**United States Naval Academy**

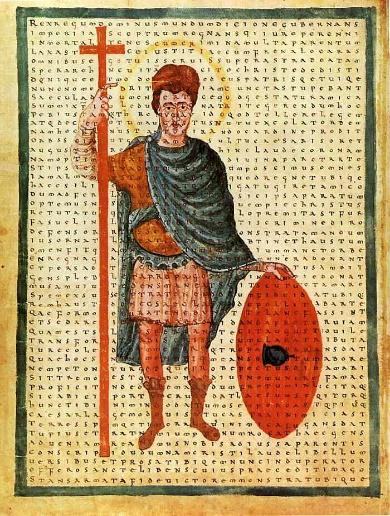
**Annapolis, Maryland**

**The West in the Pre-Modern World**

***Fall 2023***

**HH215.5001/6002**

**Mon/Wed/Fri 1330-1420/1430-1520**

**Sampson 104**

Instructor: Dr. Daniel Curry

Email: dcurry@usna.edu

Office Hours: I will be available for EI during the semester in **Sampson 333.** My office hours will be 1030-1300 on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday or by appointment.

Notice: Your receipt of this syllabus and attendance in class establishes a contract between you and the course instructor. You are responsible for being aware of the contents of this syllabus, including all course requirements.

**Course Description**

This course reviews the major historical developments of the West from Antiquity to the Enlightenment. We will trace changes in political, economic, social, and cultural structures over time and compare those developments with diverse societies. Our use of primary sources will deepen our understanding of the issues confronting groups as they sought new ways of interpreting and engaging with the world around them. The emphasis will be on big questions – why do societies rise and fall; what have been the biggest changes in human history; and what is power. Beyond the “facts” of history, however, the course will also examine how history is constructed and what this means for our understanding of it. We will learn about the importance of narrative in constructing history and the importance of the sources we use and the questions we ask of them. We will learn about the contested nature of history. How and why do people of different backgrounds come to different conclusions about history? What impact does the way we think about the history of ourselves and others have on our appreciation of the world? Crucially, we will examine why it is so necessary for – midshipmen especially – to understand the past. We study the past not just because it is interesting, nor because we want to avoid similar mistakes in the future. Studying the past hones **critical thinking skills** and forces us to engage with different perspectives and ways of understanding that apply to today’s global environment.

**Course Objectives**

At the conclusion of HH215, the student will be able to...

* Identify factors that shape change over time; to explain historical narratives; and to analyze historical evidence in critical thinking and problem solving. (Historical competence)
* Express their ideas in writing clearly, precisely, and in an organized fashion that emphasizes analysis. (Communications competence)
* Describe and explain the most important factors leading to change over time between 500 BCE and 1750 CE in Europe.
* Compare the political, social, ethical, and religious features of civilizations before 1750 CE from at least two of the following areas: Europe, the Middle East, Asia, Africa, or the Americas.
* Compare the development of the idea of citizenship in Europe with the evolution of social rights and duties of the individual in a civilization in one of the following areas: Asia, the Middle East, Africa, or the Americas.

**Grading**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Evaluation** | **Date due** |
| **Homework** | 10% | See Course Schedule |
| **Quiz #1** | 10% | Week 5 |
| **Argumentative Essay** | 10% | Week 7 |
| **Mid-Term** | 15% | Week 9 |
| **Quiz #2** | 10% | Week 13 |
| **Analytical Essay** | 15% | Week 15 |
| **Final Exam** | 20% | TBD |
| **Participation** | 10% | N/A |

All due dates are firm. Late assignments will be penalized by a half-letter grade per day late. After five days, late assignments will receive a zero.

The grading scale for this course is:

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| A+/A/A-: 90 points and above | Excellent; an incisive knowledge of the subject matter; ability to make insightful critical evaluations of the material; excellent capacity for original, creative or logical thinking; excellent ability to organize, analyse, and express ideas clearly |
| B+/B/B-: 80-89 points | Good; substantial knowledge of the subject matter; ability to make useful evaluations of the material; good capacity for original, creative or logical thinking; good ability to organize, analyse, and express ideas |
| C+C/C-: 70-79 points | Adequate; acceptable knowledge of the subject matter; ability to fully comprehend material; some capacity for original, creative or logical thinking; moderate ability to organize, analyse, and express ideas clearly |
| D+/D/D-:60-69 points | Unsatisfactory; some familiarity with the subject matter; some understanding of the material; attempt made to resolve moderately difficult problems; moderate ability to examine material in analytical manner |
| F: 59 points and below | Fail; an unacceptable performance |

