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[Undergraduate Studies \(NewUndergraduate/index.html\)](#) |

 [\(default.htm\)**](#)

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[\(NewResources/index.html\)](#)[Course Offerings \(NewCourses/index.html\)](#)

[Sitemap \(NewSiteMap/sitemap.html\)](#)

H istory 112/113

Western Civilization from 1660 to Present

Summer 2, 2002

Course Description ~ Required Texts ~ Course Requirements ~ Lectures,
Reading, Tests

~ [Additional Readings \(../Readings/112-113/Hist112-113Readings.htm\)](#)

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300A Gregory Hall | 314 Altgeld Hall

Office Hours: | M,W 10:00-11:00 am

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Course Description

This course will explore the political, military, social, and cultural history of Europe from 1660 to the present, as well as how we use this past to define ourselves today. Originally, professors consciously designed western civilization surveys to present the United States and Western Europe as the logical endpoint of human cultural development. This, of course, is a very pleasing way of seeing ourselves; it allows us to dismiss the dark side of our history, label mass-violence as non-western, and ignore pressing problems in our society by claiming that we live in the best of times. At the beginning of the twenty-first century, we need a new interpretation of the west.

In this course we want to explore the transition of Europe from a stable world of peasants, artisans and aristocrats to the mobile, democratic, industrial world we inhabit today. The French Revolution of 1789 proclaimed liberty, equality and fraternity to be the rights of all people and the watchwords of the west. How have these concepts fared since then?

Just as important, some of the leading thinkers in Europe during the Revolution envisaged history and modern society as something that would build bridges between peoples and enable progress and understanding. Has this in fact taken place, or does our knowledge of our history hinder us as much as it helps when we come into contact with other people, other places, and other ideas? In order to answer these questions, we will focus on western Europe, but we will also ask how Europeans impacted the rest of the world, and how non-Europeans changed the west. We will admire the intellectual power and rationality of the scientific revolution and the Enlightenment, but we will also stand in dismay at the totalitarian regimes inspired by the belief that the world and people can be completely controlled. We will explore the awesome power and wealth unleashed by industrialization, and the same time we quail at the human cost inflicted on workers in the name of prosperity and technology. We will pay close attention to the nation as a way to mobilize power, and the justification it provided for eliminating unwanted groups. As part of this last endeavor, we need to look beyond those who benefited from democratization and industrialization, and focus on groups who existed on the margins. In a survey course of this size where time is limited, we will focus on two minorities; women and Jews. We will try to use their experiences to get a view of Europe from the other side.

To sum up, western civilization is a Janus-faced construction, and we need to look at it from multiple perspectives in order to understand how these people viewed themselves, how culture functions, and how we use the past to define ourselves.

Required Texts

· McKay, Hill, and Buckler, *_A History of Western Society_* , vol. I, 6th edition.

- Voltaire, *Candide*
- Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
- Henrik Ibsen, A Dolls house in *Four Great Plays by Henrik Ibsen*
- Primo Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved*
- Bharati Mukherjee, *Jasmine*

As can be seen, there is a healthy amount of reading in this course. This reflects our three major, pedagogical goals: 1) careful and critical reading,

2. effective analysis and reasoning, 3) clear and accurate written presentation. Students who take responsibility for their own learning will leave this course with a better knowledge of the important events, people and ideas of western history, and with the facility in the fundamental skills essential to success in future university courses and in any other intellectual work. The TAs will discuss the specifics of the reading assignments with you.

Each lecture will present the terms necessary to understand and discuss western civilization: these concepts and definitions are the key to success on the course assignments. The lectures will not review the material in the

textbook – reading the textbook is your responsibility. Each week, the discussion sections will center on close readings of primary sources, major themes in the course, and on the relationship between text and context.

The course requirements are: 1) regular class attendance, 2) completion of all readings, 3) participation in discussion section meetings, 4) one hourly and one final exam, 5) the writing assignments.

