

The West in the World

Ball State University HIST 150-1

T-Th 09:30-10:45am, Teachers College 121

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Office hours: T-Th, 11-12, Burkhardt 234

(Appointment strongly recommended, see below)

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This course explores the history of the world from antiquity to the 20th century. It emphasizes the role of western civilizations (namely Europe) in world history, but we will also venture into other areas. This course will give you a glimpse into societies, political structures, cultures, and even literature and art, with the goal of acquiring a better understanding of our world today and the major social and political questions we face; of the work of historians; of the foundations of research; and of the principles of proper writing.

Covering so much history in one semester is quite an ambitious goal. Thus you should not expect this course to teach you history in its entirety. No one course could ever do that, and no professor is an expert in all areas. In fact, on some issues you will likely know more than I do.

This foundation (UCC tier 1) course will further the University Core Curriculum-21 goal of educating students so that they are historically literate. To achieve this goal, it will combine an emphasis on student acquisition and mastery of historical knowledge and an understanding of historical thinking and methodology.

HIST 150 will enable the students to make the Experience→ Information (E→I) transformation through a number of active-learning strategies that include modified lectures, a number of in-class exercises revolving around the use of primary and secondary source materials, and writing exercises. These pedagogies will help students understand:

- the difference between a primary and secondary source
- historical methodology—how historians use primary and secondary sources to establish historical facts and interpretations of historical events
- historical thinking—how theories and context influence the ways historians think about historical episodes and construct their interpretations
- and recognize the different fields of history—political, diplomatic, military, economic, social, cultural, and intellectual

- and recognize the different approaches taken by historians as they reflect upon the experiences of the past

Students in HIST 150 will develop 3 of the 4 cognitive skills associated with the E→I transformation:

1. accurately observe (read) and reconstruct (write, speak) elements of history to develop new ideas.
2. describe or explain how theory or context influences the use of elements of history to generate new information or insights.
3. use diverse ways to experience historical works (e.g. primary and secondary sources).

HIST 150 further enables students to accomplish the Information→Knowledge (I→K) transformation through a variety of active-learning strategies that include modified lectures, a number of in-class exercises revolving around the use of primary and secondary source materials, and writing exercises. These pedagogies will help students:

- think critically about primary and secondary sources
- critically evaluate a wide array of primary source documents relevant to a particular historical event or development
- analyze particular historical events and developments from multiple perspectives and identify factors that shaped those perspectives
- identify themes and trends in history

Students in HIST 150 will develop 3 of the 6 cognitive skills associated with the I→K transformation:

1. analyze data, events, styles, themes, and developments to reveal patterns of information or create new ones.
2. integrate information from multiple sources to develop new knowledge and insights.
3. communicate knowledge in written form and, where appropriate, orally, geographically, numerically, and symbolically.

Grading:

The maximum number of points you may earn for this course is 500. Grading will be distributed as follows (see below for explanation of each section):

Tests (3 out of 4) – 150pts

Online posts (10 out of 12) – 100pts

Final – 250pts

Your final grade will be determined by your points balance as of 5/1/2015, according to the following key: 470 points or above: A *** 450-469: A- *** 430-449: B+ *** 410-429: B *** 390-409: B- *** 375-389: C+ *** 355-374: C *** 340-354: C- *** 330-339: D+ *** 300-329: D *** less than 300: F.

You will not receive a final grade lower than what your total number of points is worth according to the key above, but I may decide to give you a higher one.

What if I'm "borderline"? How do I get bumped up?

If you are 5 points or less from the next grade, here's what I'll look at to determine whether to bump you up:

1. Have you met all course requirements as listed below?
2. Have you done reasonably well on all assignments except one, which caused your average to be lower?
3. Do I know you? Did you come talk to me during the semester? Did I get a chance to know you beyond the numbers? Don't wait till the last week. This is true for everyone, and especially important if there are personal reasons that might impair your performance. There are over 200 students in our class, so if you don't take the initiative I will not know who you are!
4. Have you already received bonus points? If I decide to offer opportunities for extra credit, and that extra credit already helped you get a better grade, I will probably not bump you up.

Requirements:

Please note: you must meet all requirements listed below to pass the course. If you don't meet one of them and do exceptionally well on all others, your final grade will still be F.

