

WCV 101  
Fall 2005

## Western Civilization to 1600

([www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv](http://www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv))

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Office Hours: M 11-11:50; T 2-3:30; W 1-1:50; and by appointment  
Teaching Assistants: Angela Robins and Kevin Green (223 McIver)  
Your Teaching Assistant's e-mail address: \_\_\_\_\_

### Course Description

Courses in “Western Civilization” have provoked a great deal of interest and controversy on campuses across the country in the last few decades, as students and others of non-Western origin have rightly demanded more representation of their heritage in University courses. This course presents an overview of Western civilization in a global context. We will examine events and changes in Western heritage from the point of view of those undergoing them, and we will compare the Western experience with other cultures.

An underlying theme is the importance of history in shaping the way people see the world today, including students in this class. Everyone has an “historical consciousness,” an understanding of the way the world became what it is today, and the purpose of this course is to introduce students to alternative ways of interpreting history by weighing the merits of differing points of view.

The course is divided into three sections: the Ancient World; the Middle Ages; and the Early Modern Period. We will approach the subject material from several perspectives, including political, social, economic, and cultural, with a number of themes in mind: civilization and barbarism; war and peace; freedom and slavery; religion and ideology; family/gender; and class.

### Goals and Objectives:

- By the end of the class students will understand that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past
- Students will take from the class the skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and to clearly express their own interpretations
- Students will experience “hands-on” work with primary source material throughout the course and will gain an understanding of how to read history through such sources
- Students will gain an understanding of the main principles and values—both the good and the bad—upon which “Western Civilization” is based

### Readings:

- *Giovanni & Lusanna*, Gene Buckner (University of California Press, 1986)
- Optional Text: *Western Civilization: A Social and Cultural History* by Margaret King
- Reserve articles and online material designated below

**Course Web Page:** [www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv](http://www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv) The page has summaries of the notes, readings, links to Internet Resources, and other features relevant to the course.

### Assignments:

Participation	35%
1 <sup>st</sup> Midterm Exam	15%
2 <sup>nd</sup> Midterm Exam	20%
Final Exam	30%

**Participation:** Your 35% class participation grade is based mostly on the course's Discussion Sections led by the two Teaching Assistants. The grade consists of worksheets, quizzes, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages double-spaced) to the readings designated below. These are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings designated below, not a summary of the reading material. Attendance is required in the Discussion Sections; students who miss due to a legitimate reason must contact their Teaching Assistant to make-up missed work.

**Exams:** There are two midterms (worth 15% and 20%) and a final (worth 30%). The exams consist of True-False, Multiple Choice, Fill-in-the-Blank, and Short Answer Questions from the readings as well as Slide IDs. The three exams cover *only* the part of the course for which they are designated (1<sup>st</sup>: Ancient World; 2<sup>nd</sup>: Middle Ages; 3<sup>rd</sup>: Early Modern), so they are not cumulative. However, the final exam includes a comprehensive Take Home Essay (worth 10% of the overall grade) that draws on broader issues and themes dealt with over the entire semester.

**Grading:** Grades will be compiled on a point system (**you can keep up with your grades during the semester on Blackboard**). For example, if you make a 80 on the 1<sup>st</sup> midterm (12/15) + an 85 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> midterm (17/20) + a total of (32.5/35) on participation + 88 on the final exam (17.6/20) + 90 on the Final Exam Essay (9/10) your final grade = **88** or **B**

### CLASS SCHEDULE

#### Part I: The Ancient World

Monday, August 15. Introduction: What is "Western Civilization?"

- Reading for Wednesday, August 17: "A Sense of History: Some Components" & "Why Study History Through Primary Sources"

Wednesday, August 17. Introduction (cont'd): Primitive Human Societies

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, August 19: "Hammurabi's Law Code"; **Assignment** (TBA in lecture class) due in sections

Friday, August 19. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, August 22. The Rise of Civilization

Wednesday, August 24. The Origins of War

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, August 26: "The Roots of War"; **Worksheet 1** due in sections

Friday, August 26. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, August 29. The Origins of Monotheism

- Reading for Wednesday, August 31: Excerpts from “The Old Testament”  
Wednesday, August 31. Hebrew Culture & Early History

**{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN 028 McIVER AT NOON ON FRIDAY}**

Friday, September 2. Early Greek History & Politics

- Reading for Wednesday, September 7: “The Polity of the Athenians”  
Wednesday, September 7. The Greek City States: Sparta & Athens