The exams will be essay-based, and will draw heavily on material from lecture, as well as discussion section, the textbook, and the primary sources. The final will be cumulative. The breakdown of grades is as follows:

1)	Mid-term 15%
2.	Final exam 25%
3.	Discussion section 40%*
4.	Base writing assign. 20%*

*Your TA will discuss specifics on the writing assignments with you (these will depend on whether or not you are in a writing-intensive section). The proportion of the grade assigned to the section and the writing assignments may change depending on whether you are taking HIS 112 or HIS 113

Lectures, Readings, and Tests

Week I

[June 10: The History of Western Civilization Courses \(Outline6-10.htm\)](#)

[June 11: Society and State in Traditional Europe \(Outline6-11.htm\)](#)

[June 12: The Enlightenment \(Outline6-12.htm\)](#)

[June 13: The Atlantic Economy and Basis of European Economic Dominance \(Outline6-13.htm\)](#) _ _

Readings:

McKay, pp.. 530-558, 568-584, 595-614, 644-656.

[Voltaire, *Candide* \(Voltaire.htm\)](#)

*****Week II*****

[June 17: The French Revolution \(Outline6-17.htm\)](#)

[June 18: Napoleon and Europe \(Outline6-18.htm\)](#)

[June 19: Romanticism, Conservatism, and Religion \(Outline6-19.htm\)](#)

[June 20: Industrialization \(Outline6-20.htm\)](#)

Readings:

McKay, pp. 690-717, 725-749, 755-771.

Week III _ _

[June 24: Socialism and the working Class \(Outline6-24.htm\)](#)

[June 25: Nationalism and the Birth of Mass politics](#)

[\(Outline6-25.htm\)](#) [June 26: Imperialism \(Outline6-26.htm\)](#)

[June 27: Politics and Lifestyles of the Middle Class \(Outline6-27.htm\)](#)
[\(Outline6-27.htm\)](#)

Reading:

McKay, pp. 823-851, 797-812, 871-885.
[Marx & Engels, *Communist Manifesto* \(Karl Marx.htm\)](#)

**** Week IV ****

[July 1: Science and the Second Phase of Industrialization](#)
[\(Outline7-1.htm\)](#) [July 2: Modern Society at the fin-de-](#)
[siècle \(Outline7-2.htm\)](#)

July 3: Mid-Term _ _

Readings:

McKay, pp. 813-817, 927-934.
[Ibsen, *A Dolls House*, pp. 1-68 \(Henrik Ibsen.htm\)](#) _ _

Week V

[July 8: World War I \(Outline7-8.htm\)](#)
[July 9: The Russian Revolution \(Outline7-9.htm\)](#)
[July 10: Weimar Germany and Modernist Culture \(Outline7-10.htm\)](#)
[July 11: Fascism: The Case of Germany \(Outline7-11.htm\)](#)

_Reading: _

McKay, pp. 891-921, 940-943, 970-986.

Week VI

[July 15: Stalinist Russia \(Outline7-151.htm\)](#)
[July 16: World War II \(Outline7-16.htm\)](#)
[July 17: Genocide, Memory, and Modern Society \(Outline7-17.htm\)](#)
[July 18: De-colonization \(Outline7-181.htm\)](#) [\(Outline7-181.htm\)](#) _

Readings:

McKay, pp. 960-967, 975-986
[Levi, *The Drowned and the Saved* \(Primo Levi.htm\)](#)

Week VII

[July 22: The Cold War \(Outline7-22.htm\)](#)
[July 23: The Welfare State: Therapy instead of Progress \(Outline7-23.htm\)](#)
[July 24: Consumer Culture \(Outline7-24.htm\)](#)
[July 25: 1968 \(Outline7-25.htm\)](#)

Readings:

McKay, pp. 993-1014.

Week VIII

[July 29: The Digital Revolution \(Outline7-29.htm\)](#)

[July 30: 1989 \(Outline7-30.htm\)](#)

[July 31: The Global World? \(Outline7-31.htm\)](#)

[Aug 1: Modern vs. Postmodern: What are We? \(Outline8-1.htm\)](#) _
[\(Outline8-1.htm\)](#) _

Readings:

McKay, pp. 1030–1059

[Mukherjee, *Jasmine* \(Jasmine.htm\)](#)