

Las Positas College
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Course Outline for HIST 1
WESTERN CIVILIZATION TO 1600
Effective: Fall 2005

I. CATALOG DESCRIPTION:

HIST 1 — WESTERN CIVILIZATION TO 1600 — 3.00 units

Origin and development of civilization in the Mediterranean and its expansion into Europe – the Near East, Greece, Rome, the Middle Ages, Renaissance, and the Reformation

3.00 Units Lecture

Grading Methods:

Letter Grade

Discipline:

	MIN
Lecture Hours:	54.00
Total Hours:	54.00

II. NUMBER OF TIMES COURSE MAY BE TAKEN FOR CREDIT: 1

III. PREREQUISITE AND/OR ADVISORY SKILLS:

IV. MEASURABLE OBJECTIVES:

Upon completion of this course, the student should be able to:

1. analyze, interpret, and explain the growth of Mediterranean culture from the dawn of history through the Protestant Reformation, including the interaction of religious, political, economic and cultural development;
2. demonstrate critical thinking by evaluating and defining issues in the interaction of economic, social, cultural and political order in response to changing historical circumstances;
3. research and critically analyze a topic selected from a provided list of topics for this course, and present the results in written form.

V. CONTENT:

- A. Introduction to Western Civilization
 1. Introduce students to the idea of Western Civilization and its vast scope chronologically and geographically. Discuss the meaning and importance of history and the study of the past. Demonstrate the use of sources, both primary and secondary, and their role in understanding the past.
- B. Ancient Civilizations
 1. Learn about the impact of farming on the emergence of civilization in the Fertile Crescent and the Middle East. Compare and contrast how the Sumerians, Egyptians, Assyrians, Persians, Hebrews, Phoenicians, Minoans, and Mycenaeans adopted new and different religious beliefs, writing systems, coinage, laws, measurement units, and commercial trading networks.
- C. Greece
 1. Learn about classical Greece's Golden Age after their defeat of the Persian Empire in the 5th century B.C. Show how conflict between city-states, especially democratic Athens and militaristic Sparta, weakened Greece enough to be defeated by the Macedonians, led by Phillip II and his son Alexander the Great. Alexander's subsequent defeat of the Persians resulted in a dissemination of Hellenistic Greek culture throughout the greater Mediterranean and eastern Asia.
- D. Roman Republican & Roman Empire
 1. From inauspicious beginnings, Rome created a republic on the Italian peninsula that evolved over eight centuries into one of the largest and longest-lived empires in history. Follow Rome's successful political, economic, and military strategies as it incorporates non-Romans within its vast empire, until repeated barbarian invasions tested and defeated Rome's ability to control such a vast territory.
- E. Rise of Christianity and Decline of Rome
 1. Trace the successful spread of Christianity throughout the Roman Empire simultaneously with Rome's decline and collapse in the 5th century A.D., but not before Rome adopted Christianity as its official religion. Learn how and why the western regions of the Roman Empire fell into chaos while the the eastern regions became the Byzantine Empire.
- F. The Byzantine Empire
 1. Follow the eastern half of the Roman Empire as it evolved into an empire built upon both Roman and Middle Eastern attributes. Centered in Constantinople, Byzantium was a lively center of learning and sophistication for centuries as it withstood pressures from the east and north. Byzantium's scholars would provide the link to ancient civilizations for western Europe in the later Middle Ages.
- G. The Islamic World
 1. Learn about the development of the last of the Middle East's three great monotheistic religions, Islam, throughout the Arab world. Trace Islam's expansion as successive religious leaders struggle to unify and control the greater Middle East.
- H. The Middle Ages

1. Learn about the fragmentation of western Europe under the pressure of repeated barbarian assaults from the east. Study the few exceptions, especially the Merovingians, the Carolingians, and the Catholic Church. Follow the Crusaders to the Middle East and understand they influenced the revival of trade and the rise of monarchies in the late Middle Ages.

I. The Renaissance

1. The Italians created a rebirth of learning and interest in the ancient civilizations, especially Greece and Rome, as a result of wealth generated from trading the goods of the Middle East and Asia with western Europe. Trace the rise of humanism and secular thought as the Italians celebrated their achievements with building great churches, palaces, schools, and art. Follow the subsequent impact of Renaissance ideas on the rest of western and northern Europe.

J. The Protestant Reformation

1. From Martin Luther's simple local protest against religious corruption on a church door in Wittenburg, Christian Europe became involved in almost 200 years of warfare as Europeans fought Europeans over their preferred version of Christianity. Learn how this heightened sense of religious identity influenced European ideas and behavior when they ventured out on the Voyages of Discovery.

VI. METHODS OF INSTRUCTION:

- A. **Lecture** - on major themes, events and personalities
- B. Readings from the text or supplementary materials on reserve in the Library
- C. **Audio-visual Activity** - In-class and home use of appropriate materials
- D. Written assignments
- E. **Discussion** - significant issues, especially those of contemporary relevance

VII. TYPICAL ASSIGNMENTS:

A. Reading: 1. Weekly assigned chapters to read that follow along with major themes 2. In-class readings of primary sources that illustrate major themes B. Discussion of assignments, lectures and supplemental materials 1. Be prepared to discuss in class, based on the last lecture and short writing assignments. 2. Discussion during and after completion of reading and writing assignments on ideas presented. C. Research writing assignments 1. Research and write a term paper pertaining to one of the main themes discussed in this course or on one of the supplemental texts. Cite your references in proper Social Science format, and footnote your sources (see example below).

VIII. EVALUATION:

- A. **Methods**
- B. **Frequency**

IX. TYPICAL TEXTS:

1. Hunt, Lynn, et al *The Making of the West*. Volume I ed., Bedford St. Martins, 2001.
2. Perry et al *Sources of the Western Tradition, Volume II*. 4th ed., Houghton Mifflin, 1999.
3. Renault, Mary *The Last of the Wine*,, Vintage Books, 1984.
4. Dunant, Sarah *The Birth of Venus*,, Random House, 2003.

X. OTHER MATERIALS REQUIRED OF STUDENTS:

- A. Outline notes, study guides prepared by instructors and sold in the campus bookstore.