Attendance – you should show up to all classes, come prepared, and engage as much as possible with the lecture's topic. Our discussion every week will be based on what we've discussed previously; the lectures will not repeat what is in the assigned texts but rather complement them; and online post- and exam-questions may come from either lectures or assigned pages in the book.

If you have a particular reason that forces you to miss class, I encourage you to come talk to me about it. The more I know about your personal situation, the more I can help you.

No cellphones, no texting during class! Phones and related accessories should not be visible during class and must be either turned off or on silent mode. If you have special circumstances that require you to receive a call/text during class, please let me know in advance and make sure to sit by the door so you can exit without disrupting the class.

I allow the use of laptops/ipads etc. in class, but I ask you to refrain from using them for any purpose but taking notes or looking up a name/place mentioned in class online. This means no facebook/twitter/youtube etc. As with cellphones, please keep them on silent mode.

Participation – since this is a very large class, we won't have long class discussions, but I will ask questions from time to time, and I encourage you to stop me and ask questions whenever you like.

Exams – 4 exams will take place throughout the semester. You need to take 3 of them (your choice which ones, but I *strongly encourage you to not skip the first*), or take all 4 and I will drop your lowest score. These will be online exams you will take on Blackboard on your own computers or at a computer lab (your choice). On a week marked below with an exam, you will have a (slightly less than) 48-hour window to log in to Blackboard to complete the test, typically from Sunday to the beginning of class on Tuesday, but this may change. You will be able to take the test only once; you will have 20 multiple-choice questions for which you will be given 50 minutes. The questions will test your knowledge of what was discussed in class and in the textbook since the previous exam (for the first exam, the beginning of the semester).

Since these will be online exams, you are free to use whatever source you like (written source, that is; please do not consult others as you go through the questions), but please **do not** count on looking up information as you read the questions – you will run out of time. You will need to study for each exam, and I will devote time in class to explaining how to do that.

Online posts – There will be 10 opportunities to respond to a question posted online (in Blackboard > Discussions), 2 of which will count as a double post (see the schedule below). You are only required to complete the equivalent of 10 posts (6 + the two double posts or 8 + one double post) or do all and I will drop your lowest 2 (that is, I will drop your two scores or one double post, whichever is lower). Each discussion forum will require you to write a one-paragraph (5-15 sentences) response to a question based on materials we covered in class and/or assigned reading. Thus attending every class is a precondition for your ability to address the questions.

Discussion forums will be posted on Blackboard after class Thursday on the relevant weeks (see schedule below), and will remain open until the beginning of our class the following Tuesday. For each post you will receive a grade from 0 to 10 points, based on the quality of your answer and how well you write it (specific instructions to follow separately; grammar, punctuation, style, and inappropriate language issues will reduce your grade).

Please note: completing the equivalent of 10 posts (8 + a double post or 6 + 2 double posts) is a minimum requirement of this course. You may choose to write more posts, but failing to meet the minimum could result in an F grade for the entire semester. If there is a legitimate reason that prevents you from writing a post, you should discuss that with me *before* the deadline for that post passes.

Final – this will be a take-home exam. You will have a 3-day window to take the exam on Blackboard, from Wednesday, 4/29 at noon to Saturday, 1/5, also at noon. The exam will consist of 52 multiple-choice questions, of which you will need to answer 50, or you may answer all 52 and your first 2 mistakes won't count. Each question will be worth 5 points, and you will have 2 hours to complete them all (unless you have special permission for extended time).

More details on the final will be given as we get closer to the date.

Miscellaneous things you should know:

1. I care a lot about how you write, whether in the online posts or just an email you send me. In fact, how you write is more important to me than what you say. I have a website dedicated to improving college students' writing skills (<http://writingmaster.net>). The website has all the information you may need on grammar, style, punctuation, and citing sources. When grading your book report, I will assume you are familiar with the rules described on this website. If you use Facebook, I suggest you "like" this site's page (<http://facebook.com/writingm>) and follow it to receive occasional writing and academic tips. If you find it useful, feel free to spread the word and share this resource with your friends. It is free to use.

