

## **Course Syllabus**

### **World Civilizations I HIS K121**

Mondays/ Wednesdays 3:30-4:45 PM

Room D224

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:**

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, an in-class exam will be given that will test your grasp of the material. The exams will consist of identification questions, multiple choice, matching, and essays. Each exam will be worth 10% of your grade for an overall total of 40%. 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.

**In-Class Quizzes**-Over the course of the semester, eight short, in-class quizzes will be given. Quizzes will focus on defining and drawing relationships between a pair of people, terms, or events in an effort to foster understanding and thinking about the material we are covering. Quizzes will be based on text and other readings and will be cumulative within each of the four time periods under study. No makeups will be offered on quizzes, but I will drop the lowest grade, so you can miss one without penalty. The combined quizzes will be worth 10% of your overall grade.

**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.

**Short Papers** - Three short research and writing assignments (3-4 pages each) that are designed to enhance your understanding of the material are scheduled. You only need to complete two of them- your choice of which two. Topics will be available two weeks in advance. They will be taken from material learned in class, as well as other readings, writings, etc. The combined writing assignments will be worth 10% of your overall grade.

**The Term Paper** - The paper assignment consists of three components and will constitute 30% 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. 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*. 20% 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.

**Class Schedule:**

<b>Week</b>	<b>Class Content</b>	<b>Text Readings</b>
Week 1 January 25, 27	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
Week 2 February 1, 3	Ancient Mesopotamia, the Hebrews, the Phoenicians  Ancient Egypt, Nubia, sub-Saharan Africa <b>Q1</b>	Chapter 2  Chapter 3
Week 3 February 8, 10	Harappan India, the Aryan Invasions, and Roots of Hinduism  Ancient China <b>Q2</b>	Chapter 4  Chapter 5
Week 4 February 17	<b>No Class February 15</b>  Early Societies in the Americas and Oceania <b>Short Paper #1 Due 2/17</b>	Chapter 6
Week 5 February 22, 24	<b>Exam # 1 2/22</b> <b>Library Session 2/24</b> Works Cited Formatting	

<p>Week 6</p> <p>March 1, 3</p>	<p><b>Unit # 2 The Classical World: 500 B.C.E. – 500 C.E.</b></p> <p>The Persian Empires and Zoroastrianism</p> <p>Classical China: Confucianism, Daoism, Legalism</p> <p><b>Term Paper Proposal w/Bibliography Due 3/3</b></p>	<p>Chapter 7</p> <p>Chapter 8</p>
<p>Week 7</p> <p><b>Spring Break</b></p>		
<p>Week 8</p> <p>March 15, 17</p>	<p>Classical India: Jainism, Buddhism, Hinduism <b>Q3</b></p> <p>Ancient Greece and the Hellenistic World</p>	<p>Chapter 9</p> <p>Chapter 10</p>
<p>Week 9</p> <p>March 22, 24</p>	<p>Ancient Rome <b>Q4</b></p> <p>The Rise of Christianity, the Barbarian Invasions and the End of the Classical Era</p> <p><b>Short Paper #2 Due 3/24</b></p>	<p>Chapter 11</p> <p>Chapter 12</p>
<p>Week 10</p> <p>March 29, 31</p>	<p><b>Exam # 2 - 3/29</b></p> <p><b>Unit #3 The Post-Classical Societies: 500 C.E. – 1000 C.E.</b></p> <p>The Byzantine Empire, Eastern Christianity, and the Slavic World</p>	<p>Chapter 13</p>
<p>Week 11</p> <p>April 5, 7</p>	<p>The Rise of Islam <b>Q5</b></p> <p>Medieval China, Japan, Korea, Vietnam</p> <p><b>Term Paper Thesis Due 4/5</b></p>	<p>Chapter 14</p> <p>Chapter 15</p>

<p>Week 12 April 12, 14</p>	<p>Post-Classical India and Southeast Asia <b>Q6</b></p> <p>Early Medieval Europe and Western Christianity <b>Short Paper #3 Due 4/14</b></p>	<p>Chapter 16</p> <p>Chapter 17</p>
<p>Week 13 April 19, 21</p>	<p><b>Exam # 3 4/19</b></p> <p><b>Unit #4 The Late Middle Ages: 1000 C.E. – 1500 C.E.</b></p> <p>Nomadic Empires and Eurasian Integration</p>	<p>Chapter 18</p>
<p>Week 14 April 26, 28</p>	<p>States and Societies in Sub-Saharan Africa <b>Q7</b></p> <p>Western Europe during the High Middle Ages</p>	<p>Chapter 19</p> <p>Chapter 20</p>
<p>Week 15 May 3, 5</p>	<p>Pre-Columbian America and Oceania <b>Q8</b></p> <p>The Recovery of Europe and China and the Voyages of Exploration</p> <p><b>Term Paper Portfolio Due 5/5</b></p>	<p>Chapter 21</p> <p>Chapter 22</p>
<p>Week 16 May 10</p>	<p><b>Final Exam #4 5/10</b></p>	

**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	40%
Quizzes	10%
Short Papers	10%
Attendance/Participation	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 first to make arrangements for the make-up. I utilize the Testing Center (A Wing) for make-ups. You will also need to make an appointment with them to take the test. They have limited availability, so act promptly! Failure to complete the make-up within the one-week window will result in a grade of zero for the exam. I allow one makeup 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.

### **Class Lectures:**

We will generally cover one chapter in the text each class period. Assuming the equipment in the classroom is operational, I utilize Power-Point presentations for my lecture material. Before each class, I will upload the files to the home page for our course on *Blackboard Vista*. This is course # 10631.

### **Extra Credit Assignment**

Online quizzes for each chapter (a total of 22) will be available on *Blackboard Vista*. 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 need to be taken before the scheduled lecture on that chapter. You will not be able to take them afterward.

**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*