

WESTERN CIVILIZATION TO 1789

Instructor

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Course

WCV 101-06
225 McIver Bldg
TR 12:30-1:45 PM
Spring 2002

REQUIRED TEXT: Marvin Perry, Western Civilization: A Brief History Vol I: To 1789 (4th Edition, 2001)
Various articles and handouts throughout the semester

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND INFORMATION:

1. **Grade Composition:**

- 3 Exams = 25% each (75% total)
- 5 Response Papers (1 page, typed) = 5% each (25% total)

Exams will consist of identifications and one essay. Blue books are required. *Response papers* will be a typed one-page answer to a question asked about primary-source documents handed out in class.

2. **Class Discussion:** We will devote some class meetings to the discussion of primary source material assigned for the response papers. Participation in discussions will affect part of your response paper grade.

3. **Attendance Policy:** Each student is permitted *four* unexcused absences. Upon the fifth unexcused absence, I have the option of dropping the student from the course.

4. **Policy on Punctuality and Cell phones/Pagers:** Class begins at 12:30. Please arrive on time – walking in late disturbs class. Please turn off your cell phone and/or pager before coming to class. Students whose phones/pagers ring during class will be asked to leave. I reserve the right to drop those students from the course who have chronic problems with punctuality and/or cell phone/pager etiquette.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

We are all heirs of a tradition called “Western Civilization.” We are all shaped by that tradition. We need to understand this tradition in order to understand who we are, why we think the way we do, why we believe the things we believe, and why we “know” the things we think we know. These themes will provide the framework for the course.

This course is designed to help us understand the Western tradition. We will examine its origins in the worlds of the Ancient Near East and Mediterranean and trace its development through Europe until the eve of the French Revolution. Our focus will be on how the people of these different places and eras answered the big “questions of being”: 1) What does it mean to be human? 2) What is/are the god(s)? 3) Where do we come from? 4) What is the purpose of life? 5) How do we as individuals fit into society? 6) How do we relate to one another as men/women and as governors/governed? We face these same questions today, and often “borrow” answers from the past.

An underlying theme of this class will be the importance of history in shaping the way people see the world today. Everyone has an “historical consciousness” - an understanding of the way the world became what it is today. History is not just the memorization of dates and facts; rather, it is the interpretation of the past. The purpose of this course is to introduce students to ways of interpreting history by weighing differing points of view in the past and the present. Students will take from the class the skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and to clearly express their own interpretations.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>LECTURE TOPIC</u>	<u>READING</u>
Jan. 15	Course Introduction	
PART I - THE ANCIENT WORLD: FOUNDATION OF THE WEST		
Jan. 17	The First Civilizations	Perry, Ch. 1 (pg. 4-9, 23-26) Discussion: <i>A Sense of History</i>
Jan. 22	The Ancient Hebrews	Perry, Ch. 2
Jan. 24	“The Job Problem” (Response Paper #1)	Discussion: <i>The Book of Job</i>
Jan. 29/31	Ancient Greece and Hellenization	Perry, Ch. 3
Feb. 05	Plato and Aristotle (Response Paper #2)	Discussion: <i>Allegory of the Cave</i>
Feb. 07	The Roman Republic	Perry, Ch. 4
Feb. 12	The Roman Empire	
Feb. 14	Review for Exam #1	
Feb. 19	Exam #1 (Part I)	
PART II – THE MIDDLE AGES: THE CHRISTIAN CENTURIES		
Feb. 21/26	The Fall of Rome/The Rise of Christianity	Perry, Ch. 5
Feb. 28	Saint Augustine (Response Paper #3)	Discussion: <i>The Enchiridion</i>
Mar. 05	Charlemagne and the Rebirth of Empire	Perry Ch. 6
Mar. 07	The Rise of Feudal Society and State	Discussion: <i>The Magna Carta</i>
Mar. 12/14	Spring Break	
Mar. 19	Papal Power and The Crusades	
Mar. 21	The High Middle Ages	Perry, Ch. 7
Mar. 26	Thomas Aquinas (Response Paper #4)	Discussion: <i>Summa Contra Gentiles</i>
Mar. 28	Review for Exam #2	
Apr. 02	Exam #2 (Part II)	
PART THREE – THE RISE OF MODERNITY: RENAISSANCE TO ENLIGHTENMENT		
Apr. 04	The Renaissance and the Individual	Perry, Ch. 8
Apr. 09	The Reformation	
Apr. 11	The Wars of Religion	
Apr. 16	The Rise of the Modern State	Perry, Ch. 9
Apr. 18	Limited Monarchy in England	
Apr. 23	The Enlightenment	Perry, Ch. 10
Apr. 25	Machiavelli (Response Paper #5)	Discussion: <i>The Prince</i>
Apr. 30	The Scientific Revolution	
May 02	Review for Exam #3	
May 09	Exam #3 (Part III) 12-3 pm	