In addition, you might want to seek the help of the writing center. The Writing Center is a community of Ball State students and faculty who value writing. You may go there to collaborate with one of the center's trained peer tutors on any project for any major. The Writing Center is a comfortable, supportive environment for writers from all communities and backgrounds. It is located in Robert Bell 291. It has both online and face-to-face appointments. To make an appointment, go to ballstate.mywconline.com.

Furthermore, if you feel you need help with preparing for class, reading, understanding lectures, or preparing for exams, there's a resource on campus you can use: the Learning Center. The Learning Center offers free tutoring for many courses on campus, including science and humanities (and including this one!), modern and classical languages, math and business, help with any writing task, and study strategies such as time management, test taking, note taking, and effective textbook reading. Call 765-285-1006 or visit NQ 350 to make an appointment to meet with a tutor, or visit them online at www.bsu.edu/learningcenter. Needless to say, I would be happy to hear from you and help out as much as I can.

2. I have zero tolerance for violations of academic dishonesty, and especially plagiarism. Even the slightest suspicion of plagiarism, cheating in the form of copying the work of another student – including in the short, online posts – or having someone write an exam for you, or any other violation of academic dishonesty as defined in the University's Student Academic Ethics Policy, will result in an *F grade for the entire course* and possible further disciplinary action. For more details, see:

<http://cms.bsu.edu/about/administrativeoffices/studentrights/policiesandprocedures/studentcode/viiethicspolicy>.

3. If you need course adaptations or accommodations because of a disability, please contact me as soon as possible. Ball State's Disability Services office coordinates services for students with disabilities; documentation of a disability needs to be on file in that office before any accommodations can be provided. Disability Services can be contacted at 765-285-5293 or dsd@bsu.edu.

4. Parts of this class will be videotaped, and the videos will be uploaded to youtube. The videos will include mostly me, but students might appear in them here and there. If you do not wish to appear in any video posted online, please let me know and I will make sure you won't.

5. Communications between us will be done primarily via email. I will send out an email with updates at least once a week, typically after our Thursday class. It is your responsibility to read and understand it. I consider announcements made via email as information that you are aware of. If there's anything unclear about an email I sent out, please respond right away with a question.

6. Questions? Concerns? Suggestions how to make this course better? Just need someone to talk to? Feel free to get in touch via email. I will respond to all emails within 48 hours (72 hours during the weekend), but usually a lot faster.

Want to set up a meeting? Just go to: <http://www.signupgenius.com/go/20f0d4eafab2caafa7-sign> to find a time that works for you. No need to email me in advance, just sign up and come to my office at your designated time.

I'm looking forward to getting to know all of you!

Course Schedule:

There are three necessary purchases for this course, available from the university bookstore or amazon.com and other similar online stores:

William McNeill, *Plagues and Peoples* (New York: Anchor Books, 1998) [you may use an earlier edition but page numbers below refer to the 1998 edition]

Marcus Rediker, *The Slave Ship: A Human History* (New York: Penguin Books, 2008) [you may use the earlier, hardback edition from 2007, but page numbers below refer to the 2008 paperback edition]

Charles Parker, *Global Interactions in the Early Modern Age* (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2010)

In the schedule below, assignments from those three books appear by their author's last name: McNeill, Rediker, and Parker. We will also be reading texts from other books and articles, as well as primary sources (documents, videos) from the different periods we study. All of these will be made available in PDF format via the course's website on Blackboard (under "Content").

How to prepare for class?

You have three options:

- a. Best: read the pages/documents assigned for each week before our Tuesday class, come to class, take notes, go over the pages in the book again to ensure you understood everything, bring any questions to next class.
- b. Second best: take a cursory look at the assigned pages before class so you'll have a general sense of what we'll be doing. Then read everything after class.
- c. Not so bad: take notes in class, read the relevant sections after class, but *before* the next class.

Any of the above 3 methods works, and you should choose the one that best fits your learning style.

Note: Anything listed below is subject to change. Pay attention to in-class announcements and emails I send out.

