

History 11: WESTERN CIVILIZATION I

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This class traces the history of Western Europe from the time of the ancient Greeks and Romans through the age of Shakespeare. Its focus is largely political. We will look at the birth of democracy under the ancient Greeks, the decline of republican institutions during the middle ages, and the rise of constitutional monarchy after the English civil war.

Required Reading:

Donald Kagan, et. al., The Western Heritage, vol. 1
Wiesner, Ruff and Wheeler, Discovering the Western Past, vol. 1

Course Requirements and Grading:

Requirements for the course consist of three tests and a final exam. The tests and exam will contain map identifications, reading & analysis and essay questions. All questions will be drawn from your lecture notes and readings. The final exam will be cumulative. NO MAKEUP EXAMS WILL BE PERMITTED except under extraordinary circumstances.

Ten percent of your grade will be based on your attendance and class participation. When I total your grade at the end of the semester, I will add up the following percentage points: 0-1 unexcused absences = 5; 2-3 unexcused absences = 4; 4-5 unexcused absences = 3; 6-8 unexcused absences = 2; 8 or more unexcused absences = 0. Your performance in class will be assigned the following characteristics and percentage points: "talks, asks questions" = 4-5; "doesn't talk in class but works well in small group discussion" = 3; "barely adequate performance" = 2; "not present and accounted for" = 0.

Absences are excused for any illness or injury, for participation in any university-sponsored event, and for a death or serious illness in the family. Absences are not excused for weddings, family excursions, and carelessly-scheduled travel itineraries. A note, signed by a nurse, physician, R.A., or other University official, is necessary to excuse an absence. Your final grade in the course will be based on the following:

60 % Three tests, each worth 20 %
30 % Final exam
10 % Attendance/Class participation
100 % TOTAL

Schedule of Weekly Topics :

Week 1 (Sept. 1–7): GREEK CIVILIZATION (c. 1500 – 500 B.C.)

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 2

Week 2 (Sept. 8–14): CLASSICAL ATHENS

****Thurs., Sept. 12: ** *READING: "The Ideal and Reality of Classical Athens"**

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 3

*Wiesner, chap. 2

Week 3 (Sept. 15–21): IMPERIAL ROME (c. 500 B.C. – 200 A.D.)

**** Thurs., Sept. 19** *READING: "The Achievements of Augustus"**

Readings:

Kagan, chaps. 4 & 5

*Wiesner, chap. 3

Recommended films:

Spartacus (1960)

Antony and Cleopatra (1973)

I Claudius (miniseries, 1976)

Gladiator (2000)

Week 4 (Sept. 22–28): THE "DECLINE AND FALL" OF ROMAN EMPIRE

Thurs., Sept. 26: FIRST TEST

Reading:

Kagan, chap. 6

****Week 5 (Sept. 29–Oct. 5): THE MAKING OF THE MIDDLE AGES (400 – 1100)**

Thurs., Oct. 3: *READING: "The Growth of Feudal Monarchy"**

Readings:

Kagan, chaps. 7

*Wiesner, chap. 6

Recommended films:

Becket (1964)

Lion in Winter (1968)

Monty Python and the Holy Grail (1975)

Braveheart (1995)

****Week 6 (Oct. 6–12): THE HIGH MIDDLE AGES (1000–1300)**

Thurs., Oct. 10: *READING: "Life at a Medieval University"**

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 8

*Wiesner, chap. 7

Recommended films:

The Name of the Rose (1986)

Crusades (documentary, 1995)

Week 7 (Oct. 13–19): THE BLACK DEATH AND AFTER (1347–1500)

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 9

Recommended films:

Henry V (1989)

Joan of Arc (TV, 1999)

Week 8 (Oct. 20–26): THE END OF THE MIDDLE AGES

Thurs., Oct. 24: **SECOND TEST**

Week 9 (Oct. 27–Nov. 2): THE RENAISSANCE (1450–1580)

Thurs., Oct. 31: *READING: The Renaissance Man and Woman"

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 10

*Wiesner, chap. 10

Recommended films:

Lady Jane (1986)

Elizabeth (1998)

****Week 10 (Nov. 3–9): THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION**

Thurs., Nov. 7: *READING: "The Reform of Religion"**

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 11

*Wiesner, chap. 12

Recommended film:

The Return of Martin Guerre (1982, French with English subtitles)

Week 11 (Nov. 10–16): THE WARS OF RELIGION

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 12

Recommended film:

Queen Margot (1994)

****Week 12 (Nov. 17–23): EARLY MODERN EUROPE**

Thurs., Nov. 21: THIRD TEST **

****Week 13 (Nov. 24–29): THE RISE OF ABSOLUTISM**

Thurs., Nov. 28 Thanksgiving Holiday (no class) **

****Week 14 (Dec. 1–7): THE AGE OF LOUIS XIV**

Thurs., Dec. 5: *READING: "Staging Absolutism"**

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 13

*Wiesner, chap. 14

Week 15 (Dec. 8–14): THE ENGLISH CIVIL WAR

Readings:

Kagan, chap. 13

****Week 16 (Dec. 15–20)**

FINAL EXAM: **Tues., Dec. 17 at 8 a.m.