

History 100

History of Western Civilization

Prof. John Orens
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Ms. Marissa Hoover

Hours: T 1:15-2:15 (Prof. Orens/jorens@gmu.edu)
R 1:30-2:30 (Ms. Gale/cgale2@gmu.edu)
W 11:00-12:00 (Ms. Hoover/mhoove@gmu.edu)

Office: Robinson B 226C

Whenever you email us you MUST send your message from your Mason account and you MUST include your name at the end of your message and identify the section you attend. This is very important.

Required Reading

Cole, Symes, Coffin, and Stacey, *Western Civilizations*, Brief 4th edition (combined edition or both volume 1 and volume 2)
Primary Sources emailed to you with this syllabus

Course Description

This course will follow the political, economic, social, and cultural development of western civilization from its roots in antiquity to the present. We shall devote special attention to the beliefs and values that shaped the world in which we live and that continue to inform our understanding of who we are. Thus, ours will be more than a journey into the past. It will be a voyage of self-discovery.

Course Requirements

Because this course covers the whole story of western civilization in a single semester, it presents unique challenges. ***It is essential, therefore, that you read this syllabus in its entirety, and that you understand and pay careful attention to all of the following requirements. They are intended for your benefit, and to do well in this class you must adhere to them faithfully.***

1. **Attendance.** Our class meetings are the foundation of everything we do this semester. Although we shall not take attendance, *you cannot earn a good grade if you do not come to class or if you are inattentive in class.*

2. **No laptops or smartphones.** This class demands your careful and undivided attention. Because laptops and smartphones are almost always distracting to you and to those around you, unless you have a disability that requires their use *you may not use a laptop or a smartphone during class. Their use is strictly forbidden. Every time you use your smartphone for any reason during class, ten points will be deducted from your quiz average for the semester without exception.*

If you believe that you need to use a laptop because you have a disability, you must submit a note from the Office of Disability Services.

3. **Quizzes.** Beginning the fourth week of class, there will be four multiple-choice quizzes approximately every two to three weeks on either Tuesday or Thursday. I have indicated with asterisks on the class schedule the weeks on which there will be a quiz. We shall send you review questions a few days before the quiz (not the quiz questions themselves) to help you study. These quizzes will account for 50% of your final grade.

4. **Midterm and Final Essays.** There will be a midterm and a final essay paper. These will both be take-home assignments of about three pages. You will receive each assignment at least two weeks before it is due. These essays will account for 50% of your final grade. There will be no in-class midterm or final examination.

Please keep in mind that you cannot earn a good grade on these important essay assignments if you cannot write clear English prose.

5. **Extra-Credit Papers** I shall choose a film for you to watch online before the midterm paper and another before the final paper. I shall give you questions to answer about the film. If you want to earn extra credit, on the day that the midterm paper is due, and then again on the last day of class when the final paper is due, you may hand in a paper in which you answer these questions. If your paper is acceptable, up to five points will be added to your midterm or final essay grade.

6. **Final Extra-Credit Assignment.** On the last day of class, I will show a film and then ask a few simple questions about it. If you participate and your answers are acceptable, up to five points will be added to your final essay grade.

Grading Scale

A = 93-100, A- = 90-92, B+ = 87-89, B = 83-86, B- = 80-82, C+ = 77-79, C = 73-76, C- = 70-73, D = 60-69

Weekly Class Schedule (Dates indicate the first class meeting of the week. T = textbook chapters, P = primary sources, * = quiz this week):

Jan. 21	Introduction to History, the Ancient Near East, Greek Civilization (T, 1-2; P, Gilgamesh)
Jan. 28	Classical and Hellenistic Greece, Roman Civilization, Christianity (T, 2-6; P, Plato, Aristotle, Stoicism, Cicero, Sermon on the Mount)
Feb. 4	The Middle Ages (T, 6-10; P, Bernard of Clairvaux, Thomas Aquinas, Julian of Norwich).
Feb. 11*	The Renaissance (T, 11-12; P, Pico della Mirandola, Machiavelli)
Feb. 18	The Reformation and Absolutism (T, 13-15; P, Luther, Bossuet, Hobbes)
Feb. 25	Limited Monarchy (T, 15; P, Locke)
March 3*	The Age of Reason (T, 16-17; P, Descartes, Voltaire, Kant)
March 17	The Age of Revolution (T, 18; P, Declaration of the Rights of Man, Olympe de Gouges, Burke), Midterm/First extra-credit paper
March 24	The Age of Industrialism and Nationalism (T, 19-21; P, Mill, Mazzini, Treitschke, Wordsworth, Marx)
March 31*	The Birth of Modern Culture (T, 22-23; P, Social Darwinism, Certainty and Uncertainty, Nietzsche, Freud)
April 7	War, Communism, and Fascism (T, 24-25; P, Lenin, Stalin, Mussolini)
April 14	Nazi Germany and the Second World War (T, 25-26; P, Hitler)
April 21	Postwar Europe and the Cold War (T, 27-29; P, Gorbachev, Sartre, John Paul II)
April 28*	The Contemporary West (T, 28-29)
April 30	Final Essay/Second extra-credit paper/In-class extra-credit assignment

MISSED PAPERS AND MISSED TESTS

If you miss a test or cannot submit a paper on time and you do not want to be penalized, you **must** bring us a **documented** reason for your absence or your late paper. *I shall schedule a make-up quiz and allow you to hand in your paper late without penalty **only** if you have a documented excuse.*

Please print your papers before the day they are due. *Last-minute computer glitches are not an acceptable excuse for a late paper.* I will not accept papers submitted by e-mail except in cases of dire emergency. In those cases you must submit a hard copy as soon as possible in order to receive credit for your work.

E-MAIL

We shall be sending review questions and other important material to your GMU e-mail address. Please make sure that your account is open and that your mailbox has room for messages. We are happy to answer questions you may have, but please *do not ask for information already contained in this syllabus. To insure that we receive your message, and in order to comply with student privacy laws, **make sure to send it from your GMU address.*** Your message should be grammatical and properly spelled.

DISABILITIES

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations *must* be arranged through that office.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

As in all your classes, you are expected to faithfully adhere to the university Honor Code. <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

ADDING AND DROPPING CLASSES

The last day you may add a class is January 28. The last day you may drop a class is February 11.

GENERAL EDUCATION: A NOTE FROM THE MASON CORE COMMITTEE

The History of Western Civilization is part of the Mason Core program, a set of courses that are the foundation of all your undergraduate studies. The Core Committee hopes that in this class you will gain familiarity with the chronology of the history of western civilization, the ability to describe and explain long term changes and continuities in that history, the ability to cite online and print sources, an understanding of how to interpret primary sources, and the ability to communicate your ideas effectively.