HIST 121: Western Civilization I

Instructor: Bruce O'Brien, Monroe 215; (540) 654-1477; bobrien@umw.edu; office hours: Tuesday 9-11 and 5-6; Tuesday and Thursday 1-2, or by appointment; class meeting Tuesday and Thursday 11:00am–12:15pm in Monroe 346

The Course

This course surveys the development of civilizations in the Near East, Mediterranean, and Europe up to the 17th century, with special attention given in lectures, readings, and discussions to the assessment of historical evidence. Students will be introduced to the remains of cultures through topical lectures and primary source readings. Students will also be shown some of the basic techniques historians use to identify and interpret records. In general terms, students will gain an:

- ability to explain human and social experiences and activities from multiple perspectives.
- ability to draw appropriate conclusions based on evidence.
- ability to transfer knowledge and skills learned to a novel situation.

The course satisfies a number of requirements: it counts as general education under Human Experience; it counts, with HIST 122, as a prerequisite to taking the introductory course for history majors (HIST 297); it is required for those seeking teaching certification in social studies or history at the secondary level.

Concerning the discipline of History rather than general education, this course has the following outcomes: Students will gain an ability to analyze sources and arguments, a comprehension of historical process, and an ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities.

Readings

In the bookstore: Joshua Cole and Carol Symes, *Western Civilizations,* 19th edition (vol. 1), with 'Access'.

Primary Source readings are available via links from the syllabus or are included in the textbook.

Work

Tests: A mid-term and a final exam. These tests will be based roughly equally on the lectures, primary source readings, and the textbook. The midterm (March 1) will cover everything up to that date. The final (May 3) will cover the entire semester. There will be review sessions on February 27 and April 26.

InQuizitive. The textbook comes with a self-testing component called InQuizitive, which is accessed through the access you bought with the textbook. Norton, the publisher, has provided videos and instructions about how to register for it. You will need a 'Student Set ID' from me—for our course (HIST 121.01 Western Civ I Spring 2018), the ID is 49552

There are 16 of these quizzes or activities currently on the syllabus, and they will count for 10% of the grade. There is one for each chapter of Cole and Symes. *These quizzes need to be completed by the date and time specified*—usually before class on the day when we begin a new chapter.

Analysis of a Primary Source: An analysis (4–5 pages) of one of the historical sources on this list. You will choose your source by March 20, when we discuss the assignment in class. A draft of this analysis is due in class on April 12. You will exchange your analysis with another student and do peer reviews of each other's work during the class period. Late drafts will result in a loss of 1/2 grade per day to the final grade of the paper. The revised version needs to be uploaded to Canvas no later than 11:59 pm on Saturday, April 28. Each peer reviewer should make a copy of his or her review and submit that to me at the same time as one is given to the author of the paper.

Readings for discussions and responses: In many lectures we will pause for some discussion of the evidence—either as presented in the textbook itself, or provided to you on the Canvas site. I will expect you to have read these primary source excerpts before class. *Bring your textbook to class* so you will have the sources handy in case we delve into them. Occasionally, I will ask you, usually ahead of time, to write out an answer to a question about these sources. If I do ask for something written, I am likely to collect it. These written responses are part of the participation grade.

Grade

Midterm 20%; Final 30%; Analysis of source 30%; InQuizitive 10%; Participation 10%.

Grading Principles

In this class, an A (93–100) or A- (90–92) mean that the work done is of excellent quality. B+ (88–89), B (83–87) and B- (80–82) mean that the work was well done, competent, even excellent in some ways, but that there is room for improvement. C+ (78–79), C (73–77), and C- (70–72) signify that the work was satisfactory in most respects, even good in some ways, but that there was much room for improvement. D+ (68–69) and D (60–67) are passing grades, but mean that much more could be done in most if not all areas of the work, but that it was not missing *in toto* any key aspect of the assignment. I assign grades based on a number of variables which, if they can be named (e.g., style, argument, research, etc.), cannot in reality be separated from the others. Each variable affects the others. Deficient style will vitiate argument; poor research will undermine argument, and so on. Students earning less than a C by mid semester will receive a notice of unsatisfactory performance.

