced or unannounced. **THE FIRST QUIZ WILL COVER THE SYLLABUS. IT WILL BE GIVEN ON THE SECOND DAY OF CLASS. FOUR OTHER QUIZZES ARE ALSO SCHEDULED: THE NAKED OLYMPICS (SEPTEMBER 13), A MAN FOR ALL SEASONS (OCTOBER 18), THINGS FALL APART (NOVEMBER 11), AND MAUS I AND MAUS II (DECEMBER 2).** All unannounced quizzes will cover the required reading, lecture material, and/or primary/secondary source documents. Please bring paper and a pen or pencil to every class. Attendance and class participation will also count for a quiz grade.

Assignments may consist of a short essay on primary or secondary source documents, or it may ask you to define terms and answer questions for the study
guides. As with the paper, please type these assignments. If you do not, I will deduct points. I will announce the assignments in class and on Blackboard. **PLEASE CHECK BLACKBOARD REGULARLY.**

In addition, at the end of the semester there is a **SHORT PAPER** (about 500 words) due on the day of exam #3. The question is listed in the course schedule (see page 6). Please type the paper. Points will be deducted if you do not.

At the end of the semester, I will drop the two lowest quiz scores and calculate the average. The score will count for the final fifth of your grade. **AS WITH THE PAPERS, NO WORK WILL BE ACCEPTED ELECTRONICALLY.**

Grades for each quiz/assignment will be posted on Blackboard.

***PLEASE NOTE: Blackboard may include an average for your cumulative score. **DISREGARD IT. BLACKBOARD DOES NOT CALCULATE SCORES ACCORDING TO WEIGHTED VALUES ASSIGNED FOR THE COURSE.**

**Grade Breakdown**
Exams (3) 60% total (20% each)
Paper 20%
Quizzes (average) 20%

**Grading Scale**
A 93-100 B+ 88-89.99 C+ 78-79.99 D 60-69.99
B- 80-82.99 C- 70-72.99

**Late Papers and Missed Exams and Quizzes**
Turn your paper in on time. Each day the paper is late (Saturdays and Sundays count as well), I will deduct 5 points from the final score. Only an emergency can remove the 5-point deduction, but you must show me a doctor's note or other documentation. In this case, if you miss an exam, a make-up will be given (probably an essay exam). **THERE ARE NO MAKE-UP QUIZZES.** But I will drop your two lowest quiz scores when determining your final quiz grade.

**Attendance and Participation**
You are expected to come to class, and your attendance will be recorded. Knowing that certain emergencies will arise during the course of the semester, you will be excused from missing **TWO CLASSES.** No need to show me a note for these absences.

Three classes will be devoted to discussion—one for *The Naked Olympics*, one for *Things Fall Apart*, and the other for *Maus I* and *II*. I expect you to participate.
Extra Credit
There is no extra credit. But if you show improvement on your exams, you can earn improvement credit. Here’s how it works: If you score higher on your third exam than you do on the first, I will divide the difference by three and add it to the score of your first exam. For example, if you score 75 on the first exam, 82 on the second, and 93 on the third, I would add 6 points (93-75=18; 18 divided by 3=6) to the result of your first exam and calculate your final grade using that score. **IMPROVEMENT CREDIT APPLIES ONLY TO THE DIFFERENCE IN SCORES BETWEEN YOUR FIRST AND THIRD EXAM.**

Electronic Devices
Cell phones, Smartphones, and other electronic devices that make any kind of noise are not permitted. I will allow PCs and tablets, but only for note taking. Do not abuse this privilege. It is distracting to those around you. **IF YOU ARE SEEN USING YOUR PC OR TABLET FOR SOMETHING OTHER THAN NOTE TAKING, YOU WILL FORFEIT YOUR RIGHT TO USE THE DEVICE IN CLASS. I WILL HAVE THE TEACHING ASSISTANTS MONITOR THE CLASSROOM FROM TIME TO TIME.**

Academic Integrity
You are expected to do your own work. Students who violate the Honor Code will be dealt with severely. Information on the Honor Code can be found at the website for the Office of Academic Integrity (https://oai.gmu.edu).

