

History 115 Medieval and Renaissance World Civilizations
Student Syllabus Spring 2014

Bethany Lutheran College
Tues/Thurs. 1:30-2:45 PM
HH 311

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Course Description: An introduction and survey of the history of the world from the developments of civilizations from the end of Rome to ca. 1400. Includes early and later Medieval Europe and Islam, India and China and the rise of civilizations in Africa, East Asia and the Americas. There are no prerequisites. (3 cr.)

Rationale: History is one of the most valuable of the Liberal Arts. History, while it may use tools of social science, the arts, science and religion, it is still basically humanistic—it tells the story of humanity. History offers us a certain original and important way of looking at the human experience. In contrasting the world's past with the present it shows us the complexity of human interactions and gives us a clearer and wider perspective. This is something that is very necessary for intelligent decision making in a democratic society and a primary goal of a Liberal Arts education.¹

With the rapidly growing interconnectedness of the world, the value in studying World History should be self-evident. An understanding of the background of other peoples and countries is essential for making informed policy decisions in a democratic society. Our motivations spring from the economics and religion of the Middle Ages and Reformation, our politics and law derive from Greece, Rome and Medieval England, our Arts from classical Greece and Medieval and Renaissance Italy, France and Germany. The impact of Islam on the west has been monumental as was the impact of Europe on Africa and the Americas at the end of the Middle Ages. All these things can be better understood by studying the origins and development of the Western world within a world context.

Even while America is changing its ethnic make-up to be less European and becoming more unique, we will continue to be basically a Western thinking and acting nation and culture. Non-western immigration, while subtly changing American culture also assimilates the dominant (Western) one. Yet the need to be informed about non-western influences will continue to grow in the coming generations if we are to cope with changes in American culture.

I Course Objectives:

- A) Concepts, Principles and Understandings: As a result of taking this course, students will, through the use of videos, DVDs, readings, written assignments, team discussions, class discussions and lectures, be able to:
 - 1) become acquainted with important people of the past and show why they are considered important through the “people” division of unit tests and pertinent essay portions of unit tests;
 - 2) understand political theories and practices that developed from late Ancient, Medieval and Renaissance times from many parts of the world using the “political” and “ideas” divisions of objective unit tests and pertinent essay portions of unit tests;

¹ The Committee of the American Historical Association, “History and the Humanities,” George W. Pierson, Chair, *Report of the Commission on the Humanities* (1964), 112-115.

- 3) compare and contrast common characteristics found in most civilizations through team discussions and by on all divisions of the unit tests and a written comprehensive final exam essay;
 - 4) discover learn how the way people of all classes lived and thought from late Ancient times to the time of the European Renaissance but in various parts of the world through the use of the “culture,” and “experiences and contributions of the underprovided divisions” of objective and pertinent essay portions of unit tests, answering specific questions on the video *Castle*, and by reading and discussing *The Wandering Arm* and writing a critical review of the novel;
 - 5) learn about aspects of culture such as the sciences, arts, reasoning, piety and moral values of past civilizations and then define them through the “culture” and “experiences and contributions of the underprovided” divisions of objective and pertinent essay portions of unit tests;
 - 6) explain the cultural role that religion, government, military, and other institutions of society have played in World Civilizations and impacted Western Civilization through the use of the “culture” and “experiences and contributions of the underprovided” divisions of objective portions and pertinent essay portions of unit tests;
 - 7) learn the names and locations of significant physical geographical and some political features germane to the course on the continents of Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas
- B) Attitudes, Interests and Appreciations: students will also, through videos, DVDs, readings, written assignments, discussions, class activities and lectures students will be able to:
- 1) recognize the legitimate² diversity found in World Civilizations including Western society through the culture and experiences and contributions of the underprovided divisions of objective and pertinent essay portions of unit tests, quizzes on primary source documents, and essays on travelogues, documentaries, articles or live experiences
 - 2) become aware of the cultural contributions of various Near Eastern, African, Asian, pre-Columbian American and European peoples and institutions to over-all Western culture through describing facts to answer questions on DVDs, and through the “culture” and “experiences and contributions of the underprovided” division of objective portions and pertinent essay portions of unit tests;
 - 3) feel a unity and continuity with the people of the past using the culture, and experiences and contributions of the underprovided divisions of objective and pertinent essay portions of unit tests, answering specific questions on the DVD *Castle*, , the DVD *Art of the Western World: Romanesque and Gothic*, and by reading and discussing *The Wandering Arm* and writing a critical review of the novel;
 - 4) Learn to enjoy at least some aspect of the study of history;
- C) Habits, Conduct and Skills: students will finally, through assigned readings, writing, Quizzes, and tests:
- 1) further learn the value of planned study through the successful completion of, various written assignments, geography quizzes, all divisions of the unit tests, and the final comprehensive exam;
 - 2) find bias in aural, written, or visual media with a more historically critical eye by writing analytical essays using such media;
 - 3) show further development in the ability to read sources, take notes from them and lectures, synthesizing this information in written assignments and recalling the information in objective quizzes, written tests and the final exam.

