

Western Civilization 101 (WCV 101-10)
Fall 2008 (25 August 2008 – 8 December 2008)

Instructor: Mr. Joseph A. Ross
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Availability: With the exception of holidays, I plan to check my email and the discussion board at least once everyday, usually in the early mornings. Please be patient as it may be 24 hours before I can respond to inquiries.

Course Description

Western Civilization 101 covers the period from Ancient Greece and Rome (ca. 750 B.C.) up through the Middle Ages and Early Modern Europe (ca. A.D. 1500). Since we will be looking at over 2,000 years of history, we will touch on the most significant historical events and developments.

The textbook will act as a secondary source, providing us with necessary background information, while the discussion board topics will focus on primary sources—documents, such as laws, religious texts, and literature, written at the time (or shortly after) the events they describe.

Learning Outcomes

Students who spend at least 3 hours a day completing all reading and writing assignments, who actively engage in the material, and are thinking about and reflecting on what they are reading and writing will . . .

- have a firm grasp of key themes in Western Civilization
- improve their writing abilities
- be able to communicate ideas, thoughts, and interpretations more clearly and concisely
- become better independent thinkers, students, and historians

Grading Policies

Although I am responsible for recording your UNCG grade, students must realize that they receive the grade they earn. I do not arbitrarily assign grades. Students should also keep in mind that a letter grade of A stands for “Excellent,” whereas a B is “Above Average,” a C “Average,” a D “Below Average,” and an F “Unsatisfactory.”

Regarding final grades, only those who fail to turn in the work earn an F. Students who simply do all the work, but do not apply themselves, cannot earn anything higher than a D. Students who do all the work and demonstrate they are at least trying to comprehend the material and contribute to the discussion earn a C. Letter grades of B are reserved for those students whose work and contributions to the class community are clearly more advanced than the majority’s. Only the truly exceptional earn a grade of A.

Grade Breakdown for the Course

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| • Discussion Board responses (15) | 300 points total / 20 points each (30%) |
| • Quizzes (12) | 300 points total / 25 points each (30%) |
| • Midterm Exam | 150 points total (15%) |
| • Final Exam | 250 points total (25%) |

Grading Scale (by total points)

A+ 1000 – 970	B+ 890 – 870	C+ 790 – 770	D+ 690 – 670
A 960 – 930	B 860 – 830	C 760 – 730	D 660 – 630
A- 920 – 900	B- 820 – 800	C- 720 – 700	D- 620 – 600

F 590 and below

Rules & Procedures

Check the “Announcements” section of Blackboard daily, and make certain your UNCG email account works. These are the two primary modes of communication I use, and I want to keep you informed of what’s going on throughout the course.

If you have questions about the course, i.e. syllabus, grading policies, or content, please go to the Discussion Board and click on the topic called, “Questions for the Professor.” More than likely you are not the only student with the same question, and I will not have to answer the same question multiple times if you post your question here.

- ! If you have questions/complaints regarding how to use Blackboard or anything technological (web browser settings, downloading information, accessing web links, errors, etc.), please do **not** contact me. Instead, post your message under the “Technical Support” forum in Blackboard, or email onlinehelp@uncg.edu.

No late work will be accepted, and there are no appeals. All the deadlines are listed on the Calendar. If you have special circumstances preventing you from turning in an assignment on time, then you must communicate that to me ASAP, preferably before the assignment is due. Failure to turn in work on time will result in a grade of zero (0). It is unfair and disrespectful to the rest of class if I make exceptions for a small minority who are incapable of staying on track. Students requesting exceptions will be referred to this policy.

Discussion board entries and exam essays should be composed in standard English using proper grammar, syntax, and punctuation. Under no circumstances are students to use Internet slang or abbreviations. In a course such as this one, we are only interested in formal, academic writing.

NO PLAGIARISM! On all graded assignments, students are expected to submit their own original work. Copying and pasting text without giving credit to the source is obviously plagiarism, but so is stealing someone else’s idea or interpretation without giving that person credit. Even if you are paraphrasing from memory something you read, you need to be able to state the source from which you are paraphrasing this material. See UNCG’s Academic Integrity Policy on the last page of the syllabus.

Discussion Board

There will be 15 discussion board topics. Participating in these discussions is absolutely key to succeeding in this course. By practicing your writing abilities on a regular and rigorous basis, and sharing these with others, you will become better interpreters of the past. **Posts will be graded on quality, as well as quantity, of writing.**

All of the topics require reading primary sources (materials written during the time period in question). These readings are located under the “Resources” section of Blackboard by clicking on “CD – Documents in Western Civilization.” **You are encouraged to reference these readings in your responses.**

- ✓ Your responses to each prompt should be between 100 and 200 words. See the “Grading Rubric” for specific grading policies.

Students should respond to each other’s writings on a regular basis. I recommend reading new postings everyday so that you do not fall behind. The newest version of Blackboard allows you to Subscribe to discussion board forums so that each time a new post appears, you will receive an email of that post. Some students may find this a convenient way of staying on track.

Feel free either to agree or disagree with someone else's argument, but be certain to provide convincing reasons explaining why you either agree or disagree.

- ! **Always be polite and civil on the Discussion Board!** Before you post anything, ask yourself if you would actually say these things to a person in a face-to-face environment. Do not allow the anonymity aspect of the Internet to strip you of your common sense and good manners. For further information on "netiquette," see <http://web.uncg.edu/dcl/icapus/resource/etiquette.asp>.

Quizzes

There will be eleven (12) quizzes throughout the course of the semester, each one based on one of the chapters from the textbook. Each quiz is made up of 25 multiple-choice questions. **All of the quizzes are made available to you at the beginning of the course, but pay close attention to the Calendar for specific due dates.**

Students should only take a quiz after they have read the appropriate chapter thoroughly and taken notes on it. **If you do not complete the quiz before the due date, you will receive a zero (0).** Students requesting exceptions will be referred to this policy. I strongly encourage you not to wait until the last moment to complete these quizzes. You should have plenty of time to complete them if you stay on task.

See the Calendar for specific due dates. Students will not be allowed to complete quizzes after the due date. You are encouraged to get ahead, but you may not fall behind.

Exams

You will need to complete a midterm and a final exam. Both of the exams are essay-based, and student responses should be analytical rather than merely descriptive (i.e., students should explain why a particular historical topic is significant, rather than saying what occurred).

- ✓ Student responses to the exam essay questions should be at least 500 words and no more than 1,000 words.

See the "Exams" section in Blackboard for details.

Technical Problem Policy

Students are responsible for obtaining and maintaining reliable Internet access. This is an online course, and if you cannot maintain reliable Internet access, then I suggest dropping the course immediately. Internet access is available at libraries, schools, hotels, and coffee shops worldwide. Therefore, no extensions will be granted due to lack of Internet access. If you have a technical problem, such as a crash or lockup, while taking a quiz, email me requesting a quiz reset. I will reset your quiz within 24 hours. **NOTE: If you wait until the day a quiz is due, you assume responsibility that a technical problem may preclude you from completing the quiz on time. Those who ask for an extension will be referred to this policy.**

Required Textbook

Perry, Marvin, et al. *Western Civilization. Ideals, Politics, and Society*. (vol. 1 to 1789), 8th edition. (Houghton Mifflin, 2007). ISBN 13: 978-0-618-61301-4 or ISBN 10: 0-618-61301-3.

Academic Integrity

All students are expected to abide by the UNCG Honor Code. Please visit the following links:
Academic Integrity Policy: <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>

Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive a grade of F for the assignment. Violations will be reported to the University in accordance with the Academic Integrity Policy. Students also risk receiving a final grade of F for the course.