\*\* *Please note that this course – and all History courses – will be using the +/- grading scale recently introduced to the Academy. As ever, the instructor reserves the right to assign you the grade that they believe you have earned.*

*Homework*

Homework will consist of short assignments that will guide you through the pre-writing process for both the argumentative and analytical essays. Additional assignments will ask you to reflect on concepts and analyze primary and secondary sources. Homework assignments will be turned in electronically on BB.

*Quizzes #1 and #2*

Quizzes are designed to be a basic check on comprehension of material. They will be similar in format to the mid-term exam. Quiz #1 content will focus on Critical Thinking concepts and various models we will use to interpret content.

*Analytical Essay*

Using the article “Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox” by Edmund S. Morgan, you will write a 4-6 page analytical essay. Your essay will evaluate the overall persuasiveness of the author’s argument made in the article and evaluate the strengths and weaknesses of the argument using standards of critical thinking. The essay must be submitted through Safe Assign on Blackboard by the start of class on the day it is due.

*Mid-term examination*

An examination of 50 minutes will take place in class during Week 9. The examination will cover materials from the lectures and readings from the beginning of the course. The exam will consist of matching, groupings, short answer, and short essay questions.

*Argumentative Essay*

You will write a 4-6 page argumentative essay. The argument will take the form of a synchronic analysis that will compare one or more of the following: the political, social, ethical, or religious features of two civilizations before 1750 CE. The sources for the paper will consist of a minimum of two (2) academic secondary sources (ie: searchable in library databases) and primary sources provided in class. The essay must be submitted through Safe Assign on Blackboard by the start of class on the day it is due.

*Final Examination*

A final examination will take place during the examination period. The examination will cover materials from the lectures and readings from the start of the semester. The exam will mainly consist of essay components based on readings and lectures.

*Participation*

Your instructor values your insight, opinions, and thoughts. No discussion can function effectively if midshipmen do not read the material and arrive prepared to discuss it. Informed participation allows you to refine your thoughts, practice speaking in a public forum, and test your ideas against friendly but rigorous criticism. Participation is not optional. Preparedness (full knowledge of the assigned readings) and informed classroom participation (relevant and thoughtful contributions, questions, or insights) are necessary for you to merit a favorable participation grade.

**Additional Information**

*Plagiarism*

Plagiarism is the presentation of the work or idea of another as one’s own work. It is the most serious of all academic misconduct. Midshipmen may not:

* steal and pass off the ideas or words of another as one’s own
* use another’s work without crediting the source
* present as new and original an idea or product derived from an existing source (including work written by yourself for other classes)

Appropriate attribution must always be used so that there is no doubt what material is a midshipman’s original work and what is drawn from a legitimate external source. For more information, see: http://libguides.usna.edu/plagiarism. Any violation of this will be dealt with most severely.

*Generative AI:*

Use of generative Artificial Intelligence (AI) to complete any part of assignments or exams in this course is prohibited. Use of AI without explicit written authorization from your professor in this course is a violation of the Naval Academy’s Honor Concept. Midshipmen are responsible for identifying if any programs they use when completing an assignment are considered generative AI. If in doubt, ask your professor.

All written assignments will contain the statement: “I have abided by the Honor Concept with regard to this assignment, including not using generative AI at any stage of the writing process.”

*Late Assignments*

Assignments will receive a penalty of a half-letter grade every 24 hours unless an extension was coordinated ahead of time.

*Computer Policy*

Personal computers should be brought to class every day. You will be asked to access documents on your computer during class. However, computers will only be used for classwork while in class. Notes for lectures will be hand written and computers will be closed during lecture portions of class.

**Required Text:**

Title: *A History of Western Society, Concise Edition, Volume 1 (Thirteenth Edition)*

Authors: Weisner-Hanks, Crowston, Perry, and McKay

ISBN-13: 978-1319112387

**Course Schedule**

\*This schedule is subject to change. Please consult the course blackboard site for updated course information.

\* All readings are to be completed before the class in which they will be discussed.