² There are clearly non-legitimate diverse practices. These are either contrary to Natural Law, Revealed Law, or both. This definition would be in keeping with Bethany’s philosophy and Mission Statement. Examples would be the *sati widow immolation*, human sacrifice, cannibalism, infanticide, euthanasia, and abortion.

- 4) Identify the names and locations of significant physical geographical and some political features germane to the course on the continents of Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas through successfully completing eight map quizzes.
- 5) demonstrate the use of correct academic citation and avoidance of plagiarism and basic research through the writing of three short papers;

II Tentative Course Outline

A) Unit One: The Development of a new Western Civilization

- 1) Topics: Common characteristics of Civilization; How to read and interpret primary source documents and images; Late Rome; Beginnings and conquest of Christianity; The "fall" of Rome and rise of Byzantium; Germanic Europe; The Rise of the Carolingians and Charlemagne; Feudalism and Manorialism; The reform of the Church; Romanesque and Gothic art and architecture; Castle architecture and function; Society structure in the high middle ages; The calamitous fourteenth century.
- 2) Learning Activities:
 - (a) Read: Upshur et al. *World History* 4th ed. Chapter 5: Disruption and Renewal in Western Asia and Europe; Assigned selections from *Reader for Primary Sources and Other Documents*; Sharan Newman's *The Wandering Arm*; Sharan Newman's article "Reaching Out: Presenting the Middle Ages to Modern America" from *Medieval Academy News*.
 - (b) View: DVD *Castle* and answer questions on it
 - (c) Geography quiz on physical geography of Medieval Europe **Tuesday, January 21.**
 - (d) Physical and political quiz on N Africa and the Middle East **Thursday, January 30.**
 - (e) View DVD on Medieval Art and Architecture and answer questions on it.
 - (f) Critical Book review of Sharan Newman's *The Wandering Arm* due **Tuesday, February 4.**
 - (g) Discussion of Sharan Newman's *The Wandering Arm*
 - (h) First Unit Test **Thursday, February 6.**

B) Unit Two: India's, Southern Asia's, East Asia's and the Middle East's Medieval Periods

- 1) Topics: Review characteristics of Civilization; Review how to read and interpret primary source documents and images; The Arabs, Muhammad and the Conquest of Islam; Islamic society; Medieval India: Gupta Empire, Islam and Indian life; Medieval South East Asia; China after the Han Dynasty; East Asian Buddhism; Second Chinese Empire and the Tang Dynasty; Early Korea, Vietnam and Japan;
- 2) Learning Activities: Reading:
 - (a) Read: Read: Upshur et al. *World History* 4th ed. Chapter 6: Disruption and Renewal in Western Asia and Europe; Assigned selections from *Reader for Primary Sources and Other Documents*.
 - (b) Geography quiz on India and S.E. Asia **Tuesday, February 18.**
 - (c) Geography quiz on East Asia **Tuesday, March 4.**
 - (d) Travelogue essay due **Thursday, February 27.** Make sure this is on a travelogue and not a documentary. Do not rely on the library to select the correct ones for you. A travelogue is like a documentary but highlights one country, city or region often in a promotional way. It is not necessarily very historical.
 - (e) Second Unit Exam on **Thursday, March 6.**

