

Course Syllabus

World Civilizations I HIS K121

Tuesdays / Thursdays 2:30 – 3:45 PM

Room D107

Three Rivers Community College

Norwich, CT 06360

Instructor: Richard Seckla

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Office: Adjunct Office

Office Hours:
By appointment

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Course Description:

This course is a survey of the evolution of world societies from prehistory to around 1500, with emphasis given to the following: technological developments; the formation of societies and religions; the development of intellectual currents; the formation of empires, and the overall political, social, and economic framework that existed in these societies during this period. The course will particularly focus on the issues that still have an immediate relevancy on the modern world.

Course Objectives:

Learning Goal: At the end of the course, students will understand, articulate and synthesize the development of ancient and medieval world societies.

Learning Objectives:

Actively engage in the learning process through demonstrated success on writing assignments

- Identify topics
- Read, assess, summarize and synthesize material
- Articulate central themes

Actively engage in the learning process through demonstrated success on the final project

- Employ correct research skills
- Synthesize information to demonstrate knowledge of subject matter
- Select, design and present data which demonstrates knowledge of the subject matter

In other words, 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.

Class Schedule:

Week	Class Content	Text Readings
Week 1 January 20	Introduction to the Course	
Week 2 January 25, 27	Unit #1 The Foundation Societies 4 Million B.C.E. – 500 B.C.E. Pre-History: the Paleolithic and Neolithic Periods Ancient Mesopotamia, the Hebrews, the Phoenicians	Chapter 1 Chapter 2
Week 3 February 1, 3	Ancient Egypt, Nubia, sub-Saharan Africa Harappan India, the Aryan Invasions, and Roots of Hinduism	Chapter 3 Chapter 4
Week 4 February 8, 10	Ancient China Early Societies in the Americas and Oceania	Chapter 5 Chapter 6
Week 5 February 15, 17	Exam # 1 2/15 Unit # 2 The Classical World: 500 B.C.E. – 500 C.E. The Persian Empires and Zoroastrianism Paper Proposals Due 2/17	Chapter 7

<p>Week 6</p> <p>February 22, 24</p>	<p>Classical China: Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism</p> <p>Classical India: Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism</p>	<p>Chapter 8</p> <p>Chapter 9</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p>March 1, 3</p>	<p>Ancient Greece and the Hellenistic World</p> <p>Ancient Rome</p>	<p>Chapter 10</p> <p>Chapter 11</p>
<p>Week 8</p> <p>March 8, 10</p>	<p>The Rise of Christianity, the Barbarian Invasions and the End of the Classical Era</p> <p>Reaction Paper Due 3/10</p>	<p>Chapter 12</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p>Spring Break</p>		
<p>Week 10</p> <p>March 22, 24</p>	<p>Exam # 2 - 3/22</p> <p>Thesis Presentations 3/24</p>	
<p>Week 11</p> <p>March 29, 31</p>	<p>Thesis Presentations 3/29</p> <p>Unit #3 The Post-Classical Societies: 500 C.E. – 1000 C.E.</p> <p>The Byzantine Empire, Eastern Christianity, and the Slavic World</p>	<p>Chapter 13</p>

Week 12 April 5, 7	The Rise of Islam Medieval China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam	Chapter 14 Chapter 15
Week 13 April 12, 14	Post-Classical India and Southeast Asia Early Medieval Europe and Western Christianity	Chapter 16 Chapter 17
Week 14 April 19, 21	Exam # 3 4/19 Unit #4 The Late Middle Ages: 1000 C.E. – 1500 C.E. Nomadic Empires and Eurasian Integration	Chapter 18
Week 15 April 26, 28	States and Societies in Sub-Saharan Africa Western Europe During the High Middle Ages Reaction Paper due 4/28	Chapter 19 Chapter 20
Week 16 May 3,5	Pre-Columbian Americas The Recovery of Europe and China and the Voyages of Exploration	Chapter 21 Chapter 22
Week 17 May 10, 12	TBD 5/10 Paper Portfolios due 5/10 Final Exam #4 5/12	

Blackboard Vista: I utilize Blackboard extensively in my courses for communications, web-based readings and other assignments. To access Blackboard, you will need your student ID and your password. If you have difficulties logging on or if you are having compatibility issues with the Blackboard software, contact the IT Help Desk; they can work through any issues with you.

Method of Evaluation:

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

Exams-Roughly at the end of the four units of material, an in-class exam will be given that will test your grasp of the material. The exams may consist of identification questions, multiple choice, matching, and essays. The first two exams will each be worth 10% of your grade, the second two exams will each be worth 15% for an overall total of 50%. I will issue a study guide prior to each exam so you can focus your studies on those items which will be on the test.

Classroom Participation, Preparation, Homework Assignments – This consists of how much you actively participate in the learning process. Most classes will consist of a lecture component and a student discussion component. You are expected to read the chapters in the text and any additional readings prior to class to allow you to be prepared for and involved in class discussions. During lectures and discussions I encourage you to ask questions in order to get a deeper understanding of the subject matter. I also expect you to demonstrate commitment by regular attendance. This component is worth 15% of your final grade.

Reaction Papers (2) – Reaction or response papers are your opportunity to express what you think or feel about something you have read in the text or other sources. Sample responses could revolve around the following questions:

How do you feel about what you have read?

What have you found most surprising? Interesting? Disturbing? Enlightening?

Do you agree or disagree with the source? Why or why not?

Two reaction papers of 2-3 pages, typed, double spaced are required. This component is worth 10% of your final grade.

The Term Paper - The paper assignment consists of three components and will constitute 25% of your final grade:

1. Paper proposal *with Works Cited in MLA format*, minimum of four sources required. This is simply a statement of the topic you have chosen to research. See handout for specifics on sources. 5% of project.
2. Thesis statement *with Works Cited in MLA format*: after you have begun researching your topic, you should be developing some opinions and taking a position based on your readings. The thesis statement is the argument that your paper will be based on supported by the evidence from your research. Around mid-semester, students will deliver an oral presentation of their research and thesis. 5% of project.
3. The paper portfolio: at the end of the session, you will submit your paper *with your original proposal and thesis statement*. 15% of project.

Note: If you want your final exam and paper returned, bring a stamped, self-addressed envelope to class at the end of the session. Figure on about \$1 for postage.

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	50%
Attendance/Participation	15%
Reaction Papers	10%
Term Paper Proposal	5%
Term Paper Thesis	5%
Term Paper Portfolio	20%

Late Assignments/Make-Up Exams:

If assignments 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.

Missed exams must be made up within one week of the original exam date (before I hand back corrected exams). It is your responsibility to contact me to make arrangements for the make-up. Failure to complete the make-up within the one-week window will result in a grade of zero for the exam. I allow one missed exam per semester without penalty. A second missed exam will be penalized by one letter grade. *No make up will be offered on the final.*

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.

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