

WORLD HISTORY
FROM THE DAWN OF CIVILIZATION THROUGH THE MIDDLE AGES

Hist 265.05, CID 3514
Syllabus
Credit 3.0
Sam Houston State University
Spring 2008

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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 19th 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 15th 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. Students will learn:

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

Required Readings

- Textbook:: Jerry H. Bentley, Herbert F. Ziegler, Heather E. Streets, *Traditions & Encounters, A Brief Global History*. Volume 1: From the Beginning to 1500. McGraw Hill. ISBN 978-0-07-320702-5.
- A variety of primary source readings will be posted on Blackboard.

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/maier/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

Reading assignments for the textbook are listed in the Outline below. For each one there will be an in-class quiz during the first 15 minutes of the session. The quiz will be in the form of 10 multiple choice questions. You should bring a Scantron form #815-E for each quiz.

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..

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| Feb. 12 | Debate: Chinese philosophies |
| Feb. 26 | Debate: Greek philosophies |
| May 6 | 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 multiple choice & an essay. Exams will pertain only to the material covered in class. You should bring a Scantron form #815-E for each exam.

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:

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| Quizzes (9) | 27% (3% each) |
| Worksheets (3) | 30% (10% each) |
| Exams (3) | 43% (14% each for Exams 1 & 2, 15% 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

| Date | Topic | Assignment |
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| INTRODUCTION | | |
| 1/17 | Introduction to the Course | |
| 1/22 | Why World History? | |
| I. EARLY CIVILIZATIONS & SOCIETIES | | |
| 1/24 | River-Valley Civilizations: The Emergence of Civilization in Mesopotamia | Quiz: Ch. 1 & 2 |
| 1/29 | River-Valley Civilizations: Egypt | |
| 1/31 | River-Valley Civilizations: The Civilized and The Barbarian in East Asia | Quiz: Ch. 3 & 4 |
| 2/5 | The Early Mesoamerican Societies | |
| 2/7 | Indo-European Migrations: Germanic & Celtic Societies | |
| II. THE CLASSICAL PERIOD: THE FIRST AGE OF EMPIRES | | |
| 2/12 | <u>Debate</u> : Chinese philosophies | Worksheet due |
| 2/14 | China: The Qin & the Han | Quiz: Ch. 5 & 6 |
| 2/19 | Classical Greece: Life in the Polis | |
| 2/21 | Classical Greece: Cultural Revolution – Humanism | |
| 2/26 | <u>Debate</u> : Greek philosophies | Worksheet due |
| 2/28 | EXAM 1 | |
| 3/4 | Classical Rome: The Roman Republic | Quiz: Ch. 8 |
| 3/6 | Classical Rome: <i>Imperium</i> during the <i>Pax Romana</i> | |
| 3/18 | Monotheisms: Judaism and the Founding of Christianity | |
| 3/20 | The Spread of Christianity | |
| 3/25 | India: Hinduism, Buddhism & Empire in Classical India | Quiz: Ch. 7 & 9 |
| 3/27 | <u>Film & Discussion</u> : <i>Guns, Germs & Steel</i> – Inequality among human societies | |
| III. THE POST-CLASSICAL PERIOD: NEW PATTERNS OF CIVILIZATION, 500-1000 | | |
| 4/1 | An Heir of Rome: The Byzantine Empire & Russia | Quiz: Ch 10 & 11 |
| 4/3 | The Rise & Spread of Islam | |
| 4/8 | EXAM 2 | |
| 4/10 | How the West was Made: The Western Synthesis, 4 th -9 th cent. | Quiz: Ch. 14 |
| 4/15 | The Christianization of Death & Burial in the West, 4 th -10 th cent. | |
| 4/17 | The Search for Order: Feudal Societies – Western Europe & Japan | Quiz: Ch. 12 & 13 |
| 4/22 | Separation of Church & State and Founding of the Modern State in the West | |
| IV. INTERREGIONAL PATTERNS OF CULTURE & CONTACT, 1000-1500 | | |
| 4/24 | What were the Crusades? | |
| 4/29 | <u>Discussion</u> : Sub-Saharan Africa & the travels of <i>Ibn Battuta</i> | Worksheet due |
| 5/1 | Nomadic Empire: the Mongols & the Effects of the Plague | Quiz: Ch. 15 & 19 |
| 5/6 | <u>Film & Discussion</u> : <i>Guns, Germs & Steel</i> – Patterns of Global Expansion | |
| 5/8 | Wrap Up | |

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| | FINAL EXAM | |
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