C) Unit Three: The Americas and Africa during Europe's Medieval Period

- 1) Topics: Review characteristics of Civilization; Review how to read and interpret primary source documents and images; Mesoamerican, Aztec, and Incan Civilizations; North American Mound Builders and other indigenous peoples; Western Sudan; Other African Kingdoms, empires, and city states.
- 2) Learning Activities:
 - (a) Read: Upshur et al. *World History* 4th ed. Chapter 7: Developing Civilizations; assigned selections from *Reader for Primary Sources and Other Documents*.
 - (b) Reaction essay on article, museum visit, documentary video or DVD, etc., on any subject covered in this course **due Tuesday, March 25**. If you choose to watch a video or DVD make sure it is a documentary and not a travelogue. Do not rely on the library to select the correct ones for you.
 - (c) Geography quiz on the pre-Columbian Americas **Thursday, March 27**.
 - (d) Geography quiz on Africa **Thursday, April 3**.
 - (e) Third Unit Exam on **Tuesday, April 8**.

D) Unit Four Europe, Asia and North Africa in the High Middle Ages and Early Renaissance

- 1) Topics: The Crusades; Expansion of Christendom and re-conquest of Iberia; Medieval southern and central Asia; Mongols; Chinggis (Genghis) and Khubilai (Kublai) Khans; the late Middle Ages in Europe; European and Asian economic recovery; Italian Renaissance and society; Northern Renaissance and society(?)³ Condition of the church(?)
- 2) Learning Activities:
 - (a) Read: Upshur et al. *World History* 4th ed. Chapter 8 and pp. 353-370 and 387-396 in chapter 9: Assigned selections from *Reader for Primary Sources and Other Documents*.
 - (b) Repeat of physical geography quiz on Medieval Europe **Tuesday 24 April**
 - (c) Repeat of physical geography quiz on N Africa and the Middle East **Tues. 2 May**
 - (d) Fourth Unit Test and final exam during assigned final exam time, date, time, and place to be announced.

II Resources:

A) Books and Articles

- 1) Jiu-Hwa L. Upshur, Janice J. Terry, James P. Holoka, Richard D. Goff, and George H. Cassar, *World History* vol. I *Before 1600: The Development of Civilization*, 4th ed. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth 2002;
- 2) John P. Boubel, ed. *Reader for Primary Sources and Other Documents* 2010 edition available in the Bethany College Bookstore;
- 3) Sharan Newman, *The Wandering Arm*. N. Y.: Tor Books, 1995;
- 4) Sharan Newman, "Reaching Out: Presenting the Middle Ages to Modern America" from *Medieval Academy News*;

B) Various video documentaries, articles, events, etc. self-selected by students for the completion of written assignments.

C) DVDs Used in Class:

- 1) Mark Olshaker, *Castle*. A Unicorn Project, produced in cooperation with WTVS Detroit. Based on the book by David Macaulay. Originally produced in 1983. Ed. Mick Manning;
- 2) Michael Woods, *Art of the Western World: Romanesque and Gothic*. WNET (Television station : New York, N.Y.), Annenberg Media., Corporation for Public Broadcasting., Educational Broadcasting Corporation. S. Burlington, VT.: Annenberg Media,[200-?], c1989.
- 3)

³ The (?) indicates that these topics will be dealt with only if there is time at the end of the semester.

