

# **Course Syllabus**

## **World Civilizations I HIS K121**

Tuesdays/Thursdays 6:00 – 9:15 PM

Room D109

Three Rivers Community College

Norwich, CT 06360

Instructor: Richard Seckla

Email Address: [rseckla@trcc.commnet.edu](mailto:rseckla@trcc.commnet.edu)

Office: Adjunct Office

Office Hours:  
By appointment

Summer Session 2010

### **Course Description:**

This course is a survey of the evolution of world societies from prehistory to around 1500, with emphasis given to the following: the formation of political and social systems, the emergence of the world's major religions, the development of major philosophical traditions, and the role of trade and economic exchange among world societies. `

### **Course Objectives:**

The overall purpose of this course is to help students gain a solid foundation in understanding the evolution of ancient and medieval societies. A secondary, yet equally important, goal is the development of a methodology in order to examine evidence in order to convey information in a clear and concise manner (this is more commonly known as critical thinking). Finally, I want students to be active participants in the course and in class discussions. I encourage you to ask questions and take the initiative to delve deeper into topics. I look for students to be enthusiastically engaged with the subject matter.

*“Few learn from history who do not bring much with them to its study” - John Stuart Mill*

### **Required Text:**

Bentley, Jerry and Herbert Ziegler. *Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past, Volume I: From The Beginning to 1500*. Fourth Edition, 2006.

In addition to the text, additional readings for class discussion may be assigned on a week-to-week basis.

## **Course Requirements and Evaluation:**

This course will focus heavily on reading, writing, and research, and the assignments will be reflective of that.

**Exams**-At the end of the four units of material, a take-home essay exam will be issued. Exams will consist of five to seven questions. You will be required to complete *two* of your choice. All essays are to be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font. Essay length is a minimum of two pages. Each exam will be worth 15% of your grade for an overall total of 60%.

**Short Papers** - Two short research and writing assignments (3-4 pages each) that are designed to more thoroughly explore a topic or theme in this course are scheduled. All papers are to be typed, double-spaced, 12 point font. These are formal writing assignments so spelling, grammar, and structure in addition to the quality of your research will comprise part of your grade. Each paper will be worth 15% of your grade for an overall total of 30%.

**Classroom Participation and Preparation** – This consists of how much your presence in the class enriches the learning environment. You are expected to read the chapters in the text and any handouts prior to class to allow you to be prepared for and involved in class discussions. Group assignments, discussion questions, and additional reading assignments will be posted prior to class on Blackboard under the Discussion folder. Additional readings will consist of class handouts and/or Web Links on Blackboard. During lectures and discussions I encourage you to ask questions in order to gain a deeper understanding of the subject matter. I also expect you to demonstrate commitment by regular attendance. This component is worth 10% of your final grade.

**Class Schedule:**

<b>Class</b>	<b>Class Content</b>	<b>Text Readings</b>
Class 1 May 25	Introduction to the Course <b>Unit #1 The Foundation Societies 4 Million B.C.E. – 500 B.C.E.</b>  Pre-History: the Paleolithic and Neolithic Periods	Chapter 1
Class 2 May 27	Ancient Mesopotamia, the Hebrews, the Phoenicians  Ancient Egypt, Nubia, sub-Saharan Africa	Chapter 2  Chapter 3
Class 3 June 1	Harappan India, the Aryan Invasions, and Roots of Hinduism  Ancient China	Chapter 4  Chapter 5
Class 4 June 3	<b>Unit # 2 The Classical World: 500 B.C.E. – 500 C.E.</b>  The Persian Empires and Zoroastrianism  Classical China: Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism	Chapter 7  Chapter 8
Class 5 June 8 <b>Exam 1 Due</b>	Classical India: Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism  Ancient Greece and the Hellenistic World	Chapter 9  Chapter 10

Class 6 June 10 <b>Paper 1 Due</b>	Ancient Rome  The Rise of Christianity, the Barbarian Invasions and the End of the Classical Era	Chapter 11 Chapter 12
Class 7 June 15 <b>Exam 2 Due</b>	<b>Unit #3 The Post-Classical Societies: 500 C.E. – 1000 C.E.</b>  The Byzantine Empire, Eastern Christianity, and the Slavic World  The Rise of Islam	Chapter 13 Chapter 14
Class 8 June 17	Medieval China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam  Post-Classical India and Southeast Asia	Chapter 15 Chapter 16
Class 9 June 22	Early Medieval Europe and Western Christianity  <b>Unit #4 The Late Middle Ages: 1000 C.E. – 1500 C.E.</b>  Nomadic Empires and Eurasian Integration	Chapter 17  Chapter 18
Class 10 June 24 <b>Exam 3 Due</b>	States and Societies in Sub-Saharan Africa  Western Europe during the High Middle Ages	Chapter 19 Chapter 20

