



# History of Civilization: Middle Ages Syllabus

## (Fall 2019 5204B902)

Instructor: Sondra Ricar, Ph.D.

E-mail: [Sondra.ricar@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:Sondra.ricar@bellevuecollege.edu)

Phone: Skype by appointment

Office location: online only

Office Hours: Online Mondays 8-9:30am via GoToMeeting.com

## Course Information

History 102 surveys world civilization from about 500 AD to 1815 (Napoleon's defeat). Topics include the fall of Rome, the rise of Christianity and Islam, medieval institutions, the Renaissance, the rise of science, the age of exploration, and the development of the nation-state. There is obviously a great deal of information in this course. We will focus on "big picture" issues rather than small details. Do I care if you know the year Muhammed died? Not at all. I care that you understand what his death meant for Islam and the world. Likewise, I would prefer you understood the effects and reasons for feudalism in the west or centralized government in China than specific dates of regimes. My goal is for you to have a better understanding of the various cultures in our world and why they have developed the way they did, why they value attributes different from those in the United States. Above all, I do not use this course to tell you what to believe or what is "correct" when it comes to the development of nations and cultures. My job is to challenge you to think about issues that are common to people and communities throughout the world.

This course may be used as social science or humanities credit, not both, at Bellevue College.

# Course Outcomes

After completing this class, students should be able to:

- Analyze and critically evaluate primary and secondary sources.
- Communicate effectively both orally and in writing.
- Compare the rise and decline of the major non-Western and Western civilizations from the Middle Ages to the early modern period.
- Evaluate the significance and impact of the creation of new European empires in the Americas, Asia, and Africa.
- Identify and assess the causes and consequences of the major economic, social, political, religious, and cultural developments of the middle ages to the early modern period.

## How Outcomes Will be Met

The primary means of assessment will be written submissions. This course is writing-intensive. You need to be prepared to submit numerous written assignments each week. In each week you will need to post to the discussion board, with an analytical post responding to one of the two prompts and then posting a specific number of reply posts. In addition, you will have an essay quiz each week, based on the material for that week. You will have videos to watch each week and in some weeks you will have assessments based on documents and other materials. Additionally, you will have an online comprehensive final exam.

Online education is not for everyone. This is not to say that you are unintelligent if you do not do well in this course, but you need to be self-directed, self-disciplined and patient. For example, in a face-to-face class when you have an assessment, if there is something you don't understand you can approach the instructor and ask. In this class that is not an option. You will have to read the material on your own, interact with your classmates on discussion boards, and take assessments to measure how much you have absorbed. In a traditional classroom I can see when a student doesn't understand something, just based on their expression. Obviously that is not an option here. You must be willing to ask a question when something is unclear as I am not a mind-reader. I do not expect you to be a mind-reader either. If I have been unclear on something, you must let me know. You must pay attention to the calendar and due dates. While I may email the class or post announcements regularly with reminders for the due dates and they will all be entered into the calendar, it is your responsibility to remember when something is due. It is very easy to fall behind if you slack off and you will not pass the class if you do not stay on top of the work. In order to successfully complete this course, you should plan your schedule very carefully and try to stick to it. Look at your work schedule, school schedule, and family obligations and allow plenty of time for each. You cannot wait until the last minute to do all of the assignments for that week. Likewise, you cannot simply wait until the end of the term to do all of the assignments. You should plan on checking Canvas at least once a day. Even though you may have completed the assignments for that week, there may be

announcements or emails that will impact your grade. I will check Canvas and my email at least once a day. I respond to emails within 48 hours, usually within 24 hours. I usually have grading done within 24-48 hours of the close of the assignment but in extraordinary circumstances it may take me longer.

## Grading

Discussion:

You have four posts on each discussion: your original post in response to one of the prompts, which should be a minimum of 400 words, and two posts, replying to posts of your classmates, with a minimum of 150 words each. Your reply posts must be substantial, not simply agreeing with or congratulating the person who wrote the original post. You should include the name of the person to whom you are replying in your posts.