III Explanation of Attendance, Assignments, Tests, Quizzes, and Final Exam

Please keep all tests and graded assignments until the end of the semester in case grades should be lost, misplaced, or misrecorded.

- A) Attendance: You are expected to attend class although you are not required to. You do not have to excuse your absences to me. I do not grade attendance. I do appreciate being informed of long absences for family funerals, prolonged illnesses, surgeries, etc.
- 1) Frequent absences, however, may affect your grade negatively because you will miss important information. Also, if you are absent, no matter how legitimate the reason, you cannot participate in team discussions and these are a part of your course grade.
 - 2) If you miss a map quiz you need a legitimate excuse for missing class that might include: conflicting college activities, serious illness or personal trauma, or a real need for your presence by family members (children, spouse, parents, etc.) in order to make up the quiz. Otherwise you will receive a zero grade; I may request proof of a legitimate absence.
 - 3) If you miss a class, find out from your team members what you missed and what is expected for the next class.
 - 4) If you miss an unannounced quiz on the readings you may not make it up and you will receive a zero unless you have a provable legitimate excuse for your absence.

Remember, you are responsible for all information given out in class. If you miss class, for whatever reason, be sure to obtain missed information from a member of your team or other member of the class. Announcements concerning assignments, tests, etc., including changing due dates, are your responsibility.

- B) Written assignments are due on the date given on the syllabus. Late assignments will be lowered a whole grade for each day they are late until they are worth only 50%.
- 1) One assignment may be postponed by one week by redeeming your late assignment coupon. Every student in class receives one of these coupons. These have no cash value and are non-transferable.
 - 2) One written assignment required for this course is a critical essay on a travelogue video/DVD.
 - (a) A travelogue is like a documentary but highlights one country, city or region often in a promotional way. It is not necessarily very historical.
 - (b) Specific directions for this essay will be posted separately on the course website on campus web.
 - 3) Another written assignment is an analytical essay on a course-related topic. This essay can be written on a number of possible things.
 - (a) Sometimes there are special lectures/guest speakers, performances, etc. at BLC or other area colleges and universities. Attending one of these on a topic of Medieval or Renaissance World History could be used for the basis of a report.
 - (b) You could also choose to visit a historical site, but in the United States this would be limited. One closer site would be the Minneapolis Institute of Art. It has sections containing Medieval or early Renaissance era art and artifacts from many of the areas of the world we will be studying. (The Institute's Medieval European collection is quite pathetic, however). Other museums with Medieval era collections would also be allowed. The visit must be concurrent with the semester. If you choose to do this, concentrate your essay around one or two artifacts or pieces of art.

