

George Mason University
Spring 2021
**HIST 125 DL1 Introduction
to World History (online)**

Course No. 202110.14666

Instructor: Dr. Gail Hook

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Course meets January 25 – May 10, 2021



13th century terracotta sculpture from Djenné-Jeno, the oldest known city in sub-Saharan Africa

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is a survey of the development of the world from early civilizations to the present. Major themes include the rise and fall of governments and empires, the evolution of cultures and society, economics and commerce, and in the end, globalization. We will examine these themes through a variety of venues including articles, chapters, primary documents, and film posted on Blackboard, and the professor's video lectures. This class is asynchronous and does not meet together at a specific time, but there are weekly modules and required discussion groups. There is no textbook for this class. **IMPORTANT: Students should possess college-level reading and writing skills. If you have a question about this, please see the instructor or your academic advisor.**

COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of World Civilization.
- Students will demonstrate the ability to narrate and explain long-term changes and continuities in World Civilization.
- Students will develop historical literacies by analyzing primary sources of various kinds (texts, images, music) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretation of historical events.
- Students will communicate effectively—in writing and on discussion board—their understanding and response to patterns, processes, and themes in the history of world civilization.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

- There is no required textbook for this class. All reading assignments will be posted in weekly modules on Blackboard. IF you would like a general survey text for your own interest, I recommend Robert W. Strayer and Eric W. Nelson, *Ways of the World: A Brief Global History*, or Tom Standage, *History of the World in Six Glasses* (Walker Publishing Company, 2006). ISBN-13: 978-0802715524

GRADING AND CLASS PARTICIPATION

A+ = 98-100; A = 93-97; A- = 90-92; B+ = 87-89; B = 82-86; B- = 80-81; C+ = 77-79; C = 72-76; C- = 70-71; D = 60-69; F = below 60

Final semester grades are based on weekly participation in Discussion Board (20% all together), two 2-3 page response papers (a mid-term and a final, 25% each), and a 5-6 page short research paper or an expanded response paper (30%). See "Discussion Board," "Response Papers" and "Research Paper" below. **PLEASE NOTE that there is no Spring Recess scheduled for Spring Semester 2021 due to Covid-19 concerns.**

- **DISCUSSION BOARD.** You will be assessed on your participation in the class discussion. You should submit one thoughtful comment or question on Discussion Board each week in order to receive full participation credit. Your answer should be at least 3 or 4 substantial sentences and demonstrate your engagement with the class material. You will also submit a reply or response to another student's posting. Questions and suggestions for discussion will be available on Blackboard each week. Each week is worth up to 6 points (but feel free to submit multiple posts in a discussion).

The discussion board grade is not just an average of the number of points in each week's discussion board. The discussion board posts are all together worth 20% of the final semester grade. This is calculated by the Blackboard computer.

- **RESPONSE PAPERS.** There are no formal exams for this course. Instead, two times during the semester you will be asked to write a 2-3 page (single-space) response paper related to the material we studied in class. You will be given several questions to answer within the response paper. Response papers are worth up to 100 points each. They each count 25% of the semester grade.
- **RESEARCH PAPER.** You will also be asked to write a 5-6 page (double-space) research paper on a topic related to this class. A list of suggested topics will be provided but you must have your choice of topic approved by the professor. The paper should include at least one photograph, chart, or map, and all sources will be footnoted. You can use any scholarly system of footnoting as long as it is consistent throughout the paper. The intent of the paper is to reference and expand on the material studied in the class, and to explore further a topic of particular interest to you. The research paper is worth 100 points, like an exam, and counts as 30% of the final semester grade.
- **Understanding your "Grade so far" on Blackboard:**
After a few weeks, in the Grade Center on Blackboard, you will see a column labeled "Grade so far." This shows your current course grade based on the work you have completed and I have graded so far. This lets you know how you have performed in this course so far. It does NOT say "this will be your final grade if you stop working now." So use "Grade so far" to know how you have performed so far and to inspire you to keep your work at a high quality for the rest of the semester!