**Week 1: Orientation**

Thursday, 8/17 - **Course Introduction**

**- Content Overview (500 BC to 1750 CE)**

**- What is “Western Civilization?”**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Friday 8/18 **- Critical Thinking: Elements of Thought/Logical Fallacies**

Reading: 1) Paul and Elder, *The Miniature Guide to Critical Thinking*

2) Fitch, “Good Decisions: Tips and Strategies for Avoiding

Psychological Traps”

**Week 2: Mesopotamia and Egypt**

Monday, 8/21 - **Sources: Primary vs. Secondary and Analytical Forms**

**- Ancient Mesopotamia**

Reading: 1) Patrick Rael, “How to Read a Secondary Source,” “How to Read a Primary Source,” “’Predatory’ Reading,” and “Some Keys to Good Reading” in *Reading, Writing, & Researching for History: A Guide for College Students.* Available online at: [Reading, Writing, and Researching for History: – A Guide for College Students by Patrick Rael, Bowdoin College](https://courses.bowdoin.edu/writing-guides/)

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 8/23 **- Ancient Egypt**

Reading: 1) “The Epic of Gilgamesh” (Excerpt)

2) “Code of Hammurabi” (Excerpt)

3) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* Chapter 1

Homework: ***Critical Thinking Reflection Paper***

Friday, 8/25 NO Class

**Week 3: Ancient Greece, Alexander the Great, and Roman Republic**

Monday, 8/28 **- Greece, India and the East**

Reading: 1) Thucydides, *History of the Peloponnesian War* (Funeral Oration and Melian Dialogue)

3) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 50-112

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 8/30 **- Roman Republic**

**- Reading Academic Essays: Thesis ID/Essay Organization**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 114-147

Homework: NA

Friday 9/1 - **Transition from Republic to Empire**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 148-177

Homework: *Summary of Content Assignment (Ch 5 and 6)*

**Week 4: Late Antiquity and Early Middle Ages**

Monday, 9/4 NO Class

Wednesday, 9/6 **-Introduction to Essay Assignments: Analytical/Argumentative**

Reading: 1) Patrick Rael, “Structuring your Essay,” “The Three Parts of a History Paper,” “The Thesis,” and “History and Rhetoric.”

Homework: NA

Friday, 9/8 (Parent’s Weekend) **-Crisis of Third Century and Fall of Rome**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

**Week 5: Review and Quiz #1**

Monday, 9/11 - **Check on Learning and Writing Workshop**

Reading: 1) Patrick Rael, “Avoid Common Mistakes in Your History Paper,” “Grammar for Historians,” “Formatting Your Paper,” “A Style Sheet for History Writers,” and “The Scholarly Voice: Hints on Crafting Historical Prose.”

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 9/13 **-Crisis of Third Century and Fall of Rome Continued**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 178-209

Homework: NA

Friday, 9/15 **-Creation of European Identity**

Reading: NA

Homework:

**Week 6: Early Middle Ages**

Monday, 9/18 - **European Dynasties (Merovingians and Carolingians)**

Reading: NA

Homework: *Argumentative Essay Thesis Due*

Wednesday, 9/20 - **Quiz #1**

- **Rise of Islam**

Reading:1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 210-238

Homework: NA

Friday, 9/22 (McMullen Conference- **Office Hours and paper research**)

**Week 7: 13th Century World System**

Monday, 9/25 **- Agrarian Revolution and 13th Century World System**

Reading: 1) Ibn Battuta, “Travels in Asia and Africa (1325-1354)” (Excerpt)

2) Marco Polo, “Travels in China” (Excerpt)

Homework: *Argumentative Essay Outline Due (Voluntary Assignment)*

Wednesday, 9/27 - **Medieval Church/Crusades**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 240-271

Homework: NA

Friday, 9/29 **-Assign Analytical Essay**

**Reading: NA**

**Homework:**

**Week 8: Collapse and Recovery of the Afro-Eurasian World (1300-1550)**

Monday, 10/2 - **Mongol Empire**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 10/4 **Black Death**

Reading: 1) “Health Ordinances of Pistoria”

2) “The Confession of Agiment of Geneva”

3) “The Cremation of Strasburg Jews”:

Homework: NA

Friday, 10/6 -**Social Change in Europe**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 306-338

Homework: NA

**Week 9: Mid-term**

Monday, 10/9 (No Class- Columbus Day)

