

**George Mason University
College of Humanities and Social Sciences
Mason Core - History**

**Hist. 125. 006 – Introduction to World History
[3] Credits, Spring 2023
Monday/Wednesday – 3.00 – 4.15 pm Innovation Hall #105 – Main Campus**

Faculty

Name: Dr. Alan P. Capps
Office Hours: By Appointment
Office Location:
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Prerequisites

None.

University Catalog Course Description

This course **introduces** students to the history of the modern world. Throughout the semester, we will examine the broad impact of economic, political, and social changes and their impact on people around the globe. We will also delve into several subsets of the three broad categories. Prominent themes will include the growth and dynamics of empire, colonization and decolonization, technical developments and the ongoing evolution of a global economy, nationalism and revolutionary movements, the nexus of political, cultural, and religious views, and modern imperialism and its lasting impact on international societies.

Satisfies the general education requirement in Western civilization/world history

Course Overview

Analytical approach to world history overview surveys significant features of principal existing civilizations of the world, as initially formed and altered by key global processes, including forces of modernity.

There is no grand design to the way history goes. The process does not fall neatly into categories. Things turn out differently than expected. Change always surprises everybody because things do not happen in straight lines. Connections are made by accident. The links have brought into existence some of the most powerful tools and systems that drive the world from both a positive

and negative standpoint. Innovations and connections emerge from a closely linked sequence of events within the greater web of history that connects us all to the past and the future.

Course Delivery Method

This course will be delivered using a lecture recitation format.

Course Performance Evaluation

Students are expected to submit all assignments as outlined by the instructor.

- **Mid-term and Final exam**

This course will have two exams: a midterm and a final. These exams will focus on the lectures. Each exam will present a selection of terms, events, or concepts and need students to select and discuss a specific number. The exams will also offer a series of essay questions, of which students must choose one or more to answer. The midterm will be worth 25% of the overall grade, and the final exam will be 35%.

Writing Assignments

Two writing assignments: two short papers (1,000 -1,500 words, 15% each), the first due before the mid-term and the second due before the final. You will select a topic, clear it with me, and write your paper. The topic area is open to you. The only caveat is that the first paper's topic must be drawn from the period covered by the first six weeks. The second paper can draw from the entire semester. Your goal is to find a topic that interests you and tell me about it. Why did you choose this topic? What interests you about the subject? What more do you want to know? What are the limitations? Who has written about your topic recently, and do you agree with that work's findings?

Examples:

Was Alexander the Great genuinely great? Why/Why not? Justify your response

Should Western Museums, e.g., The British Museum, give back artifacts to Greece? Yes, or no? Justify your response.

What is the current understanding of how the pyramids were built? Do you agree or not? Justify your response.

All papers should employ the *Chicago Style Guide*.

Make sure you read, edit, and read and edit your papers again. With the technology at your fingertips, there should be no typos or basic grammatical mistakes. Include footnotes and a bibliography, neither of which will form part of the overall word count.

If you want assistance/guidance/ideas, ASK ME.

- **Other Requirements**

Attendance/participation in class (10%): The lectures complement the readings; they do not duplicate them. Students who miss lectures will miss important content.

Regular completion of the reading assignments: What you learn from the lectures and readings will be employed in both discussion segments of the class and incorporated into writing assignments. Participation in discussions should show evidence of reading and critically analyzing the assigned tasks. All students are actively encouraged to participate in class discussions.

Grading

This course is graded on the Undergraduate Regular scale.

<https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/academic/grading/#text>

Professional Dispositions

Readings

See <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/policies-procedures/>

Class Schedule

Week One

January 23 - Introduction to World History and Syllabus Review

January 25 - The Building Blocks of Civilization

Week Two

January 30 - First Civilizations of Africa and Western Asia

February 1 - Ancient and Classical China

Week Three

February 6 - Ancient and Classical India (Last day to withdraw 100% Tuition Refund)

February 8 – Mesoamerica

Week Four

February 13 – Classical Greece (Last day to withdraw 50% Tuition Refund)

February 15 – Classical Rome

Week Five

February 20 - Judaism, Christianity, and Islam

February 22 – African kingdoms (First Paper Due in class)

Week Six

February 27 - Mid-term Exam in class

March 1 – The Byzantine World

Week Seven

March 6 - Germanic tribes and the Vikings

March 8 – Were the Dark Ages Dark?

Week Eight (Spring Break – no classes)

March 13

March 15

Week Nine

March 20 – The Crusades

March 22 - The Onslaught of the Mongols

Week Ten

March 27 - The Middle Ages: The rise of the commercial world

March 29 – The Middle Ages: Disease, Death, and Destruction

Week Eleven

April 3 – The Renaissance

April 5 - The World Starts to Get Smaller: Exploration or Exploitation?

Week Twelve

April 10 – Religion: Reformation and Counter-Reformation

April 12 – Scientific Revolution

Week Thirteen

April 17 - Western Domination: Revolutions, Reactions, and Imperialism (Part I)

April 19 - Western Domination: Revolutions, Reactions, and Imperialism (Part II)

Week Fourteen

April 24 – The Twentieth Century (Part I - 1900- 1945)

April 26 – The Twentieth Century (Part II – 1945-2000)

Week Fifteen

May 1 - Out of the Shadows/Where Do We Go from Here?

May 3 (Last class) Review Class (Second Paper Due in class)

Week Sixteen

May 10 - 17 Final Exam Period

Note: Faculty reserves the right to alter the schedule as necessary, with notification to students.

Core Values Commitment

The College of Education and Human Development is committed to collaboration, ethical leadership, innovation, research-based practice, and social justice. Therefore, students are expected to adhere to these principles: <http://cehd.gmu.edu/values/>.

GMU Policies and Resources for Students

Policies

- Students must adhere to the guidelines of the Mason Honor Code (see <https://catalog.gmu.edu/policies/honor-code-system/>).
- Students must follow the university policy for Responsible Use of Computing (see <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/policies/responsible-use-of-computing/>).
- Students are responsible for the content of university communications sent to their Mason email account and must 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 accounts.
- Students with disabilities who seek accommodations in a course must be registered with George Mason University Disability Services. Approved accommodations will begin when the instructor receives the written letter from Disability Services (see <https://ds.gmu.edu/>).
- Students must silence all sound-emitting devices during class unless authorized by the instructor.

Campus Resources

- Support for submission of assignments to Tk20 should be directed to tk20help@gmu.edu or <https://cehd.gmu.edu/aero/tk20>. Questions or concerns regarding the use of Blackboard should be directed to <http://coursesupport.gmu.edu/>.
- For information on student support resources on campus, see <https://ctfe.gmu.edu/teaching/student-support-resources-on-campus>.

For additional information on the College of Education and Human Development, please visit our website <https://cehd.gmu.edu/students/>.