

West Los Angeles College
Humanities 30 (Section 1252)
The Beginnings of Civilization
2/10/14 - 6/04/14

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OVERVIEW:

This survey class covers the cultural heritage of Western civilization, from the beginnings of early communication through Mesopotamia, Egypt, Greece, Rome, to the Middle Ages with the roots of Christianity, and on to the early Renaissance. The class also looks at how this cultural heritage connects to the 21st century. The class presents a history of culture with emphasis on artistic, literary, philosophical, technological, musical and religious traditions.

History has been compared to an onion, with the 21st Century as the outer layer and each century of history resting on the next layer. The layers are peeled away until you get to the very last piece: the beginning of civilization. When it comes to the humanities, the spider web is an apt analogy. The start of cultural history is at the center, with the ever-crossing threads of the web expanding outward. A large part of humanistic history involves intermingling and overlapping. As decades and centuries pass, the more this "weaving" occurs and, for good and bad, the more the parallels come into view. One of the more exciting aspects of studying the humanities is observing how the events and the thinkers from thousands of years ago informs what we do and how we think today.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK:

The Humanistic Tradition, Volume I: Prehistory to the Early Modern World, Sixth Edition

Fiero, Gloria K.

McGraw Hill

0-07-734627-0

COURSE FORMAT:

The class meets Mondays and Wednesday from 9:35 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. from February 10 to May 28 in FA 208. (See schedule for exceptions.)

In addition, the class will meet on June 4 from 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.

Office hours will take place each Monday, when class is scheduled, from 8:30 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. (Location to be determined.)

Students may also access grade information, handouts and additional resources through the Etudes course management system. A demonstration of Etudes will be given on Wednesday February 12. Students will not have access to the site until after class on Wednesday, February 12.

GOALS OF THE CLASS:

To help students develop a new and expanded appreciation of the cultural history of western civilization.

To show that much of what happens today is connected to the periods that are being studied.

To facilitate a participant's writing, analyzing, speaking and research skills.

To introduce students to a variety of artistic, literary, technological, religious and political achievements.

To demonstrate that cultural history and political history are, often, not two separate entities.

WLAC INSTITUTIONAL STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES:

To trace eras of Western development from Ancient

foundations to the Renaissance while surveying a wide variety of styles and periods to ascertain influences on our modern world cultures.

OTHER LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Critical Thinking: Analyze problems by differentiating fact from opinions, using evidence, and using sound reasoning to specify multiple solutions and their consequences.

Communication: Effectively communicate thought in a clear, well-organized manner to persuade, inform, and convey ideas in academic, work, family and community settings.

Quantitative Reasoning: Identify, analyze, and solve problems that are quantitative in nature.

Self-awareness/Interpersonal Skills: Apply self-assessment and reflection strategies to interpersonal, work, community, career, and educational pathways.

Civic Responsibility: Apply the principles of civility to situations in the contexts of work, family, community and the global world.

Technical Competence: Utilize the appropriate technology effectively for informational, academic, personal, and professional needs. Use competent technique in a musical performance

Cultural Diversity: Respectfully engage with other cultures in an effort to understand them.

Ethics: Practice and demonstrate standards of personal and professional integrity, honesty and fairness; apply ethical principles in submission of all college work.

ASSESSMENT ACTIVITIES:

A.) Class Discussions

- B.) Essay assignments
- C.) Reaction papers
- D.) Multiple-choice tests

GRADING SCALE:

1,100 or more points -- A

1,000 to 1,099 points -- B

900 - 999 points -- C

800 - 899 points -- D

799 or fewer points F

(See Components of the Class for more detailed information)

ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENT:

It is essential that students participate in class assignments, class discussions and homework assignments.

While the class is designed so that everyone - if circumstances present themselves - can skip some assignments and still do well, if you skip more than four consecutive assignments, you will be dropped from the class.

If you do not skip assignments, it is possible to finish the class prior to the end-of-class on June 4.

STATEMENT OF STUDENT CONDUCT:

It is expected that students will participate in class discussions in a courteous and thoughtful manner.

Cell phones should be kept in pockets, backpacks and purses. Texting is not allowed in class. If students need to make emergency phone calls or emergency texts, he/she should leave the room and return when the emergency matter has been handled.

It is a student's responsibility to be aware of assignment deadlines.

Computer problems, power failures and internet connection difficulties are not an excuse for missed assignments. Students should make certain they have back-up for these areas.

A lack of access to the textbook is not an excuse for missed assignments.

Deadlines are not extended for out-of-class assignments. Instead, the class offers significant additional points and extra credit opportunities that are available to every student. There will be one make-up day, May 14, for students who miss the Midpoint essay exam or one of the first two 50 question multiple-choice tests. Again, if students don't miss assignments, students may be able to complete the class before June 4. (See Components of Class and Attendance Requirement.)

CHEATING OR PLAGIARISM IS NOT TOLERATED. Examples of cheating or plagiarism include representing the words, ideas or work of another as one's own in any academic exercise (plagiarism), including the use of commercial term paper companies.

Plagiarized assignments will be given a score of zero.

SEMESTER SCHEDULE OF TOPICS (Subject to change.):

Period One: Civilization/Egypt (2/10/14 - 3/03/14)

Period Two: Mesopotamia (3/03/14 - 3/12/14)

Period Three: Greece (3/12/14 to 3/24/14)

Period Four: Rome (3/24/14 - 4/16/14)

Period Five: Roots of Christianity/The Early Middle Ages
(4/21/14 - 4/30/14)

Period Six: The High Middle Ages 4/30/14 - 5/19/14)

Period Seven: The early Renaissance/Connecting the Dots
(5/19/14 - 5/28/14)

GRADING COMPONENTS OF CLASS:

Reaction Papers

Students are asked to write five reactions papers during the class. Four regular essays and one rewrite from the first four essays or an essay of the student's selection.

