

**WORLD HISTORY**  
**FROM THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION THROUGH THE MIDDLE AGES**

History 265.06, CID 7053  
Credit 3.0  
TT 9:30, SHB #304  
Sam Houston State University  
Fall 2007

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**Description of the Course**

“During most of the course of human history, the most advanced civilizations have been not in the West, but in East Asia or the Middle East. A relatively brief period of European dominance culminated with the era of imperialism in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, when the political, military, and economic power of the advanced nations of the West spanned the globe.... World history, then, is not simply a chronicle of the rise of the West to global dominance, nor is it a celebration of the superiority of the civilization of Europe and the United States over other parts of the world. The history of the world has been a complex process in which many branches of the human community have taken an active part, and the dominance of any area of the world has been a temporary rather than a permanent phenomenon.”

This statement is one which would have not been found in our history textbooks only a few generations ago. Indeed, the creation of World History courses at Sam Houston State and other universities in the West is evidence alone that the Western view of the world has significantly changed in the past half-century. In the most immediate sense, Western institutions of higher education now believe it is important if not vital that students learn about the other societies of the world – past and present – just as they already do about their own society. On this note, we will be surveying human history before the more recent era of European-Western ascendance (which began around the 15<sup>th</sup> century). We will be studying both how human societies germinated and developed in different parts of the world and also how they interacted and influenced one another’s development via cross-cultural exchanges.

**Objectives for the Course**

- Gaining factual knowledge of the subject matter
- Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, & theories pertaining to World History
- Developing skill in expressing oneself orally & in writing
- Learning to analyze and critically evaluate ideas, arguments & points of view

**Required Readings**

- Textbook: Jerry Bentley, Herbert Ziegler, Heather Streets, *Traditions & Encounters: A Brief Global History*, vol. 1. (McGraw Hill, 2006). ISBN 0073207020
- The links for other, primary source readings available on the Web will be posted on Blackboard periodically throughout the semester.

**Attendance Policy**

I expect every student to be present and on time for every class. If you happen to arrive more than 5 minutes late on a particular day, I would ask that you not enter the classroom since it disrupts the session and annoys those students who are punctual. The only exceptions regarding tardiness will be on days of inclement weather. I will feel obligated to disseminate material and instructions one time only. In case of any absence, whether excused or unexcused, you are still responsible for the material covered and obtaining it is incumbent upon you. It would be a good idea to establish relationships with fellow students in order to assure that you remain well informed and are adequately prepared for exams.

Per University policy, an attendance sheet will be passed around at each class session. You may miss three hours of class without penalty. Three points will be deducted from your overall semester grade for each absence beyond these three hours of missed class. In the event you experience some emergency for missing class after your three hours, you must provide documentation (to my satisfaction) for those days. In the event you must drop this class, please remember, do so through the Registrar's office. Otherwise, your course grade will be "F."

**Classroom Policy, Holy Days Policy, Academic Honesty, Students with Disabilities**

The University's policies regarding these matters can be found at the following link:

<http://www.shsu.edu/mailler/coursesyllabus.pdf>

**Additional Notes**

Do make note that the university has placed a limit on the number of "Q" a student can have on a transcript of his/her student records. Also, as a condition of enrollment in this course, a student agrees to give permission to have all written materials checked for plagiarism by computer internet verification. Continued enrollment in this course beyond the 12th class day constitutes your agreement to this condition. I prefer that you not bring a tape recorder to class unless you can provide some documentation for a disability. Please be considerate of your classmates. In consideration of time constraints and unforeseen circumstances that might adversely affect the majority of the class, I will reserve the right to make changes to this syllabus.

**Reading Assignments & Quizzes**

Listed below are the reading assignments in the Textbook. On each of the dates we will begin class with a short quiz on the material in the assigned chapter(s).

Tues., Aug. 28	Chapters 1-2
Tues., Sept. 4	Chapters 3-4
Tues., Sept. 18	Chapters 5-6
Tues., Sept. 25	Chapter 8
Tues., Oct. 9	Chapter 9
Thursday, Oct. 18	Chapter 7
Thursday, Oct. 25	Chapters 10-11
Tues., Nov. 6	Chapter 14
Tues., Nov. 13	Chapters 12-13
Tues., Dec. 4	Chapters 15 and 19

### **Worksheets for Debate/Discussion**

On the dates listed below we will have an in-class Debate or Discussion based on the writings of certain individuals. Each student is to complete a brief Worksheet as a means to help prepare for the Debate/Discussion. For the debates, I will present you with a set of questions pertaining to the writings, and you are to compose responses to each question. The responses are to be your OWN writing and not something copied. The completed Worksheet should be typed (12-font, Times New Roman, double-spaced), printed out and stapled, and handed in on the day of the Debate/Discussion. Only those Worksheets handed in during class will be accepted (i.e. none will be accepted that are submitted via email or handed in any time before or after that class). **NOTE:** You should consult the Textbook for material that will help you understand the historical context and content of the philosophies and also the writings of Ibn Battuta..

