

Western Civilization 101

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This course examines developments which created and shaped Western civilization between about 800 B.C. and A.D. 1600. We will consider three phases: ancient, medieval, and early modern. In each case, we will focus on the way in which distinctive institutions, practices, and ideas emerged at different times as responses to particular problems. These problems are 1) how best to live in a city-state (the ancient world), 2) how to find and hold onto a stable place (the medieval world), and 3) how to live a full, valid life as an individual (the early modern world). These are basic problems which grew out of particular circumstances existing at different times. For shorthand purposes, we will use a set of images to remind us of the settings characteristic of each of the successive phases of western civilization: the city, the monastery and the castle, and the workshop and "counting house". We will keep those in focus and try to view developments from the perspectives of these separate, distinctive settings.

Our textbook, Frankforter and Spellman, *The West. Culture and Ideals. Vol. I.*, will provide a narrative sketch. Through lectures, I will amplify this from the perspectives of the city, the monastery and castle, and the workshop and "counting house". Readings in primary sources (located at various websites) drawn from each of the three phases will provide direct exposure to illustrative writings and ideas. The course rests on these three foundations and no one of them can be ignored.

Students will meet each week in both lecture classes and smaller discussion sections. Students are responsible for completing the assigned readings in the textbook and in the assigned primary sources (on CD or on the web) before each class. Class and discussion section attendance is mandatory. More than two unexcused absences will cause the loss of a full grade. More than three will cause a student to be dropped from the course. There will be four exams in the course, various writing assignments, and occasional quizzes.

All writing assignments are to be turned in at the Discussion Section meeting.

Required text

Frankforter and Spellman, *The West. Culture and Ideals. Vol. I.*

CLASS SCHEDULE (*The West = W*)

<u>Topic</u>	<u>Assignment—Complete before Class</u>
1/21 Discussion Sections	
1/23 Introduction	W xli-xlvii, 2, 60, 178, 292
I.A. <i>Cities: The Greek Experience</i>	
1/26 Athens and the Development of Democracy	W 72-101; <i>Pericles' Funeral Oration</i> in West CD or online at http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/pericles-funeralspeech.html
1/28 Discussion Sections	
1/30 Rhetoric and Education	W 101-117
2/2 Drama, History, and the <i>Demos</i>	Sophocles, <i>Antigone</i> ; in West CD or online at http://www.geocities.com/Athens/Aegean/4979/antigone.html Reading Response #1 Due
2/4 Discussion Sections	
2/6 Socrates, Philosophy, and the Polis	<i>Apology of Socrates</i> = http://eawc.evansville.edu/anthology/apology.htm Reading Response #2 Due
2/9 Plato, Politics, and the Soul	<i>Republic, Allegory of the Cave</i> = http://www.historyguide.org/ancient/allegory_bb.html Reading Response #3 Due
2/11 Discussion Sections	
2/13 Alexander and the Hellenistic World	W 119-129
2/16 Problem of Individualism	http://www.historyguide.org/ancient/lecture9b.html Reading Response #4 Due
2/18 Discussion Sections	
2/20 EXAM #1	
I.A. <i>Cities: The Roman Experience</i>	
2/23 The Roman Problem	W 129-135
2/25 Discussion Sections	
2/27 Roman Experience: Peace Through War	W 135-138
3/2 Adapting to Empire	W138-151; Augustus, <i>Res Gestae</i> (“What I Did”), online at http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/14resgestae.html

3/4 Discussion Sections Reading Response #5 Due
3/6 Empire Becomes a City W 152-177

3/9-3/13 Spring Break

3/16 Pax Romana and Christianity W 182-189; Paul, *Letter
Romans*, Chapters 12-13;
Didache =
<http://www.bibleontheweb.com/Bible.asp> (fill in *Romans* and 12
in search windows)
<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/text/didache-roberts.html>
Reading Response #6 Due

3/18 Discussion Sections
3/20 EXAM #2

II. *Monasteries and Castles*

3/23 Decline and Fall of Empire: A New World W 189-207
3/25 Discussion Sections
3/27 The Monastic Middle Ages Monastic Texts, online at
<http://www.benedictine.edu/abbey/site2/rule.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/chart-cluny.html>
Reading Response #7 Due

