

Fall 2001

## Western Civilization

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

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Office Hours: M 10-10:50; T 1-1:50; W 1-1:50

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 just 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:

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

**Course Web Page:** The course web page is at [www.uncg.edu/~jwjones/westernciv](http://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 for the readings designated below; 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 assigned 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 (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 will also include a comprehensive 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 1<sup>st</sup> midterm (18/20) + an 80 on the 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

Tuesday, August 21. Introduction: What is “Western Civilization?”

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

Thursday, August 23. The Origins of Human Civilization

- Reading for next class: Hammurabi’s Law Code
- One paragraph assignment, to be explained in class, due Tuesday

### Part I: The Ancient World

Tuesday, August 28. Early Human Civilizations: Discussion of Hammurabi’s Law Code

- Reading for next class: Excerpts from the Old Testament Book of Isaiah

Thursday, August 30. 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 Tuesday

Tuesday, September 4. The Origins of War

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

Thursday, September 6. Greek History & Politics

- Reading for next class: “Women in Greek Society” & “Lysistrata”

**\*\*Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class Tuesday**

Tuesday, September 11. The Classical Era: Women & Sexuality in Greek Society

- Reading for next class: “A Letter from Alexander to Aristotle”?

Thursday, September 13. Hellenistic World: Phillip of Macedon & Alexander the Great

- Reading for next class: Roman Mythology

Tuesday, September 18. 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 Thursday

Thursday, September 20. Roman Society: The Roles of Women and Slaves

Tuesday, September 25. The Roman Empire

### **Thursday, September 27. First Midterm Exam**

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

Tuesday, October 2. Jesus of Nazareth & the Rise of Christianity

- Reading for next class: “Perpetua’s Diary”

Thursday, October 4. Early Christian Europe

- Reading for next class: Anti-Semitism in Europe

**\*\*Reaction Piece (1-2 pages) to these readings due in class next Thursday**

Thursday, October 11. Europe’s Internal “Other”: Jews & anti-Semitism

Tuesday, October 16. Europe’s Internal “Other”: Jews & anti-Semitism (cont’d)

- Reading for next class: Excerpts from the Koran

Thursday, October 18. Europe’s External “Other”: Mohammed & the Rise of Islam

Tuesday, October 23. Islam (cont’d) and the Fall of Rome

- Reading for next class: The Conversion of Clovis & The Christianization of Russia
- **Worksheet 3** on these readings due at the beginning of class Thursday

Thursday, October 25. Early Medieval Europe: Discussion of Readings

- Reading for next class: Eyewitness Accounts of the Crusader’s Capture of Jerusalem
- Reading for next Thursday: Excerpts from Geoffrey Chaucer’s “Canterbury Tales”

Tuesday, October 30. Christianity’s “Holy Wars”: the Crusades

Thursday, November 1. The Late Medieval Period: Discussion of “Canterbury Tales”

### **Tuesday, November 6. Second Midterm Exam**

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

Thursday, November 8. 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*

Tuesday, November 13. The “Black Death” (cont’d) and Peasant Rebellion

Thursday, November 15. The Renaissance

Tuesday, November 20. Renaissance Society: Discussion of *Giovanni and Lusanna*

Tuesday, November 27. The Reformation & Religious Strife

Thursday, November 29. Heretics & Witches

- Reading for next class: The “Malleus Maleficarium” (“The Witches’ Hammer”)
- **Worksheet 4** on these readings due at the beginning of class Tuesday

Tuesday, December 4. 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 Thursday**

Thursday, December 6. Europeans and the “New” World

**Final Exam: Friday, December 14 3:30-6:30 PM**

**GRADE RECORD for Western Civ 101**

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

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

{Note: These assignments add up to a possible final grade of 33 points}

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 _____		Q 4 _____	
		Q 5 _____	Part. Grade
_____	+	_____	+
		= _____	= <input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
			+
		<u>1st Midterm (20 pts.)</u>	
		(letter grade) _____ x .20 =	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
			+
		<u>2nd Midterm (20 pts.)</u>	
		(letter grade) _____ x .20 =	<input style="width: 50px;" type="text"/>
			= _____*

\*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.