Once you have posted to the board you will be able to see my comments, Sondra's Thoughts, on the issues. You should reply to my post with something substantial with a minimum of 150 words. You should address what Sondra's Thoughts says about both prompts. Your replies to your classmates can be on either of the prompts, provided you engage what they wrote.

Your original post is due by midnight Wednesday and your reply posts are all due by midnight Sunday. Although I do not accept late work, given the constraints of Canvas some students will submit their original posts to the discussion late. Therefore, there will be a one letter grade per day deduction late penalty. Additionally, I will deduct points if you do not put the name of the person to whom you are replying in your post. Each discussion board initial post will be worth 10 points. Each reply post will be worth 5 points. Due to past problems with plagiarism you will need to submit a copy of your original post to a Vericite assignment to be evaluated for possible plagiarism. Submissions that have too high a similarity score may result in a zero for the assignment and a report to the college authorities.

The discussion is where you can discuss your opinions on the issues raised by the material in the course. The presumption is that you already understand the material and thus should not be explaining it here. The discussions are an important part of the course as this is where we most closely replicate a face-to-face classroom. Thus, it is important that all students contribute to the discussions. When participating in group discussions, you should be aware of the tone of communication. You should communicate to each other and the instructor in a respectful manner, offering up helpful suggestions when necessary.

It is important to use proper English, including punctuation and capitalization. Students will be coming from a wide variety of backgrounds and locations around the world and may not be familiar with the acronyms that arise from text messages or slang. Please

be careful to avoid using slang whenever possible and avoid the use of swear words when communicating during class.

### Quizzes

Each module you will have a short-essay quiz. The quiz will give you three questions (randomly generated) and you will be able to choose which of the two you answer. Your answers should be roughly a minimum of 200 words each. I view the quizzes as information dumps and thus do not mark down for poor grammar. The quiz is timed and you may only take it once, so be sure you are prepared to stay at the computer once you have accessed the quiz. The quiz questions allow you to show me what you have learned about the topic, rather than asking you to regurgitate specific facts. The possible questions will be posted in the Start Here module at the beginning of the term, so you have an idea of what to pay attention to while you study.

### Start Here Assignments

In the first week, you will have a variety of assignments to familiarize yourself with the course and policies.

### Documents Assignments

In some modules you will have an exercise relating to the topic for the week. For this exercise you will read and analyze documents and other materials relating to an event, submitting your conclusions for a grade. You are going to reconcile various accounts, some of them conflicting, to come to a conclusion about what happened and why. The point of this exercise is not only to help expand your knowledge of the history but also to help develop your critical thinking skills.

### Final Exam

You will have a final exam. The final exam is comprehensive in that it is a very broad question. The exam and quizzes will be essay questions which ask you to evaluate material and show me what you understand rather than asking for specific names and dates. As with the quizzes, I view the exam as more information dump than formal submission and will not mark down for poor grammar. The final will be worth 150 points. As with the quizzes, the possible questions for the final exam will be posted in the Start Here module.

### Extra Credit

It is important that each student be judged on the same body of work. Therefore, I rarely offer extra credit.

## Books and Materials Required

Rather than use a \$200 textbook which will be outdated within a year or a set of books which you will only use part of, I have transitioned to an [Open Textbook](#) and other online readings. There are obvious trade-offs with this, but we will do our best.

# Help with Canvas

Students can find help with Canvas by following the link here: [Student Canvas Help](#)

Additionally, you can find videos on YouTube to help illustrate various parts of the system. Once you are in the classroom there is a help link in the left menu, a question mark in a circle, that will lead you to various Canvas resources. You can also post questions on the Online Office board where your classmates may be able to help you out.

## Classroom Learning Atmosphere

If you are new to online learning, or even if you have a great deal of experience with online classes, you should review the [Core Rules of Netiquette](#) in order to remember how to get along with your classmates and your instructor.