Students with Disabilities
Accommodations for students with disabilities are available. See the webpage of the Office of Disability Services (ODS) (https://ds.gmu.edu) or call 993-2474 for more information. You can also visit the ODS office. It is located in SUB I, rm. 4205.

Diversity
This course adheres GMU’s Diversity Statement: “George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.” For more, see https://stearnscenter.gmu.edu/professional-development/mason-diversity-statement.

Important Drop and Add Dates
- September 3 is the final day you can add the course.
- September 9 is the final day you can withdraw from the course without a financial charge.
- October 29 is the final day for selective withdrawal.
COURSE SCHEDULE:

Week 1: Creating Law and Order
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  • Text: “Defining Primary and Secondary Source Documents”
August 26: Introduction
August 28: The Rule of Law and Writing in Mesopotamia and Egypt
  Read: pp. 5-21 (PAGES BY THEMSELVES REFER TO THE RECOMMENDED TEXT, HUNT ET AL., UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED) (QUIZ)
August 30: Mesopotamia and Egypt (cont.)
  Read: The Naked Olympics, chapters 1-3; pp. 26-31, 39-43

Week 2: Democracy and the Polis
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  • Image: “Siren Vase”; Mask of Agamemnon; “Charioteer of Delphi”; Athenian ostrakas; Mycenean dagger and pottery
  • Text: Excerpt from Homer, The Odyssey
September 2: No class (Labor Day)
September 4: Homer: Let Me Tell You a Story
  Read: The Naked Olympics, chapters 4-6; pp. 34-39, 43-55
September 6: Sparta and Athens
  Read: The Naked Olympics, chapters 7-9; pp. 55-60, 61-63

Week 3: Ancient Greece
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  • Text: Excerpts from Plato, The Dialogues; Aesop, Aesop’s Fables; Epicurus, Principal Doctrines; and Thucydides, History of the Peloponnesian War
September 9: Sparta vs. Athens (cont.)
  Read: The Naked Olympics, chapters 10-12; pp. 66-81, 91-95
September 11: Let Me Ask You Something: The Socratic Method
September 13: The Naked Olympics, Discussion (QUIZ)
  Read: The Naked Olympics, chapters 16-18

Week 4: Ancient Rome
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  • Image: Trajan’s Column; House of Livia (fresco); Column of Marcus Aurelius, the Pantheon, and Roman coins
  • Text: Augustus, Res Gestae Divi Augusti; excerpts from Julius Caesar, The Gallic Wars, and Ovid, Metamorphoses
September 16: LA Dolce Vita?: Life in Rome
  Read: pp. 126-138
September 18: Life in Rome (cont.)
  Read: pp. 139-145
  TURN IN PAPER ON THE NAKED OLYMPICS
September 20: The Long and Winding Via Appia: Pax Romana to Empire’s End
Read: pp. 145-151, 155-171, 179-183

Week 5: The Frankish World of Charlemagne and Beyond
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  - Image: Bayeux Tapestry
  - Text: Charlemagne, “General Capitulary of the Missi,” and excerpt from Einhard, *The Life of Charlemagne*

September 23: Qui Était Charlemagne?
Read: pp. 172-178, 187-201, 204-211, 220-227

September 25: EXAM #1

September 27: The Church in Turmoil: The Avignon Papacy

Week 6: The Calamitous 1300s
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):

September 30: The Hundred Years’ War

October 2: A Plague on All Your Houses: The Black Death
Read: pp. 368-372

October 4: Jeanne d’Arc, the Maid Who Became a Saint
Read: pp. 373-375

Week 7: The Power of Conviction: Religiosity and Exploration
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
  - Text: Excerpts from Luis de Camões, *The Lusiads*, and Bartolomé de las Casas, *A Short Account of the Destruction of the Indies*

October 7: Jeanne d’Arc (cont.); Ferdinand Magellan: Round the World in...Three Years”
Read: pp. 397-402

October 9: Ferdinand Magellan (cont.); The Three Reformers: Luther, Calvin and Henry VIII
Read: pp. 403-409

October 11: The Three Reformers (cont.)
Read: pp. 409-411

Week 8: The Reformation
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):

