



History 100: History of Western Civilization

Section 005 (MWF 9:30-10:20) & Section 007 (MWF 10:30-11:20)
Science and Technology I, room 206

Instructor: Dr. Joshua Arthurs

Office Hours: Robinson B375C, Wednesdays 1:30-3:30 or by appointment

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Course Description:

History is a story we tell about ourselves – where we come from, what we believe, where we are going. So what does the story of Western Civilization tell us about ourselves? This course will examine key themes in the “autobiography” of the West. We will look at the many ways in which the West has been defined over the centuries; pivotal transformations and moments in its development; the cultural, social, political and philosophical values to which it has laid claim; and the various “Others” against which it has been defined. By analyzing and interrogating the story of this civilization, we can come to a better understanding of who “we” are today, and of the political, social, economic and cultural forces that shape our world.

Readings:

Most of your readings will be available via the course website, which you can reach by logging on to **courses.gmu.edu**. You should print out the readings and come to class prepared to discuss them. In addition to online readings, there are several **mandatory** books for purchase at the campus bookstore. It is preferable, but not required, that you get the following editions:

- Sophocles, *Antigone*. Trans. David Franklin and John Harrison (Cambridge, 2003).
- St. Benedict, *The Rule of St. Benedict* (Vintage, 1998).
- Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*. Trans. David Wootton (Hackett, 1995).
- Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde* (Broadview, 2005).
- Art Spiegelman, *Maus* volumes I&II (Penguin, 2003).

There is also an **optional** textbook for the course, Frankforter and Spellman's *The West: Culture and Ideas* combined volume (Prentice Hall Portfolio Edition, 2004), again available at the campus bookstore. The textbook provides basic historical background that will help you follow the lectures and study for assignments and quizzes. I have included relevant page ranges for each lecture.

Course Website:

In addition to the readings, the course website will include slides from lectures, study questions for our discussions, assignments and interesting links. Again, you can log on at **courses.gmu.edu**.

Grading:

Your grade is based on three types of assignments:

Papers (40%): two papers, each of 4-5 pages. You will receive an assignment sheet several classes ahead of the due date. To reward improvement over the course of the semester, the papers are weighted progressively. The midterm paper is worth 15% and the final paper is worth 25%. You must submit both papers to pass the course, even if your grade is mathematically passing.

Quizzes (40%): Over the course of the semester, there will be five quizzes to assess how well you have kept up with the lectures and readings. Each one is worth 10% of your grade. Since these are in-class and time-dependent, there are **no make-ups**. Your lowest quiz score (including missed ones) will be dropped.

Participation and Attendance (20%): As you will notice on the syllabus, some weeks will be focused on lectures while others are devoted to discussion. During discussion weeks, the class will be divided into two groups to facilitate conversation. Our discussion will be focused on one longer reading (indicated on the syllabus) but will also bring in themes and texts from other sessions. Your contributions for each discussion week are graded and form the core of your participation grade. You must attend the discussion group to which you are assigned.

Attendance also counts towards your participation grade. You are expected to attend all class meetings, with a notebook and the readings in hand. Be prepared to discuss the texts and ask questions. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; however, I understand that illness and problems can arise, so you will be allowed two "free" misses over the course of the semester. Be judicious about how you use these absences: if you use up your absences early in the semester, I will not be sympathetic when you need to miss class later in the term. Perfect attendance will raise your participation grade; multiple absences will lower it. Under GMU regulations, some absences – e.g. for varsity sports or religious holidays – are acceptable and will not be counted against you. If you are a student athlete, you must complete the relevant paperwork from the Athletics Office and inform me if you will be missing class for a competition.

Extra Credit:

To make up for lost points, or to gain extra credit, you can write a 3-4 page response paper analyzing a historical film, museum exhibit or historical website of your choice that relates to the themes of the course. However, **it must be approved by me beforehand**, and it is **your** responsibility to come to me with a suggestion and a justification for your choice. Extra credit assignments are graded, and you can receive up to 5% for an “A” quality response. You may only do one extra credit assignment per semester, and it must be turned in by our last class session.

Course Expectations:

Assignments: The papers must be submitted in **HARD COPY** and stapled – not sent via email. They should be double-spaced and in 12-point font. Late papers will be deducted half a grade for every day of lateness, beginning at the time at which they are due. No extensions will be given.

Communication: I will often communicate with the class via your GMU email account. Please be sure to check it regularly. Email is also the best way to contact me. When emailing, please be polite and professional. I will work hard to get back to you in a timely manner.

Courtesy during Class: It is disruptive to others to arrive late to class or leave early. Please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early, explain the situation to me beforehand and sit near the door so that you can exit as quietly as possible. Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, or any other wireless device that may make noise during class. I will confiscate your device if it rings in class. You may use laptops in class for taking notes, but if you are using it for email, instant-messaging, or any other activity I will ask you to stop using your computer.

Academic Integrity: Any evidence of cheating or plagiarism will automatically result in a penalty. Depending on the seriousness of the incident, this can range from F on an assignment to F for the course and referral to the University Honor Committee. Plagiarism is a serious academic problem and means that you have willfully stolen the thoughts, ideas, and words of others and treated them as your own. Please cite all of your sources! I reserve the right to use anti-plagiarism software in dubious cases.

Writing Center: Writing is one of the most important skills in this course. You are encouraged to use the GMU Writing Center to help you revise papers. More information on the Writing Center's resources can be found at writingcenter.gmu.edu.

Disability and Academic Accommodation: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Disability Resource Center (DRC) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. Please note: students who do not produce the proper paperwork from the DR office have no right to claim accommodation for a learning disability.