Class 11 June 29	Early Societies in the Americas and Oceania  Pre-Columbian America and Oceania	Chapter 6  Chapter 21
Class 12 July 1 <b>Paper 2 Due</b>	The Recovery of Europe and China and the Voyages of Exploration	Chapter 22
Class 13 July 6 <b>Exam 4 Due</b>		

**Grading System:**

A = 93-100	C = 73-76
A- = 90-92	C- = 70-72
B+ = 87-89	D+ = 67-69
B = 83-86	D = 63-66
B- = 80-82	D- = 60-62
C+ = 77-79	F = Below 60

Exams	60%
Short Papers	30%
Attendance/Participation	10%

**Late Assignments/Make-Up Exams:**

If papers and/or exams are not turned in on the due date, your grade will be lowered for each day in which it is not turned in. Late papers must be emailed.

**Attendance:**

Regular attendance is essential for success in the course and is expected. Within the College's guidelines and with permission, occasional absences for compelling reasons will be granted. I take attendance at the beginning of each class, and it goes without saying that habitual absences or lateness will negatively affect your individual contribution grade.

## Communications

Do *not* send emails to my personal addresses. Some I use on a consistent basis, others not. Consequently, you run the risk of having your message overlooked.

Should you need to reach me outside of class, use my Three Rivers addresses:

rseckla@trcc.commnet.edu or, preferably, through the email tool on Blackboard. I check these daily.

You should also be in the habit of checking Blackboard regularly for announcements and/or assignments.

## Extra Credit Assignment

Online quizzes for each chapter (a total of 22) will be available on Blackboard. Each quiz will consist of 10 multiple choice questions with a 20 minute limit for completion. Requirements: Complete a minimum of 16 quizzes with 4 from each unit of the text. You can do more if you like; I will count the four *highest* scores from each unit. Credit will be given as follows:

16 Quizzes with 90-100 Average	10 Points
16 Quizzes with 80-89 Average	9 Points
16 Quizzes with 70-79 Average	8 Points
16 Quizzes with 60-69 Average	6 Points

Advantage to you: these points drop down to the bottom line. In other words, if your grade after factoring in your exams, quizzes, papers, and class participation is a 75 but you averaged a B on the 16 quizzes, then 9 points will be added to your grade moving you from a 75 to an 84 or a C to a B.

Another advantage is that some of the same multiple choice questions will show up on the exams, so this serves as a way to prep for them. Of course, all of this is predicated on you taking the time to read the text.

A note on timing: the quizzes are date-sensitive roughly corresponding to the time we spend on each of the four units. All quizzes are posted so check the dates.

### **College Withdrawal Policy:**

A student who finds it necessary to discontinue a course MUST complete a withdrawal form obtained from the Registrar's Office. Students may withdraw from class anytime during the first ten weeks of the semester without being in good standing or obtaining prior permission of the instructor. After that period, a student wishing to withdraw must obtain written authorization of the instructor to receive a "W" grade for the course. Students who fail to properly withdraw and cease coming to class, will be assigned an "F" for the course. Eligibility for refund of tuition is based upon date of withdrawal when received by the registrar. Verbal withdrawals will not be accepted.

### **Learning Disabilities Statement:**

If you are a student with a disability and believe you will need accommodations for this class, it is your responsibility to contact the Disabilities Counseling Services at 383-5240. To avoid any delay in the receipt of accommodations, you should contact the counselor as soon as possible. Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received an accommodation letter from the Disabilities Counselor. Your cooperation is appreciated.

### **Cell Phones / Pagers:**

Students are notified that cellular phones and beepers are allowed in class or in the Learning Resource Center only if they turned off or in the silent mode. Under no circumstances are phones to be answered in class. When there are extenuating circumstances that require that a student be available by phone or beeper, the student should speak to the instructor prior to class, so that together they can arrive at an agreement.

### **Academic Dishonesty:**

Plagiarism in any form is a major breach of academic standards. Any form of cheating or plagiarism will be reported to the college immediately and may result in an “F” for the assignment or an “F” for the entire course. Remember, you can cite other sources or use quotations from other writers in your papers as long as you use the proper citation – in other words, a footnote.

### **Civility in the Classroom:**

The classroom is a place of learning. In this setting, all ideas and opinions are to be heard and respected, even if you disagree with what is said. Anyone who upsets this environment, or who disrespects anyone in the class, will not be tolerated. Lively, insightful, and considerate interaction is encouraged – so let’s enjoy!

*“History is the witness of time, the lamp of truth, the embodied soul of memory, the instructress of life, and the messenger of antiquity” – Marcus Tullius Cicero*