October 15 (Tuesday): Film: *A Man for All Seasons*
Read: pp. 414-420

October 16: Film: *A Man for All Seasons* (cont.)
October 18: Finish A Man for All Seasons (QUIZ)
   Read: pp. 421-422

Week 9: Protestants vs. Catholics: The Religious Wars
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
   • Image: Versailles and its fashion, architecture, tapestries, statuary, paintings, and gardens
   • Text: Excerpt from Duc de Saint-Simon, The Memoirs of the Duke de Saint-Simon

October 21: The Defeat of the Spanish Armada
   Read: pp. 426-433

October 23: To Defenestrate: The Start of the Thirty Years’ War
   Read: pp. 434-442

October 25: Louis XIV: Le Roi du Soleil
   Read: pp. 457-464, 471-472, 504-506

Week 10: Political Absolutism
   October 28: EXAM #2
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
   • Text: Magna Carta; Virginia Declaration of Rights; Montesquieu, “The Spirit of the Laws”; and Emmanuel Joseph Sieyes, “What is the Third Estate?”

October 30: The Enlightenment: Reason, not Faith
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 1-2; pp. 445-454, 490-496, 514-518, 522-530, 536-538

November 1: The Start of the French Revolution
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 3-4; pp. 551-561

Week 11: Revolution: France and Napoleon
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
   • Text: Olympe de Gouges, “Declaration of the Rights of Woman”; Napoleonic Code;” London Times (commentary of the death of Napoleon), and excerpt from Andre Francoise Miot de Melito, Memoirs

November 4: Terror!
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 5-8; pp. 561-572

November 6: Napoleon and the World He Created
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 9-16; pp. 579-595

November 8: The Revolutions of 1848
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 17-22; pp. 595-597, 600-605, 609-619, 625-634

Week 12: “Iron and Blood”: Nationalism and Imperialism
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):
   • Text: Berlin Congress (1884-1885), and material on Belgian Congo

November 11: Things Fall Apart—Discussion (QUIZ)
   Read: Things Fall Apart, chapters 23-25

November 13: “When the World Went Mad”: WWI
Read: Start *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 651-655, 675-686, 722-728, 732-738

November 15: WWI (cont.)
Read: Continue *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 742-757

**TURN IN PAPER ON THINGS FALL APART**

**Week 13: The Roaring Twenties and Tumultuous Thirties**
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):*
- Image: “Guernica” by Pablo Picasso

November 18: The U.S. in the 1920s
Read: Continue *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 760-773

November 20: Schicklgruber or Hitler? A Psycho History
Read: Continue *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 781-787

November 22: The Nazis’ Rise to Power
Read: Continue *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 792-797

**Week 14: Adolf Hitler and the Holocaust**
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):*
- Image: Beer Hall Putschists in Landsberg, Germany; Albert Speer’s model of “Germania”; movie poster of *The Victory of Faith*

November 25: The Nazis’ Rise to Power (cont.)
Read: Continue *Maus I* and *II*; pp. 797-809

November 27 and 29: No class (Thanksgiving Break)

**Week 15: The Holocaust, the Cold War, and Beyond**
*Primary and Secondary Sources (on Blackboard):*
- Image: “Rape of the Sabine Women” by Pablo Picasso
- Text: Address of John F. Kennedy (Cuban Missile Crisis); Charter of the Organization for African Unity; Patrice Lumumba’s final missive to wife; Freedom Charter of South Africa; and Schomburg Center for Research in Black Culture, “The Challenge of Decolonization in Africa” (by Benjamin Talton)

December 2: *Maus I* and *II*—Discussion (QUIZ)
Read: finish *Maus I* and *II*

December 4: “An Iron Curtain...across the Continent”: The Cold War Begins
Read: pp. 814-827

December 6: The Tragic Games: The 1972 Munich Olympics
Read: pp. 828-835, 867-877

**TURN IN PAPER ON MAUS I and II**
***December 16: EXAM #3 (starts at 7:30 a.m.)

**TURN IN SHORT PAPER (500 WORDS) ON THE FOLLOWING QUESTION:** In your opinion, what is the most significant event in the history of western civilization and why?