Sept. 13	Debate: Chinese philosophies
Sept. 27	Debate: Greek philosophies
Nov. 29	Discussion based on writings by Ibn Battuta

### **Exams**

There will be three total exams for the course—two during the semester and a Final. Each exam will be composed of an essay and multiple choice questions. Exams will pertain only to the material covered in class.

### **Late Policy**

Any assignment turned in late will be marked down 10 points for each of the first three days that it is late (I would advise you to turn in to me any late paper via email attachment so that you incur the least amount of penalty). Beyond that point no credit can be earned for it. Make-ups for missed exams must be done within 5 school days of the scheduled exam day, and unless you can verify that you missed the exam for a good reason, 15 points will be subtracted from the exam score.

### **Grading**

The coursework breaks down as follows:

Quizzes (10)	30% (3% each)
Worksheets (3)	30% (10% each)
Exams (3)	40% (13% each for Exams 1 & 2, 14% for Final Exam)

**\*Note:** Grades will be posted and updated on Blackboard over the course of the semester. Once you've taken the Final Exam and your semester grade is finalized on Blackboard, it cannot be negotiated. It will not be possible to do extra credit work or a make-up assignment in order to try and raise your grade. You will be able to track your grade on Blackboard throughout the semester, which means you will know as the semester goes along whether you have to work harder to get the letter grade you want.

**OUTLINE** (Outline is subject to changes)**INTRODUCTION**

Aug. 21 Introduction to the Course  
 Aug. 23 Why World History?

**EARLY CIVILIZATIONS & SOCIETIES**

Aug. 28 River-Valley Civilizations: The Emergence of Civilization in Mesopotamia  
 Aug. 30 River-Valley Civilizations: Egypt  
 Sept. 4 River-Valley Civilizations: The Civilized and The Barbarian in East Asia  
 Sept. 6 The Early Mesoamerican Societies  
 Sept. 11 Indo-European Migrations: Germanic & Celtic Societies

**THE CLASSICAL PERIOD: THE FIRST AGE OF EMPIRES**

Sept. 13 Debate: Chinese philosophies  
 Sept. 18 China: The Qin & the Han  
 Sept. 20 Classical Greece: Life in the Polis  
 Sept. 25 Classical Greece: Cultural Revolution – Humanism  
 Sept. 27 Debate: Greek philosophies  
**Oct. 2 EXAM 1**  
 Oct. 4 Classical Rome: The Roman Republic  
 Oct. 9 Classical Rome: *Imperium* during the *Pax Romana*  
 Oct. 11 Monotheisms: Judaism and the Founding of Christianity  
 Oct. 16 The Spread of Christianity  
 Oct. 18 India: Hinduism, Buddhism & Empire in Classical India  
 Oct. 23 Film & Discussion: *Guns, Germs & Steel* – Inequality among human societies in WH

**THE POST-CLASSICAL PERIOD: NEW PATTERNS OF CIVILIZATION, 6<sup>th</sup>-11<sup>th</sup> cent.**

Oct. 25 An Heir of Rome: The Byzantine Empire & Russia  
 Oct. 30 The Rise & Spread of Islam  
**Nov. 1 EXAM 2**  
 Nov. 6 How the West was Made: The Western Synthesis, 4<sup>th</sup>-9<sup>th</sup> cent.  
 Nov. 8 The Christianization of Death & Burial in the West, 4<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> cent.  
 Nov. 13 The Search for Order: Feudal Societies – Western Europe & Japan  
 Nov. 15 Separation of Church & State and the Founding of the Modern State in the West  
 Nov. 20 TBD

**INTERREGIONAL PATTERNS OF CULTURE & CONTACT, 1000-1500**

Nov. 27 What were the Crusades?  
 Nov. 29 Discussion: Africa & the travels of *Ibn Battuta*  
 Dec. 4 Nomadic Empire: the Mongols & the Effects of the Plague  
 Dec. 6 Film & Discussion: *Guns, Germs & Steel* – Patterns of Global Expansion

**FINAL EXAM**