The Significance of Participation

Participation, which counts for 10% of the grade, will be based on attendance and contributions to discussions. You should be prepared to answer questions on the readings and to have opinions about the issues we are studying. The participation grade will also derive from the occasional written responses you turn in when asked.

The Honor Code

As with all courses at UMW, this class will abide by the honor code. Sharing of work for responses, or any kind of plagiarism, must be avoided. You may discuss the issues involved in the responses or source analysis, but you cannot copy one another's work.

Students with Disabilities

The Office of Disability Services has been designated by the University of Mary Washington as the primary office to guide, counsel, and assist students with disabilities. If you receive services through that office and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodations. I will hold any information you share with me in strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise.

If you have not made contact with the Office of Disability Services and have reasonable accommodation needs, I will be happy to help you contact them. The office will require appropriate documentation of a disability.

Other Resources

If you are depressed or stressed out and finding it hard to cope with school, the people around you, or life in general, I recommend visiting the UMW Counseling and Psychological Services Center: the Center can be reached at (540) 654-1053 (M-F 8-4:30), or you can stop by Lee 106.

For events and announcements from the History Department, as well as useful pages on research and writing, see the Department's News and Resources website: http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/

I reserve the right to change this syllabus and calendar during the course of the semester

Calendar

January 16 Introduction to the course and its subject

18 Early Civilizations

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 1; For discussion: 'The Flood: Two Accounts" (pp. 12–13)

23 Early Civilizations, continued

Reading for discussion: *Sumerian King List*

25 Peoples, Gods, and Empires, 1700–500 BCE

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 2; For discussion: 'Remembering Hatshepsut' (pp. 44–45)

30 Peoples, Gods, and Empires, continued

For discussion: ‘The Diplomacy of the Mycenaeans and the Hittites’ (p. 53)

February 1 The Civilization of Greece, 1000–400 BCE

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 3

6 The Civilization of Greece, continued

8 The Greek World Expands, 400–150 BCE

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 4

13 The Civilization of Ancient Rome

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 5; For discussion: ‘Two Views of Augustus’s Rule’ (pp. 170–71)

15 The Transformation of Rome

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 6; For discussion: ‘The Development of an Imperial Policy Toward Christians’ (pp. 190–91); Celsus

20 Rome’s Three Heirs, 500–950

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 7; For discussion: ‘A Sura from the Qur’an’ (p. 224)

22 Rome’s Three Heirs, continued

Reading for discussion: *The Penitential of Theodore*

27 Review for midterm

March 1 ***The Midterm Exam***

2–11 *Spring Break*

13 The Expansion of Europe, 950–1100

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 8

15 The Expansion of Europe continued

20 The Analysis assignment

Primary Source chosen by this date, by the start of class. Use the list provided under

assignments.

22 The Consolidation of Europe, 1100–1250

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 9; For discussion: 'Two Conversion Experiences' (pp. 306–307)

27 The Consolidation of Europe, continued

29 The Medieval World, 1250–1350

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 10; For discussion: 'Vikings Encounter the Natives of North America' (pp. 338 39)

April 3 Rebirth and Unrest, 1350–1453

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 11; For discussion: 'A Renaissance Attitude toward Women' (p. 370)

5 Innovation and Exploration, 1453–1533

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 12

10 The Age of Dissent and Division, 1500–1564

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 13

12 ***Peer Reviews in class***

17 Europe in the Atlantic World, 1550–1660

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 14

19 European Monarchies and Absolutism, 1660–1725

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 15

24 The New Science of the Seventeenth Century

Reading: Cole and Symes, *Western Civilizations*, chapter 16

26 Review for final exam

May 3 Noon to 2:30 PM ***Final Exam***