

Spring 2002

Western Civilization

(www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv)

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Office Hours: M 3:20-4:20; W 1-1:50; F 10-10:50

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.

By the end of the course students will understand, firstly, that history is not the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the interpretation of the past; and, secondly, that we tend to see the world through a number of basic assumptions that are not always accurate. Students will take from the class the skills to critically appraise varying historical arguments and to clearly express their own interpretations.

Readings:

?? *A Medieval Life*, Judith M. Bennett (McGraw-Hill, 1999)

?? *Giovanni and Lusanna*, Gene Buckner (University of California Press, 1986)

?? Reserve article and online material designated below

?? Optional Texts: *Civilization in the West* by Mark Kishlansky or *Western Civilization: A Social and Cultural History* by Margaret King

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

Assignments:

Participation	30%
2 Midterm Exams	20% each
Final Exam	30%

Participation: Your 30 % class participation grade consists of worksheets, random and announced in-class quizzes, and Reaction Pieces (1-2 pages double-spaced). These are intended to be your reaction to or opinion of the readings designated below, not a summary of the reading material. Students who miss an in-class quiz can *only* make it up with a legitimate reason. Inform me beforehand if you know you have to miss a quiz and we will schedule a make-up.

Exams: There are two midterms (worth 20% each) and a final (worth 30%). Each of the three exams covers *only* the part of the course for which they are designated (1st: Ancient World; 2nd: Middle Ages; 3rd: Early Modern), so they are not cumulative. However, the final exam includes a comprehensive Take Home Essay Question (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. For example, if you make a 90 on the 1st midterm (18/20) + an 80 on the 2nd midterm (16/20) + 84 on the final exam (25/30) + 90 on participation (27/30) your final grade = **86** or **B**. Keep up with your grades on the chart at the end of the syllabus to know your grade going into the Final Exam.

CLASS SCHEDULE

Monday, January 14. Introduction: What is “Western Civilization?”

?? Reading for next class: “A Sense of History: Some Components” & “Why Study History Through Primary Sources”

Wednesday, January 16. The Origins of Human Civilization

?? Reading for next class: Hammurabi’s Law Code

?? One paragraph assignment, to be explained in class, due next Wednesday

Part I: The Ancient World

Wednesday, January 23. Early Human Civilizations: Discussion of Hammurabi’s Law Code

?? Reading for next class: Excerpts from the Old Testament

Monday, January 28. Hebrew Culture & the Origins of Monotheism

?? Reading for next class: “The Roots of War” by Thomas Powers

?? **Worksheet 1** on this reading due at the beginning of class Wednesday

Wednesday, January 30. The Origins of War

?? Reading for next class: “The Polity of the Athenians”

Monday, February 4. Greek History & Politics

?? Reading for next class: “Women in Greek Society” & “Lysistrata”; ****Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class Wednesday**

Wednesday, February 6. The Classical Era: Women & Sexuality in Greek Society

?? Reading for next class: “Runaway Slaves in Alexandria: Reward Offered!”

Monday, February 11. Hellenistic World: Phillip of Macedon & Alexander the Great
?? Reading for next class: Roman Mythology

Wednesday, February 13. Roman Mythology & the Rise of Rome
?? Reading for next class: “A Strike by the Women of Rome” & “Slavery in the Ancient World”
?? **Worksheet 2** on these readings due at the beginning of class Monday

Monday, February 18. Roman Society: The Roles of Women and Slaves
?? Reading for next class: Graffiti on the walls of Pompeii

Wednesday, February 20. The Roman Empire

Monday, February 25. First Midterm Exam

Part II: The Middle Ages

Wednesday, February 27. Jesus of Nazareth & the Rise of Christianity
?? Reading for next class: “Perpetua’s Diary”

Monday, March 4. Early Christian Europe
?? Reading for next class: Excerpts from *Sermons against the Jews* by John Chrysostom

Wednesday, March 6. Europe’s Internal “Other”: Jews & anti-Semitism
?? Reading for next class: Anti-Semitism in Europe

****Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class Monday, March 18**

Monday, March 18. Europe’s Internal “Other”: Jews & anti-Semitism (cont’d)
?? Reading for next class: Excerpts from the Koran

Wednesday, March 20. Europe’s External “Other”: Mohammed & the Rise of Islam
BEGIN READING *A Medieval Life*; **Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) due in class Monday, April 1

Monday, March 25. Europe’s External “Other”: Mohammed & the Rise of Islam (cont’d)
?? Reading for next class: The Christianization of Russia
?? **Worksheet 3** on this reading due at the beginning of class Wednesday

Wednesday, March 27. Early Medieval Europe: Discussion of Reading
?? Reading for next class: Eyewitness Accounts of the Crusader’s Capture of Jerusalem

Monday, April 1. Medieval Europe and Christianity’s “Holy Wars”: the Crusades
****Reaction Piece to *A Medieval Life* due in class today**

Wednesday, April 3. Medieval England: Discussion of *A Medieval Life*

Monday, April 8. Second Midterm Exam

Part III: The Early Modern Period

Wednesday, April 10. The “Black Death”

?? Reading for next class: Documents on the Plague & Reviews of Herlihy’s *The Black Death and the Transformation of the West*; BEGIN READING *Giovanni and Lusanna*

Monday, April 15. The “Black Death” (cont’d)

Wednesday, April 17. Peasant Rebellions and the Renaissance

Monday, April 22. Renaissance Society: Discussion of *Giovanni and Lusanna*

Wednesday, April 24. The Reformation

Monday, April 29. Heretics & Witches

?? Reading for next class: The “Malleus Maleficarium” (“The Witches’ Hammer”)

?? **Worksheet 4** on this reading due at the beginning of class Wednesday

Wednesday, May 1. The European Witch Craze

?? Reading for next class: e-reserve article “The Truth about the First Thanksgiving”

****Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to this readings due in class Monday**

Monday, May 6. Europe’s Conquest of America

Final Exam: Monday, May 13 Noon-3:00

GRADE RECORD

Participation Grade (WS = Worksheet; RP = Reaction Piece; Q= Quiz)

{Note: Worksheets & Reaction Pieces are worth 2 pts.; Quizzes are either 3 or 5 pts. }

Add your scores on these assignments:

WS 1 _____	RP 1 _____	Q 1 _____	
WS 2 _____	RP 2 _____	Q 2 _____	
WS 3 _____	RP 3 _____	Q 3 _____	
WS 4 _____	RP 4 _____	Q 4 _____	
		Q 5 _____	Part. Grade
_____ + _____ + _____ = _____ = <input type="text"/>			
			+
		<u>1st Midterm (20 pts.)</u>	
		(grade) _____ x .20 = <input type="text"/>	
			+
		<u>2nd Midterm (20 pts.)</u>	
		(grade) _____ x .20 = <input type="text"/>	
			+
		Extra Credit Points _____	
			= _____*

*This is your numerical grade for the course going into the Final Exam, which covers the remaining 30% of the grade, including a Take Home Essay Question worth 10% of the overall course grade. To convert the number to a letter grade, divide it by 70, which is the total number of points possible prior to the Final Exam.