Schedule

Week I

- 1/21 Introduction: History? Western? Civilization?
- 1/23 The Invention of the West? The Rise of Ancient Greece
Homer, *The Odyssey*
Herodotus, *The Persian Wars* (read preface; sections 1.1-1.6; sections 7.22-7.228)
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 52-65

Week II

- 1/26 Idiots and Politics: the Athenian Moment
Thucydides, *Pericles' Funeral Oration*
Plato, *The Allegory of the Cave*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 65-99
- 1/28 Farmers, Soldiers, Citizens: the Roman Republic
Livy, *The Rape of Lucretia*
Polybius, *Rome at the End of the Punic Wars* (read the first section only)
Livy, *The Story of Cincinnatus* (read sections 3.26-3.29)
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 110-123
- 1/30 The Capital of the World: Imperial Rome
Augustus, *Res Gestae*
Aelius Aristides, *Panegyric to Rome*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 124-147

Week III – Discussion – Sophocles, *Antigone*

- 2/2 Group 1
2/4 Group 2
2/6 **QUIZ #1**

Week IV

- 2/9 The Fall of Rome, the Birth of Christendom
St. Augustine, *The City of God*
Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 152-173
- 2/11 Kings, Popes and Vassals: Politics, Religion and Feudalism
Einhard, *The Life of Charlemagne*
Fulbert of Chartres, *On Feudal Obligations*
Pope Gregory VII, *Dictatus Papae*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 175-198

- 2/13 Holy War: the Crusades and the Expansion of Christendom
Fulcher of Chartres, *Urban II's Speech at Clermont*
Raynaldus, *Accusations against the Albigensians*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 199-224

Week V – Discussion – *The Rule of St. Benedict* (read introduction; prologue; chapters 1-7, 22-30, 33-40, 48-49, 53-55, 63-73)

2/16 Group 2

2/18 Group 1

2/20 **QUIZ #2**

MIDTERM PAPER ASSIGNMENT HANDED OUT

Week VI

- 2/23 The Waning of the Middle Ages I: the Renaissance
Giorgio Vasari, *The Life of Leonardo da Vinci*
Pico Della Mirandola, *Oration on the Dignity of Man*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 273-287

- 2/25 The Waning of the Middle Ages II: the Age of Discovery
Christopher Columbus, *Journal*
Richard Hakluyt, *Discourse on Western Planting*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 288-296, 348-366

2/27 **NO CLASS**

Week VII – Discussion – Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince* (read the dedication; chapters 1-6, 8-10, 14-19, 21, 25-26)

3/2 Group 1

3/4 Group 2

- 3/6 The Waning of the Middle Ages III: the Reformation
Martin Luther, *The Freedom of a Christian*
St. Ignatius Loyola, *Spiritual Exercises*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 297-323
MIDTERM PAPERS DUE AT THE START OF CLASS

*****SPRING BREAK 3/9 TO 3/15*****

Week VIII

- 3/16 Religious Conflict and Absolutism in Early Modern Europe
Jean Domat, *On Social Order and Absolute Monarchy*

Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan*

- 3/18 Reason Triumphant: the Enlightenment
Thomas Paine, *Of the Religion of Deism Compared with the Christian Religion*
John Locke, *Second Treatise on Government*
Jean-Jaques Rousseau, *The Social Contract*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 367-385

3/20 **QUIZ #3**

Week IX

- 3/23 Liberty, Equality, Fraternity: the French Revolution I
Abbé Sieyès, *What is the Third Estate?*
The Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 386-396
- 3/25 Art and Terror: the French Revolution II
Maximilien Robespierre, *On the Principles of Political Morality*
The Republican Calendar
- 3/27 From Left to Right: Nationalism in the Nineteenth Century
Giuseppe Mazzini, *Duties to Your Country*
Ernst Moritz Arndt, *The German Fatherland*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 410-433, 455-478

Week X

- 3/30 The World Transformed: the Industrial Revolution
Friederich Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England*
William Wordsworth, *The World is Too Much With Us*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 434-454
- 4/1 Answering the Social Question: Marxism
Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (read chapter 1, “Bourgeois and Proletarians”)
- 4/3 The White Man’s Burden: The New Imperialism
Jules Ferry, *On French Colonial Expansion*
Rudyard Kipling, *The White Man’s Burden*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 479-499

Week XI – Discussion – Robert Louis Stevenson, *The Strange Case of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde*

- 4/6 Group 2
4/8 Group 1

4/10 **QUIZ #4**

Week XII

- 4/13 The Crisis of the West: the Great War
F.T. Marinetti, *The Futurist Manifesto*
Wilfred Owen, *Dulce et Decorum Est*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 502-515
- 4/15 A New World Order: the Treaty of Versailles and the Russian Revolution
Alexandra Kollontai, *Communism and the Family*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 515-523
- 4/17 The Laboratory Generation: Fascism and Nazism
Benito Mussolini, *What is Fascism?*
Adolf Hitler, *Mein Kampf*
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 524-563
- FINAL PAPER ASSIGNMENT HANDED OUT**

Week XIII – Discussion – Art Spiegelman, *Maus* (volumes I and II)

- 4/20 **NO CLASS – VISIT THE HOLOCAUST MUSEUM**
- 4/22 Group 1
- 4/24 Group 2

Week XIV

- 4/27 Reconstruction and Confrontation: the Cold War
Winston Churchill, *The Sinews of Peace*
The Universal Declaration of Human Rights
Recommended: Frankforter and Spellman, 566-586
- 4/29 Group 2 - discussion of Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*
- 5/1 Group 1 - discussion of Benjamin R. Barber, *Jihad vs. McWorld*

Week XV

- 5/4 **QUIZ #5**
LAST DAY TO TURN IN EXTRA CREDIT ASSIGNMENTS
- 5/6 **FINAL PAPER DUE IN HISTORY DEPT. MAILBOX BY NOON**