Meeting Times:

While this is an online class, best practices are that we transition to making these classes as similar to face-to-face classes as possible. Thus, you have a discussion post due by midnight Wednesday each week. The remainder of your work for that week is due no later than midnight Sunday. As this is an online class you can access it from anywhere that has connectivity. There is an impression among some students that they can wait until the end of the week or even the end of the term to do all the work. That is not acceptable. You must attend class each week. I do not give points for attendance nor do I drop people for non-attendance. You are assuming adult responsibilities by enrolling in a college course and thus you should take the responsibility to drop a course you have decided you no longer wish to take. If you stop attending the course and do not drop, I will give you the failing grade that you earned.

## Instructor's Expectations

My expectations for you:

Come to class with a positive attitude and an open and questioning mind.

Attend class regularly, submit your work on time.

Treat other people with respect; be considerate

My commitment to you:

To share my enthusiasm for studying World History and Civilizations

To respect you as an adult who has made an important commitment toward trying to improve your life by attending community college.

To treat all my students equally, regardless of ethnicity, gender identity, religion, or other factors by which many people judge others.

To prepare and present thoughtful and engaging lessons and lectures.  
To give challenging and clear assignments; and to return them to you with comments in a reasonable amount of time.  
To help you succeed in this class.

### Late Policy

I do not accept late work for any reason. In the past students found this policy to be arbitrary and unfeeling. I do not accept late work in any of my classes. I set aside time to grade your work in order to give you timely responses to it. Late work complicates my ability to grade in a timely manner. And fundamentally, if I allow you to start falling behind, you will rapidly run into trouble. You will have a specific amount of time on each module so you must plan accordingly. It is also necessary for you to post to the discussion boards several times each module. You should plan on doing your work in advance of the cutoff time. The assignments are set up to close exactly on time so if you are copying and pasting but haven't finished when the time runs out, you will lose your work. Also, you never know what may happen in your life so waiting until the last minute to do your work may result in your not having time to do it.

### Computer Excuses

You are taking an online class; it is your responsibility to have access to a computer and backup your files. What does this mean? Computer crashes, lost information, Internet access becomes unavailable, hardware/software difficulties, time zone issues, or your dog ate your computer are not reasons for inability to complete your work. You should also pay attention to what browsers work best with Canvas. For example, Canvas does not like AOL, nor does it like outdated versions of most browsers like Chrome or Mozilla. What does this mean? If you are using one of them you will be able to access the class, but may not be able to send an email in the class. Or you may not be able to complete an assessment. By far the most frequent problem students have is related to using the wrong browser. Be aware of this issue and prepare for it. There may be some coursework for this class that cannot be completed with mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets, iPads, or Chromebooks. Will you have access to a laptop or desktop computer if needed?

## Accessibility

The online elements of this course are designed to be welcoming to, accessible to, and usable by everyone, including students who are English-language learners, have a variety of learning styles, have disabilities, or are new to online learning. Be sure to let me know immediately if you encounter a required element or resource in the course that is not accessible to you. Also, let me know of changes I can make to the course so that it is more welcoming to, accessible to, or usable by students who take this course in the future.

## **Affirmation of Inclusion**

Bellevue College is committed to maintaining an environment in which every member of the campus community feels welcome to participate in the life of the college, free from harassment and discrimination.

We value our different backgrounds at Bellevue College, and students, faculty, staff members, and administrators are to treat one another with dignity and respect.

[Affirmation of Inclusion](#)

## **Veterans and Active Duty Military**

I welcome all students into my classroom and military personnel are no different from other students. However, some military face additional challenges. Wounded warriors may have acquired injuries which through the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) entitles them the use of accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for students with verified disabilities. Veterans with a disability requiring an accommodation should contact the Disability Resource Center for help with accommodations.

Along the same lines, both active duty and veterans may be called up for deployment. Several veterans have experienced being recalled to active duty due to the need for more personnel in the field with our current military engagements. I will accommodate your deployment needs as necessary. Simply inform me or have a commanding officer inform me of what you need and I will take the necessary steps to accommodate you. As with other aspects of personal identity (gender, ethnicity, religion, etc.) your classmates will only know of your military service if you volunteer that information. I will not inform the class of this.