For each of the first four essays, students will be presented with a minimum of 25 questions. Students should select one question. Students will be presented with the questions at least three weeks before they are due.

Reaction papers are just that: a student's reaction to a question. There doesn't need to be research component for these essays. (Although, if you choose, there can be.)

These essays are designed to expand a students critical thinking skills. The essays should be thoughtful and well-planned.

Each essay should be typed, double-spaced, 12-point type and a minimum of 500 words with no more than 750 words.

Each reaction paper is worth up to 85 points and based on the following scale:

Clarity -- up to 25 points

Accuracy -- up to 15 points

Specifics/giving examples to support the answer -- up to 15 points

Personal analysis -- up to 15 points

Answering all aspects of the question -- up to 10 points

Turning in the Essay -- 5 points

Extensions are not given for reaction papers. Students who are unable to attend class on the day a reaction paper is due, should email the paper to noonanlf@wlac.edu. There is a risk involved here. If students do not receive an email back from Lloyd Noonan stating the paper was received, it mean it was not received.

Schedule of Reaction Papers:

Reaction Paper #1 -- due March 10

Reaction Paper #2 -- due April 14

Reaction Paper #3 -- due April 30

Reaction Paper #4 -- due May 19

Reaction Paper #5 -- due May 28

Class Discussions

Class Discussions are an important part of Humanities 30.

For each month -- February, March, April and May -- student can earn up to 50 points for per month participating in class discussions for a total of up to 200 points for the entire class.

At the end of each month, students are asked to assess their class discussion performance. This is not an assessment of what students would like to have said, but

what students actually said. So participation is important.

Midpoint and Endpoint Essay Exams

On April 16, the Midpoint Essay exam will take place. On June 4, the Endpoint Essay exam will take place.

There are two questions in each exam. Students will be asked to select one question from category "A" and write that essay and one question from category "B" and write that essay.

The first week of class, students will be provided with a list of possible questions for the Midpoint Essays.

On April 21, students will be provided with a list of possible questions for the Endpoint Essays.

Students can use notes and printouts during the exam. Books, computers and cell phones are not allowed.

STUDENTS CAN RECEIVE UP TO 75 POINTS PER ESSAY FOR A POSSIBLE MAXIMUM 300 POINTS FOR THE FOUR ESSAYS.

Each 75-point essay is based on the following scale:

Writing at least 5-7 clear paragraphs -- up to 25 points

Accuracy -- up to 15 points

Specifics/Giving Examples -- up to 15 points

Your own analysis - up to 15 points

Turning in the essay - 5 points

Multiple-Choice Tests

There will be three 50-question multiple-choice tests on March 19, May 5 and June 4. Each question is worth two points for a total of up to 100 points per test.

The multiple-choice tests will be based on information from the textbook and the class.

Extra Credit

There will be five unannounced extra-credit twenty-point bonus tests given during the class. Students must be present to earn the points. These extra-credit tests are based on videos shown in class or the textbook readings.

In addition, on May 5, a 100-question extra-credit multiple-choice test will open on the Etudes class site. Students have between May 5 and May 21 to complete this extra-credit test.

Class Topics -- Subject to Change

February 10 -- Introduction to the class/Civilization

February 12 -- Civilization

February 19 -- Egypt

February 24 -- Egypt

February 26 -- no class/Noonan speaking at AWP conference

March 3 -- Egypt/Mesopotamia

March 5 -- Mesopotamia

March 10 -- Mesopotamia/First Reaction Paper due

March 12 -- Mesopotamia

March 17 -- Greece

March 19 -- Greece/First Multiple-Choice Test

March 24 -- Greece

March 26 -- Rome

April 2 -- Rome

April 14 -- Rome/Second Reaction Paper due

April 16 -- Midpoint Essay Exam

April 21 -- Roots of Christianity/Early Middle Ages

April 23 -- Early Middle Ages

April 28 -- Early Middle Ages

April 30 -- Early Middle Ages/Third Reaction Paper due

May 5 -- The Middle Ages/Second Multiple-Choice test

May 7 -- The Middle Ages

May 12 -- The Middle Ages

May 14 -- Make-Up Day. If students miss Midpoint Essay Exam, First Multiple-Choice test or Second Multiple-Choice test, this is the day for make-up exams. Students whom didn't miss these tests, can bring in drafts of the Fourth Reaction Paper, Fifth Reaction Paper or Endpoint Essays and Lloyd Noonan will read the drafts.

May 19 -- The Middle Ages/Connection the Dots/Fourth Reaction Paper due

May 21 -- The Middle Ages/Connecting the Dots

May 28 -- Connecting the Dots/Fifth Reaction Paper due

June 2 -- Review

June 4 10:15 a.m. to 12:15 a.m. -- Third Multiple-Choice test/Endpoint Essay exam

Schedule of Textbook Readings:

Period One: Civilization/Egypt -- Introduction/Chapter 1 and 2

Period Two: Mesopotamia -- Introduction/Chapters 1 and 2

Period Three: Greece -- Chapters 4 and 5

Period Four: Rome -- Chapter 6

Period Five: Roots of Christianity/The Early Middle Ages - Chapter 8

Period Six: The High Middle Ages -- Chapters 11, 12, 13

Period Seven: The early Renaissance/Connecting the Dots --
Chapters 15, 16, 18