- (c) You could attend a concert of “early music” by groups such as the “Rose Ensemble” in Minneapolis (or on their tours). Similar to art pieces, concentrate on no more than two pieces that were performed.
 - (d) You may also view a documentary video on some aspect of Medieval European or World History that is approximately an hour long. At an absolute minimum it must be 45 minutes long. One documentary would be done for each report. I will also be using a number of such videos in class from various series. You could view one from the series that I do not use in class. You may also view an appropriate documentary on TV. The most likely places are PBS; TLC; History Channels; National Geographic Channel; and Discovery channel. Be selective. Not everything on these channels is worth watching or historically accurate (especially on the so called “History Channel” where there is now is a great deal of garbage). Be especially wary of anything that uses the word “mystery” in its title, seems sensationalized, or emphasizes blood and gore or torture. Sex and violence sells in history videos as in ever other kind of media so watch for a bias towards these and choose something else if sex and/or violence seem over-emphasized.
 - (e) You may read a magazine, or journal article on a topic that interests you about any of the places we will be studying, or in the case of Latin America, Asia and Africa, from modern times as well. The *Smithsonian*, *Archeology Today* and *National Geographic* are examples of commonly used magazines. You may **not** use an article off the internet. History majors or those thinking of being history majors should consider using a journal article from such sources as *Speculum*, *History*, *History Journal*, *Eighteenth Century Studies*, and if you are thinking of teaching social studies on the secondary level, *History of Education Quarterly*. Hard copies of all of these are available in the History Resource Corner currently in the Math Resource Room.
 - (f) Specific directions for these essays will be posted separately on the course website on campus web.
- 4) Critical Review of the Novel
- (a) You are required to read the novel by Sharan Newman, *The Wandering Arm*, and then write a critical review of it.
 - (b) Specific directions for the writing of this review will be posted separately on the course website on campus web.
- C) Quizzes and in-class work:
- 1) There will be six geography quizzes.
 - (a) The quizzes will consist of names that you must match to place numbers on a map. You will be given a list and study map ahead of time.
 - (b) Missed geography (map) quizzes must be made up **within one week of the original date** and are allowed only for serious illness, personal or family trauma, and scheduled collegiate activities. I may ask for proof of your excuse.
 - 2) Students will be assigned to teams in order to discuss certain assigned readings, particularly from the Primary Source Reader.
 - 3) Teams will evaluate contributions to discussions by each other as individual members at mid-term and at the end of the semester.
- D) Tests and Exam:
- 1) This semester there will be no make-up tests. You will be allowed to drop one test and if you miss one then that will be the one you drop.
 - (a) The tests will consist of some objective questions and one essay question.
 - (b) The objective portions of the unit tests will have the divisions of “people, political ideas, the power of ideas, culture,” and “contributions and experiences of the underprovided.” (None of this means a thing to you but it hopefully satisfies the assessment ~~police~~)

requirements.) [A little attempt at humor there in an otherwise grim situation.]

- (c) You will be given the possible essay questions ahead of time (usually four) so you can prepare your answers. At the time of the test you will have a choice of at least two of those questions. Unit Tests will consist of a section of true and false, fill-in-the-blank, and multiple choice followed by an essay section. You will need to answer one essay question from a selection of at least two.
- 2) The Final Exam period will actually consist of the fourth unit test plus a comprehensive essay question that you will have ahead of time so that you may prepare your answer.
 - (a) You will also be able to bring notes with you on a 3X5 note card to help you answer the comprehensive question (only).

E) Extra Credit: There is none; please do not ask. Put your time and energy into the scheduled work

IV. Other Information:

- A Any cheating on tests, quizzes or plagiarizing on written assignments (including turning in written work when you have not read or watched the necessary material) will result in a failing grade and could even result in failure of the course.
- B Plagiarism: The MLA Handbook has defined plagiarism as follows:
 - 1. Repeating another's sentences as your own
 - 2. Adopting a particular apt phrase as your own
 - 3. Paraphrasing someone else's argument as your own
 - 4. Presenting someone else's line of thinking as though it were your own

To restate this, in short, to plagiarize is to use someone else's work or ideas as your own, without crediting or citing the source. Direct, word-for-word copying is permissible if the material appears in quotation marks and if the source is cited. Rephrasing and summarizing is permissible if the source is cited. The instructor reserves the right to fail any student involved in plagiarism.⁴

- C Special Needs: Please let me know of any special needs you might have that I can reasonably accommodate (such as the use of oral testing, recorded books, large-print copies, etc.) or of any serious medical conditions that may require emergency treatment during a class session.

⁴ *MLA Handbook for Writers of Research Papers, Theses, Dissertations* (New York, Modern Language Association, 1977) as cited in handout at fall, 2002 faculty workshop on plagiarism, Bethany Lutheran College, Mankato, MN.

Late Assignment Certificate

(Turn in the Day the Assignment is Due)

Entitles (your name) _____
to an extension on one written assignment for one week from its due date.

Assignment Name: _____

Authorized by *Dr. John P. Boubel*

Expires end of Spring 2014

Not redeemable for cash; redemption value \$0.00.

Date Assignment was due: _____