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 9: “Women in Greek Society”; Euphiletus: A Husband Speaks in His Own Defense; and “Lysistrata”; **Reaction Piece** to these readings (1-2 pages) due in sections  
Friday, September 9. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, September 12. Ancient Greek Sexuality & Phillip of Macedon

Wednesday, September 14. Alexander the Great

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 16: “Selections on Alexander the Great”; “From the Classical to the Hellenistic World, c. 400-30 BCE”; “Runaway Slaves in Alexandria: Reward Offered!”; **Assignment**: respond to at least one of the Discussion Questions for each of these separate readings—due in sections  
Friday, September 16. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

- Reading for Monday, September 19: Roman Legends  
Monday, September 19. The Rise of Rome

Wednesday, September 21. The Rise of Rome (cont’d)

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, September 23: Graffiti on the walls of Pompeii; “A Strike by the Women of Rome”; “Slavery in the Ancient World”; **Worksheet 2** due in sections  
Friday, September 23. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, September 26. The Late Republic & the Roman Empire

Wednesday, September 28. **1<sup>st</sup> Midterm Exam**

## **Part II: The Middle Ages**

**{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN 028 McIVER AT NOON ON FRIDAY}**

Friday, September 30. Jesus of Nazareth & the Rise of Christianity

- Reading for Monday, October 3: “Perpetua’s Diary”  
Monday, October 3. Persecution of the Early Christians

Wednesday, October 5. Paul of Tarsus & the Roots of Anti-Semitism

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 7: Excerpts from *Sermons against the Jews* by John Chrysostom; “The Last Vexation of Mel”; and Anti-Semitism in Europe; **Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) to these readings due in sections  
Friday, October 7. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Wednesday, October 12. Anti-Semitism (cont’d) & the Rise of Islam

**{NOTE: WE WILL NOT HAVE DISCUSSION SECTIONS THIS WEEK; MEET IN 028 McIVER AT NOON ON FRIDAY}**

Friday, October 14. The Rise of Islam (cont’d)

Monday, October 17. The Early History of Islam (cont’d)

Wednesday, October 19. The Islamic Faith

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 21: excerpts from the Quran; “Islam According to Oprah” by Rod Dreher; Terrorism & Islam; **Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) to these readings due in sections  
Friday, October 21. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, October 24. The Fall of Rome & Early Medieval Europe

Wednesday, October 26. The High Medieval Period & the Crusades

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, October 28: The Christianization of Russia; Eyewitness Accounts of the Crusader’s Capture of Jerusalem; “The Story of a Story: Legacy of the Crusades” by Muhammad Asad; **Worksheet 3** due in sections  
Friday, October 28. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, October 31. **2<sup>nd</sup> Midterm Exam**

### **Part III: The Early Modern Period**

BEGIN READING *Giovanni and Lusanna* by Gene Brucker; **\*\*Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) due Friday, November 11**

- Reading for Wednesday, November 2: The Famine of 1315  
Wednesday, November 2. The “Black Death”

- Readings for Discussion Sections for Friday, November 4: Documents on the Plague; *The Black Death*; Reviews of David Herlihy’s *The Black Death & Transformation of the West*; **Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) to these readings due in sections  
Friday, November 4. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 7. The “Black Death” (cont’d) & Peasant Rebellions

Wednesday, November 9. The European Renaissance

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, December 11: *Giovanni & Lusanna*; **Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) due in sections

Friday, November 11. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 14. The Reformation

Wednesday, November 16. The Reformation & Religious Strife

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, November 18: Readings on the Reformation; “The Struggle for Reformation Europe, 1500-1560”; **Assignment:** respond to at least one of the Discussion Questions for each of these separate readings and at least two Comparative Questions at the end—due in sections

Friday, November 18. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

Monday, November 21. The Spanish Inquisition & the Witch Craze

Monday, November 28. The Witch Craze (cont’d)

- Reading for Wednesday, November 30: “The Truth about the First Thanksgiving” by James Loewen; **Reaction Piece** (1-2 pages) to this reading due in class

Wednesday, November 30. Europe’s Conquest of America: Discussion of the Reading

- Reading for Discussion Sections for Friday, December 2: Diabolical Seduction: A Witch on Trial; The “*Malleus Maleficarium*” (“The Witches’ Hammer”); Witchcraft Documents; **Worksheet 4** due in sections

Friday, December 2. DISCUSSION SECTIONS

**Final Exam: Monday, December 5**