

George Mason University  
Fall 2023

## HIST 125 DLA Introduction to World History (online)

Course No. 202370.80560  
Instructor: Dr. Gail Hook  
Email: [ghook@gmu.edu](mailto:ghook@gmu.edu)



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

### COURSE OVERVIEW

This course is an introductory survey of the development of world history 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 in books, primary documents, and film and other media posted on Blackboard, and the professor's video lectures. **This is a fully online, asynchronous course and does not meet together at a specific time, but there are weekly modules and required discussion groups every week.** 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 (Value edition) Combined Volume (2018)* or Tom Standage, *History of the World in Six Glasses* (Walker Publishing Company, 2006).

### 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), three 1-2 page response papers (25% each), and a journal about a country of your choice that you have followed all semester (5%). See "Discussion Board," "Response Papers," and "Journal" below.

- **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, three times during the semester you will be asked to write a 1-2 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.
- **COUNTRY JOURNAL.** At the beginning of the semester, you will be asked to choose one country anywhere in the world (not your own home country) that you will follow for the entire semester. You will get instructions on setting up a journal in Blackboard for your personal entries about that country every week. Entries can be a link and your concise comment about a recent article you found, or an encyclopedia entry, or a travel blog, or a photograph, map, or drawing. The idea is to become familiar with one country in the world and follow its history and current events. You will become an "expert" about that country! You will post an entry every week, and they will be reviewed periodically by the professor, but the entire notebook will graded at the end of the semester. This notebook is worth 5% of your 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, see this university link: <https://oai.gmu.edu/full-honor-code-document/> (and click on "Definitions").

### **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 <https://ds.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**

\* August 21

Monday is first day of Fall classes

Introduction to the class / Getting to know each other / First assignment

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

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

**WEEK 2**

August 28

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Egypt / Persian Empire

**WEEK 3**

September 4

**Monday: Labor Day: University Closed**

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Ancient Greece / Alexander the Great / the Hellenistic kings

**WEEK 4**

September 11

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Comparing the Roman, Chinese, and Indian Empires

**WEEK 5**

September 18

**RESPONSE PAPER #1 IS DUE NO LATER THAN 11:59 P.M. ON SUNDAY, SEPT. 24**

This assignment will be posted on Blackboard at the end of Week 4.

No other assignments this week. Country journal is optional this week.

**WEEK 6**

September 25

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Roads of Commerce, 600-1450 C.E. / East Asian Connections, 600-1300

**WEEK 7**

October 2

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard

*Study topics:* Islam, 600-1450 / Christendom, 600-1450

**WEEK 8****October 9****FALL BREAK (no classes) Monday, October 9***Read:* Assignment on Blackboard and watch film on Blackboard: "Wild Horses of Mongolia, with Julia Roberts"*Study topics:* The Mongols

## WEEK 9

October 16

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard*Study topics:* Worlds of the 15th-17th Centuries

## WEEK 10

October 23

**RESPONSE PAPER #2 IS DUE on Blackboard no later than 11:59 p.m. on Sunday, Oct. 29**

This assignment will be posted on Blackboard at the end of Week 9.

No other assignment this week. Country journal is optional this week.

## WEEK 11

October 30

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard*Study topics:* Atlantic Revolutions, 1750-1914 / European Colonization 1750-1914 / Commerce and Consequences 1450-1750 / Industrial Revolutions, 1750-1900

## WEEK 12

November 6

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard*Study topics:* World War I and "between the wars"

## WEEK 13

November 13

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard*Study topics:* World War II / The Cold War

## WEEK 14

November 20

*Read:* Assignment on Blackboard*Study topics:* Latin America / The Global South**Wed. Nov. 22 – Sun. Nov. 26 Thanksgiving Recess: No Classes (University Closed)**

## WEEK 15

November 27

**RESPONSE PAPER #3 is due no later than 11:59 p.m. on SUNDAY, DEC. 3**

This assignment will be posted on Blackboard at the end of Week 14.

\*Saturday, Dec. 2: Last day of classes

## WEEK 16

Mon. Dec. 4 – Tue. Dec. 5

University Reading Days: Study time for final exams. (No classes)

Wed. Dec. 6 – Wed. Dec. 13

Examination Period

**Your Country Journal should be complete no later than Wed., Dec. 6**  
**Final assignment: Discussion board: Share with the class a brief discussion of the country you studied for your journal. This is due no later than 11:59 p.m. on WEDNESDAY, DEC. 13**