3/30 Discussion Sections
4/1 Feudal Middle Ages W207-238; Feudal
Documents, CD 6.6 and
online at
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/sbook1i.html#Feudalism>
Read initial paragraphs
and selections under
“Oaths and Contracts”
heading
Reading Response #8 Due

4/3 Kingdoms and Countries W 242-254, 383-291

4/6 Synthesis: Church as State W 349-260, 305-6
Papal Texts: *Election Decree, Dictatus Papae* =
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/papal-elect1059.html>
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/g7-dictpap.html>
Reading Response #9 Due

4/8 Discussion Sections
4/10 Spring Holiday

4/13 Medieval Mind

W 263-280; Dante, *Commedia* selections =

http://www.cimmay.net/divine_comedy/inferno (*Inferno*, just read Canto I)

http://www.cimmay.net/divine_comedy/purgatorio (*Purgatory*, scroll down and read Canto XVI)

http://www.cimmay.net/divine_comedy/paradiso (*Paradise*, scroll down and read Canto XXX)

Reading Response #10 Due

4/15 THIRD EXAM

III. Workshops and Counting Houses: The Early Modern Experience

4/17 The European Middle Class

W 260-234; 324-328

4/20 From Petrarch to Pico

W 329-341

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/petrarch-ventoux.html>

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/med/oration.html>

Reading Response #11 Due

4/22 Discussion Sections

4/24 The Secular Perspective

Machiavelli, *The Prince* =

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/machiavelli-prince.html> Read

Introduction, Dedications, and Chapters 14-19

Reading Response #12 Due

4/27 Reformation: Luther

W 306-311' 356-311; online readings at

Luther on faith:

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/luther-faith.txt>

Luther's 95 Theses:

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/luther/web/ninetyfive.html>

(study guide for the 95 Theses that is very helpful:

<http://www-personal.ksu.edu/~lyman/english233/sg-95ths.htm>)

Luther's Address to the Christian Nobility of the German Nation:

<http://www.thenagain.info/Classes/Sources/Luther.html>

Reading Response #13 Due

4/29 Discussion Sections

5/1 Reformation: Calvin

W 361-365

5/4 Reformation: England and Elsewhere

Online reading at

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/loyola-spirex.html>

5/5 Review

5/8 EXAM #4 12-3 p.m.

READING RESPONSE ASSIGNMENTS

These are to be short, focused pieces from a paragraph to a page in length. Respond to the question directly. Do not provide background discussion. Turn these in to your Discussion Group leader at the class preceding the Discussion Group meeting.

- 1. Do you think Creon or Antigone has the better justification for his or her position? Why?**
- 2. In what sense do you think Socrates has been trying to wake up his fellow citizens? Why has he been doing this?**
- 3. Based on what Plato writes in this selection, where does he think true reality lies? How can we perceive it?**
- 4. How do Hellenistic "philosophies" seem to be more about the individual than the state or society?**
- 5. How in the *Res Gestae* does Augustus present his achievement as involving restoration, not innovation?**
- 6. On the basis of what you read in Paul's *First Letter to the Corinthians* and in the *Didache*, what would you say are the essential Christian beliefs and practices in the late 1st-early 2nd century A.D.?**
- 7. After reading the *Rule of St. Benedict*, make a list of what seem to you to be the virtues most emphasized by Benedict and cite the passages which seem to you the best expressions of those virtues.**
- 8. According to these contracts, what does a vassal typically *have* to do for his lord? What does the lord do for the vassal?**
- 9. After reading the Papal Texts identify ideas or beliefs that are used as bases for asserting papal supremacy.**
- 10. Dante, as the traveler in the *Divine Comedy* is lost, bewildered, and confused, but as he moves through the Inferno and Purgatory and into Paradise, everything is explained to him, he sees and learns to understand, and finally apprehends the all-embracing picture and meaning of things in God. What do you think is the message here concerning the purpose of human existence and the means by which we may achieve the divinely intended goal?**

11. In the *Ascent of Mt. Ventoux*, how does Petrarch reveal his misgivings about the importance of human achievement in this world compared with the pursuit of salvation.

12. What passages in *The Prince*, Chapters 14-19 reveal Machiavelli's view of people in general and the true ways of the world?

13. After you have read the assigned readings through the 95 Theses, pick out 6 of the 95 theses that you think provide a quintessential statement of Luther's basic characteristic theological views and explain why they well express Luther's views.