## **Religious Holidays**

Students who expect to miss classes, examinations, or any other assignments because of their religious observance should be provided with a reasonable alternative opportunity to complete such academic responsibilities. It is the obligation of students to provide faculty with reasonable notice of the dates of religious holidays on which they will be absent, preferably at the beginning of the term. The [Request for Accommodations for Reasons of Faith or Conscience Form](#) provides more information about and the steps to request this accommodation.

Students who are absent on days of examinations or class assignments should be offered an opportunity to make up the work without penalty (if they have previously arranged to be absent), unless it can be demonstrated that a makeup opportunity would constitute an unreasonable burden on a member of the faculty. Should disagreement

arise over what constitutes an unreasonable burden or any element of this policy, parties involved should consult the department chair, or Dean.

[Policy 2950 Accommodations for Reasons of Faith or Conscience](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2950p-2/)

(<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/policies/id-2950p-2/>).

## **Annual Notice Non-Discrimination**

Bellevue College does not discriminate on the basis of race or ethnicity; creed; color; national origin; sex; marital status; sexual orientation; age; religion; genetic information; the presence of any sensory, mental, or physical disability; or veteran status in educational programs and activities which it operates. Bellevue College is prohibited from discriminating in such a manner by college policy and by state and federal law. All college personnel and persons, vendors, and organizations with whom the college does business are required to comply with applicable federal and state statutes and regulations designed to promote affirmative action and equal opportunity.

Reports of gender and sex-based discrimination, sexual misconduct, or retaliation by a student should be raised with the Title IX office (see 1440P2 for contact information). In cases where the impacted party is a student and the responding party is a college employee, the Title IX coordinator will direct the matter to the Office of Human Resources (HR). All other reports, including all reports where the impacted party is an employee, should be raised with the HR. If a report is against personnel in the Title IX office or HR, it should be submitted to the president's office for referral to an alternate designee.

[Equal Opportunity](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/equal/>)

***[Spanish and Chinese versions of the anti-discrimination notice are available at [Equal Opportunity](#) should you wish to link to them or include them in your syllabus.]***

## **Confidentiality and Mandatory Reporting**

As an instructor, one of my responsibilities is to help create a safe learning environment on our campus. It is my goal that you feel able to share information related to your life experiences in classroom discussions, in your written work, and in our one-on-one meetings. I will seek to keep information you share private to the greatest extent possible. However, I am required to share with the Title IX Coordinator any and all information regarding sexual assault and other forms of sexual misconduct (e.g. relationship violence, stalking) that may have occurred on campus or that impacts someone on campus. Students may speak to someone confidentially by contacting the BC Counseling Center at (425) 564-2212. The Title IX Office can be contacted at 425-



564-2641 and more information can be found at [Title IX](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/titleix/>).

If you have any concerns, you may report to: [Report Concerns](https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/) (<https://www.bellevuecollege.edu/reportconcerns/>).

## **“Online Office” Board**

I will have an Online Office discussion board linked on the home page for the course. You should check this board regularly as this is where some important announcements will be made, in addition to those sent to your Canvas email account. This board is the first place to go if you find something you don't understand, as your classmates might be able to help. I will check this board at least once every 24 hours to respond to questions. You can however always email me if you feel your question is “too stupid” to put on the board. Usually what will happen in that case is I will remove your identifying information, post the question on the board and my answer to the whole class, as many students are often wondering the same thing. Please feel free to discuss topics other than the class subject matter, but try to maintain some standard of civilized behavior. If you wish to be automatically notified when something new is posted to this board you must click the "Subscribe" button for the forum to receive automatic email updates. This can be found by going to Discussions in the left menu, and at the top of the page you will see “Pinned” discussions. The top one will be the Online Office. If you look to the right side of the screen you will see a small speech bubble on the line for that discussion. Click on it and you will be subscribed to receive automatic updates when someone has posted to that discussion board. You can do this for any discussion in the class. I do recommend you subscribe at least to the Online Office as this will help keep you on track when events occur that may affect your ability to do your work. I will frequently post announcements, letting you know when a new module is open, when the previous one is graded, or other information that may affect you or your grade. When you open Canvas and see the tile for this class (the square that is colored on the top 50%, the middle has the name of the class, and the bottom has little icons) you will see a speech bubble if there is a discussion post you should read and there is a little megaphone if there is an announcement you should read. Do not ignore the announcements as you will be held responsible for the information that is included in the announcement.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is presenting someone else's work as your own. Essentially it is stealing someone's intellectual product. It is not only illegal and a violation of college policy, it is an insult to your classmates and me. It shows you do not care enough to do your own work. And if you plagiarize you do not learn, so you shortchange yourself by not obtaining the education you are at Bellevue to attain. I have a zero-tolerance policy on