Week 1 – introduction, from the Ice Age to Egypt, Babylonia, and China: the roots of human civilizations

Tuesday, 1/6 and Thursday, 1/8

Week 1 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary Source: Laws of Hammurabi

Week 2 – Persia, Greece, Rome, and the ancient world

1/13, 1/15

Week 2 reading on Blackboard > Content

McNeill, 94-136 (first part of Ch. 3)

Online post#1 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

Week 3 – The emergence of monotheism: Judaism and Christianity

1/20, 1/22

Week 3 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary source: a section from the Babylonian Talmud

1/20: online post #1 due at the beginning of class

Online post #2 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

Week 4 – The 3 civilizations of late antiquity and early middle ages: Byzantium, Islam, and China

1/27, 1/29

Week 4 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary Sources: a section from the Qura'n; the Pact of 'Umar

1/27: online post #2 due at the beginning of class

Online post #3 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

*** Exam #1 (Sunday 1/25 to Tuesday 1/27 on Blackboard; covers weeks 1-3) ***

Week 5 – The Middle Ages, the Crusades, and the Americas

2/3, 2/5

Week 5 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary Source: a crusader's description

Special presentation: Romanesque and Gothic architecture in medieval Europe (on Blackboard).

2/3: online post #3 due at the beginning of class

Online post #4 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

Week 6 – The Mongols, the Black Death, and the disastrous 14th century

2/10, 2/12

Parker, 146-172

McNeill, 161-207 (Ch. 4)

Primary source: Boccaccio's description of the Black Death

2/10: online post #4 due at the beginning of class

Online post #5 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

Week 7 – The Renaissance and the rise of new empires

2/17, 2/19

Parker, 39-65

Week 7 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary sources: Busbecq on the Ottomans; Machiavelli on republics and monarchies

2/17: online post #5 due at the beginning of class

Online post #6 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

*** Exam #2 (Sunday 2/15 to Tuesday 2/17 on Blackboard; covers weeks 4-6) ***

Week 8 – The Age of Exploration, the Protestant Reformation, and some non-European empires
2/24, 2/26

Parker, 13-37, 146-180

Week 8 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary sources: Pope Leo X's condemnation of Martin Luther; images from the Mughal Padshanama (illustrated history, 17th century)

2/24: online post #6 due at the beginning of class

Online post #7-8 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class (on Rediker's book, covering chapters 1, 2, 4, 6, 9, and 10; due in about 3 weeks)

3/3, 3/5 – no class, spring break

Week 9 – The 17th and 18th centuries: science and enlightenment
3/10, 3/12

Parker, 182-218

McNeill, 208-241 (Ch. 5)

Primary sources: Catherine the Great of Russia on governance; virtual tours of Enlightenment palaces (Versailles, Hermitage Museum, Dolmabahçe Palace); edicts by the Qing Qianlong Emperor of China.

Week 10 – The Atlantic Slave Trade
3/17, 3/19

Parker, 111-131

Movie (link on Blackboard): *Amazing Grace*

3/17: online post #7-8 (report on Rediker's book) due at the beginning of class

Online post #9 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

Week 11 – The French and American revolutions; imperialism and nationalism in the 19th century

3/24, 3/26

Week 11 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary source: Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen

3/24: online post #9 due at the beginning of class

Online post #10 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class

*** Exam #3 (Sunday 3/22 to Tuesday 3/24 on Blackboard; covers weeks 7-10) ***

Week 12 – 19th-20th centuries: industry, trade, science, and the arts

3/31, 4/2

Week 12 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary sources: A description of Manchester, an industrial city; Charles Darwin on evolution

Short movie (link on Blackboard): Snow

3/31: online post #10 due at the beginning of class

Online post #11-12 opens on Blackboard after Thursday's class (on art at the David Owsley Museum of Art, due in about 3 weeks)

Weeks 13-14 – world wars and other conflicts in the 20th century

4/7, 4/9, 4/14, 4/16

Weeks 13-14 reading on Blackboard > Content

Primary sources: Woodrow Wilson's 14 points, 1919; the Wannsee Conference minutes, 1942; speeches by Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, Churchill, and Roosevelt (video)

*** Exam #4 (Sunday 4/12 to Tuesday 4/14 on Blackboard; covers weeks 10-13) ***

Week 15 – 20th century: art, food, the environment, and human rights

4/21, 4/23

Week 15 reading on Blackboard > Content

Documentaries (on Blackboard): Al Gore's *An Inconvenient Truth* and *Food Inc.*

4/21: Online post #11-12 due at the beginning of class