

History 103

History of Civilization: the Contemporary World

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Please e-mail me on the Canvas site when possible.

Office hours: online or by appointment

Course content and objectives:

History 103 is a college-level survey of global civilization from the French Revolution to the present. The course examines the major developments that have shaped world history since the end of the 18th century. These include the ideas of the French Revolution and their impact; the industrial revolution; major cultural and intellectual trends and responses to a changing world; economic history; gender history, the growth of modern ideologies, including Marxism, liberalism, nationalism, socialism, Nazism, Fascism, and the development of totalitarian government; military history, imperialism and de-colonization; and the shifting balance of political power.

This course seeks to provide an understanding of the comparative features of modern civilizations, an appreciation of important personalities and events that shaped the contemporary world as well as an understanding of the impact of 19th and 20th century developments on the lives of ordinary men and women. The course should help students understand the nature of the problems facing the contemporary world.

Major Topics and Themes:

1. The changing role of women
2. The impact of industrialization
3. The development of liberal democracy
4. The growth of major political movements: socialism, communism, liberalism, fascism
5. Philosophical and social responses to changing living conditions
6. Military history
7. Nationalism and the rise of the great powers

Learning Outcomes:

At the conclusion of this course, successful students will be able to:

1. Define and explain the significance of key facts and events of the period under study, and develop criteria to judge events, people, and processes from an historical-cultural perspective.
2. Determine an historical thesis and judge the appropriateness of both the argument and its development.
3. Adapt scholarly processes of analysis, interpretation, and synthesis to articulate an original point of view demonstrating a command of relevant facts and a framework of logical deduction.

- Drawing inferences from discrete data
- Differentiating between facts, value judgments, and generalizations
- Differentiating between description and explanation
- Synthesizing data and interpretation
- Recognizing the role of cause and effect in historical analysis

4. Expand their vocabulary

5. Demonstrate the importance of traditions of thought and ethical values in the process of historical change.

Teaching methods:

This course is in large part taught by class readings, videos, discussions and online audio lectures, which were recorded by my colleague, Dr. Graham Haslam.

The class requires each student to undertake independent work virtually on a daily basis. Work methods for this course resemble those that would be applied in the study of a foreign language. The study of history is cumulative. Since issues and events are presented as relational, it is fundamental to the success of a student to ensure that the reading assignments and other work will be accomplished in a timely fashion so that students will gain a coherent accumulation of relevant data as method of analysis and argument are introduced. Students are expected to work about two hours each day outside of class.

Similar to most college-level history courses, this is a writing-intensive course. Learning to clearly and effectively express ideas in writing is one of the most important skills students can develop at college. Students should expect to complete a significant amount of writing in the form of weekly discussion posts, exams and a paper. This course will hone your ability to communicate ideas and facts clearly and accurately.

Students are advised to take careful notes as they read the books and listen to the class lectures.

All questions concerning lectures and text assignments are welcome. It is important for students to gain a reasonable geographical sense of places under discussion. Also, it is crucial that each student develop a chronology of events that will serve as a scaffold upon which to build arguments and interpretations of data.

Book:

There is one required book for this class:

- McKay, Hill, Buckler, and Ebrey, McKay's Understanding World Societies w/sources (pkg), ISBN 9781457659249

You will also have some articles and primary sources to read for this class. These will be available on the Canvas site.

In addition, you will be required to read and/or skim at least three other books for your paper. I do not expect you to buy the books for your paper. These books should be available from the college library or from local public libraries.

Assignments:

No grading curve will be used in this course. All individual assignments, exams, essays and quizzes are based upon 100 points. Students must accomplish four types of tasks:

- There will be **two exams**. The mid-term exam will account for 25% of your final course grade, and the final exam will account for 25% of your final course grade. Both the mid-term and final will have online, timed quiz components. Both exams will also have an essay component. You will complete the essays on-line. I will post study guides for both exams about one week before the exam becomes available.

- There will be a weekly **discussion forum** unless otherwise indicated in announcements on Canvas. The discussion forum will be launched on Sundays for the following Week. Weeks begin on Mondays for this course. (Each week's assignments will be listed in the **Modules**.) The Discussion Essays and Responses will represent 25% of the course grade. Full instructions concerning what is expected of students and how discussions are graded are posted on the homepage. Please see the "Discussion Essays and Responses Explained" and "Writing Good Discussion Essays" documents in the Vital Information folder located on the Home Page.

- Each student will write a **paper** of five to eight pages in length (minimum of 1,500 words). The paper should be typed, double-spaced, and have a twelve font. This paper will be written in the standard format using the conventions adopted by historians (www.chicagomanualorstyle.org). A list of topics, instructions, and conventions to follow will be posted on the homepage. You may choose a topic that is not listed on the list, but you must obtain instructor approval of the topic. Each student must consult individually with the instructor before embarking on research for the paper. This can be done in a discussion forum and/or via e-mail. The paper will represent 25% of the course grade. Further details are available on the homepage.

Your overall grade will be based on your performance on the assignments listed above.

Final Grade:

25% Mid-term Exam

25% Final Exam

25% Discussion Posts (Six Essays and Six Responses – Only one essay and one response will count during any given week.)

25% Paper

Reading Assignments and Deadlines:

All reading assignments and deadlines for assignments are found on the calendar on the class Blackboard page on a week-by-week basis. Students are responsible for monitoring the calendar daily and for being familiar with the assignment deadlines.

Grades:

Below is the grading

scale I will use in the
class:

A = 100-93

A- = 92-90

B+ = 89-85

B = 84-80

B- = 79-75

C+ = 74-70

C = 69-65

C- = 64-60

D+ = 59-55

D = 54-50

F = below 50