Plagiarism or other cheating (such as cribbing someone else's discussion post). You will receive a zero on the assignment and be reported to the appropriate college authorities. Repeated plagiarism will lead to a zero in the class. It is possible that you might be expelled from the college if you are a repeat offender. In order to detect possible plagiarism, most of your submissions will be subject to Vericite review.

## Student Conduct Code and Academic Integrity

Any act of academic dishonesty, including cheating, plagiarism (using the ideas or words of another as one's own without crediting the source), and fabrication, and inappropriate/disruptive classroom behavior are violations of the Student Conduct Code of Bellevue College. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, repeatedly talking out of turn, arriving late or leaving early without a valid reason, allowing cell phones to ring, and inappropriate behavior toward the instructor or classmates. The instructor can refer any violation of the Student Conduct Code to the Manager of Student Conduct for investigation. Specific student rights, responsibilities, and appeal procedures are listed in the Student Conduct Code at: [Student Code](#)

## Disability Resource Center (DRC)

The Disability Resource Center serves students with disabilities. Common disabilities include physical, neurological (e.g. Autism, ADD/ADHD), and mental health (e.g. depression, anxiety). If you are a student who has a disability or if you think you may need accommodations in order to have equal access in your classes, programs, activities, and any other services, please contact the DRC.

If you require assistance in an emergency, please meet with your individual instructors to develop a safety plan for while in class and contact the DRC to develop a safety plan for while you are elsewhere on campus.

The DRC office is located in building B Room 132. You can contact the DRC by stopping by the office at B132, calling our front desk phone number (425) 564-2498, emailing [drc@bellevuecollege.edu](mailto:drc@bellevuecollege.edu). Deaf students can reach us by calling TTY: (425) 564-6189, or by Skype (account name **DRCatBC**). For more information about the services we offer, including our Initial Access Application, visit our website at [Disability Resource Center](http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc) (<http://www.bellevuecollege.edu/drc>).

Service Animals are allowed in this classroom. Emotional Support Animals need to be approved through the DRC. All other animals will be asked to leave. If you believe you need your animal with you, please connect with the DRC and refrain from bringing your animal until a decision has been made.

# Final Exam Schedule

Your final exam will be online, and it will be open from December 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>. You will only be able to access it once.

## Course Calendar

Week of Sept. 16<sup>th</sup>: Start Here and Module One

Week of Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>: Module Two

Week of Sept. 30<sup>th</sup>: Module Three

Week of Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>: Module Four

Week of Oct. 14<sup>th</sup>: Module Five

Week of Oct. 21<sup>st</sup>: Module Six

Week of Oct. 28<sup>th</sup>: Module Seven

Week of Nov. 4<sup>th</sup>: Module Eight

Week of Nov. 11<sup>th</sup>: Module Nine

Week of Nov. 18<sup>th</sup>: Module Ten

Week of Nov. 25<sup>th</sup>: Module Eleven

Final Exam December 2<sup>nd</sup> through 6<sup>th</sup>

## Additional Information

A note about accessing Canvas from the People's Republic of China: some users have reported that they do not have full access to all Canvas functionality from within the People's Republic of China. This appears to be due to Canvas' parent company, Instructure, not fully committing to Chinese government requirements regarding internet operations within the country. The Chinese government does not inform foreign entities of their policy updates; therefore, Bellevue College cannot anticipate access to Canvas.

If you will be in China during the quarter, you should prepare for intermittent and uncertain access to Canvas.

Source: [Access to Canvas in China](https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/) (https://support.canvas.fsu.edu/kb/article/1157-access-to-canvas-in-china/)