Tuesday, 10/10 - **Check on Learning and Writing Workshop**

Reading: *NA*

Homework: *Argumentative Essay Due*

Wednesday, 10/11 - **Rise of the Ottoman Empire**

Reading: *Did Marco Polo Go to China?:* A Critical Appraisal*.*”By I. de Rachewiltz

Homework: NA

Friday, 10/13 **- Review for Mid-term**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

**Week 10: Recovery and Expansion in Eurasia (1350-1550)**

Monday, 10/16 **Mid-term**

Wednesday, 10/18 -**Renaissance and Protestant Reformation**

Reading: 1) 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 338-403

Homework: NA

Friday, 10/20 – **Renaissance and Protestant Reformation Continued**

Reading: 1) Venetian Observations on the Ottoman Empire

2) An Ambassador’s Report on the Ottoman Empire

3) Lady Mary Wortley Mantagu, Concerning Smallpox Vaccination in

Turkey

Homework: *Primary Source Worksheet #1*

**Week 11: The Americas before and after 1492**

Monday, 10/23 - **The Americas in 1491**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 404-439

2

Wednesday, 10/25 -**First Contact**

Reading: 1) *Broken Spears, an Aztec account of the Conquest of Mexico*

(Excerpt)

2) Hernan Cortes, *2nd Letter to Charles V* (Excerpt)

3) Bernal Diaz, *The True History of the Conquest of New Spain*

(Exerpt)

4) Bartolome de la Casas, “In Defense of the Indians”

Homework: NA

Friday, 10/27 **- First Contact Continued**

Reading: ) Morgan, “Slavery and Freedom: The American Paradox”

Homework: *Morgan article thesis and analytical form identification*

**Week 12: 30 Years War and Westphalian Peace in Europe**

Monday,10/30 -**International System (Liberalism/Realism/Constructivism)**

Reading: NA

Homework:

Wednesday, 11/1  **- 30 Years War**

Reading: 1) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 440-475

2) Vaughan, “The Origins Debate: Slavery and Racism in

Seventeenth-Century Virginia”

Homework: NA

Friday, 11/3 **- Age of Limited Warfare and Impact of Treaty of Westphalia**

Reading: NA

Homework: *Analytical Essay Thesis Statement*

**Week 13: European Exploration and Conquest**

Monday, 11/6 **- Columbian Exchange**

Reading: Montesquieu, *The Spirit of the Laws*

Homework: *Primary Source Worksheet #2*

Wednesday, 11/8 - **European Expansion**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Friday, 11/10 No Class

**Week 14: Emergence of the Atlantic World and Slavery**

Monday, 11/13 **- Atlantic Trade Network, Plantations and Forced Labor**

Reading: 1) Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano*

(Excerpt)

Homework: *Analytical Essay Outline Due (Voluntary/Not Graded)*

Wednesday, 11/15 **- Quiz #2**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Friday, 11/17 **- Plantations and Forced Labor**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

**Week 15: Scientific Revolution and Enlightenment**

Monday, 11/20 **- English/Scottish vs. Continental Traditions**

Reading: 1) Dorinda Outram, “What is Enlightenment” in *The Enlightenment.*

2) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 476-490

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 11/22 (Early Schedule) – **Enlightenment**

Reading: 1) 2) “Slaves’ Appeal to Thomas Gage, Royal Governor of Massachusetts, May 25, 1774”

2) *A History of Western Society* (Text Book)*,* pp. 491-511

Homework: NA

**Week 16: Atlantic Revolutions, Western Way of War and Military Revolutions**

Monday, 11/27 **– Atlantic Revolutions**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 11/29 – **Military Revolutions and the Western Way of War**

Reading: 1) Knox and Murray, “Thinking About Revolutions in Warfare” in *Dynamics of Military Revolution,* pp. 1-14.

2) Parker, “The Western Way of War” in *The Cambridge History of Warfare,* pp. 1-11.

Homework: NA

Friday, 12/1 – **Military Revolutions Continued**

Reading: NA

Homework: *Analytical Essay Due*

**Week 17: Review**

Monday, 12/4 **- What does it all Mean?**

Reading: NA

Homework: NA

Wednesday, 12/6 (Last Class) **-Final Exam Review**

Reading: NA

Homework: *Final Course Reflection Paper*

**TBD: Final Exam**