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Students must be responsible for their own work. Students must adhere to the guidelines of the George Mason University Honor Code. Any student found cheating, including plagiarism, will receive a grade of "0" for the assignment or exam and may also be referred to the Dean of Student Services for additional disciplinary action. If you are unsure what plagiarism is, you should read through this website: <http://mason.gmu.edu/~montecin/plagiarism.htm>

MasonLive/EMAIL (GMU Email)

Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their George Mason University email account and are required to activate their account and check it regularly. All communication from the university, college, school, and program will be sent to students solely through their Mason email account.

Once you sign up for your Patriot Pass, your passwords will be synchronized, and you will use your Patriot Pass username and password to log in to the following systems: Blackboard, University Libraries, MasonLive, myMason, Patriot Web.

UNIVERSITY POLICIES

Students must follow the university policies. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu>].

RESPONSIBLE USE OF COMPUTING

Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing. [See <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/1301gen.html>].

STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with the George Mason University Office of Disability Services (ODS) and inform their instructor, in writing, at the beginning of the semester [See <http://ods.gmu.edu>].

WITHDRAWAL FROM CLASS

If you choose to withdraw from this class, it is your responsibility to check the appropriate deadlines and proceed with the withdrawal process.

WEEKLY SCHEDULE

NOTE: This schedule is an outline only and subject to change. See Blackboard for weekly assignments.

*Each week begins on Monday, on this date

WEEK 1

January 25 **Classes begin on Monday, January 25**

Introduction to class / Getting to know each other

Study topics: First Peoples, First Farmers, to 4000 BCE / First civilizations 3500 BCE-500 BCE

Read: "The Great Human Migration" at

<https://www.smithsonianmag.com/history/the-great-human-migration-13561/>

and "What was the Neolithic Revolution?" at

<https://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/topics/reference/neolithic-agricultural-revolution/#close>

and "Mesopotamia" at

<https://www.history.com/topics/ancient-middle-east/mesopotamia>

and "Ancient Egypt: A Brief History" at

<https://www.livescience.com/55578-egyptian-civilization.html>

WEEK 2

February 1 *Study topics:* Second-Wave Civilizations: Eurasia

Read: "The Rise of the Persian Empire" at

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/world-history/ancient-medieval/ancient-persia/a/the-rise-of-persia>

and

"Ancient Greek Civilization" at <https://www.timemaps.com/civilizations/ancient-greeks/>

and

"Alexander the Great" at

http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/historic_figures/alexander_the_great.shtml

WEEK 3

February 8

Read: Assignment on Blackboard

Study topics: Roman Empire / North Africa 500 BCE-500 CE

WEEK 4

February 15

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: Commerce & Culture, 600-1450 C.E. / East Asian Connections, 600-1300

WEEK 5

February 22

RESPONSE PAPER #1 IS DUE NO LATER THAN 11:59 P.M. ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 28.
This assignment will be posted on Blackboard at the end of Week 4.
No other assignments this week.

WEEK 6

March 1

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: Islam, 600-1450 / Christendom, 600-1450

WEEK 7

March 8

Read: Assignment on Blackboard; and film on Blackboard: "Wild Horses of Mongolia, with Julia Roberts"
Study topics: The Mongols 1200-1450

WEEK 8**March 15**

RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC PROPOSAL is due no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, March 28.
No other assignments this week.

WEEK 9

March 22

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: Worlds of the Fifteenth century

WEEK 10

March 29

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: Commerce and Consequences 1450-1750 / Atlantic Revolutions, 1750-1914

WEEK 11

April 5

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: Industrial Revolutions, 1750-1900 / European Colonization 1750-1914

WEEK 12

April 12

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: World War I and II

WEEK 13

April 19

Read: Assignment on Blackboard
Study topics: The Cold War / Globalization / New Cold War today?

WEEK 14

April 26

RESPONSE PAPER #2 IS DUE on Blackboard no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 2.
This assignment will be posted in Week 13.
Friday, April 30. Last day of classes. Saturday, May 1, Reading day.

EXAM WEEK

Monday-Monday, May 3-10.

RESEARCH PAPER IS DUE on Blackboard no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, May 9.