

WORLD CIVILIZATIONS I

Vanguard University of Southern California

Instructor

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Office Hours:

Tues: 3:00-4:15

Thurs: 12:00-1:30 & 3:00-4:15

in my office in the Social

Science Building, or by

appointment



Class

Spring 2016

HIST 203 C

10:30-11:45

Class Description

We all desire to understand the world and the meaning behind the ideas, people and events we find there. As we try to make sense of the things that we encounter, we naturally look through the narrow lens of our own time and place. History, however, provides us with an escape hatch from our own era and culture. Its stories give us a panoramic view of human nature throughout the ages, enabling us to look with fresh eyes on ourselves and our hidden assumptions. In this class we will read great thinkers of the past and ask along with them the major questions shared by all time periods and peoples—who are we and how do we know things? What is just and what is evil? What makes us happy and what is the good life? The answers to these questions define the character of civilizations and reflect the deepest longings of those who build civilizations: human beings. Over the course of the semester we will examine a selection of some of the most influential texts of the ancient and medieval world, ending with the beginning of what we call the Modern Era in the 1600s.

Class Objectives

In this class, students will form the ability to think critically about themselves and the past and present world; to ask the great questions of life with some of history's most influential actors and thinkers; to practice reading primary texts and reflecting on them clearly in writing; and above all, to share in the pursuit of life and truth that all human beings of every age are called to, and thus fulfill the purpose of a Christian liberal arts education.

<u>Student Learning Outcome</u>	<u>How this Course Fulfills the SLO</u>
Understand, develop and practice a Christian worldview.	Class discussions; and Essay II.
Expand one's awareness of and respect for one's own culture and other cultures.	Class discussions; Exams; and Essays I and II.
Continuously develop the ability to communicate effectively.	Class discussions; Essays I and II.
Locate relevant information, evaluate its quality, and think critically about its context and content.	Examination of primary sources.
Become an effective local, national and global citizen.	Examination of primary sources; class discussions; Essays I and II.

Class Methodology and Requirements

This class is a combination of lecture and discussion. Prior to each class, you will need to have read and reflected on the assigned readings listed for each day. To help you with your reading of the primary texts (the most important part of this class!) you will have weekly reading questions to answer in class. These will be your own notes on the text and need not be fancy or exhaustive—bullet points will be fine. They are designed to help you with the readings, prepare you for class discussion, and act as review aids for your exams and papers. Two written exams (composed of identification questions and essay) and two short papers will be required. All class work must be stapled. The professor may revise the syllabus at any time.

Grade Breakdown

Participation and Quizzes (20%)
Midterm Exam (20%)
Final Exam (20%)
Essay I (20%)
Essay II (20%)

Grading Scale

93% A	73% C
90%A-	70% C-
87% B+	67% D+
83% B	63% D
80% B-	60% D-
76% C+	<60% F

Check Moodle to see your grades, and contact the teacher at any time to discuss your progress in the course.

Late Work

Papers will lose a letter grade each day that they are late. No Make-up exams will be accepted without prior discussion with the teacher or in the case of extreme emergency (extreme emergencies involve phrases such as “charging Minotaur,” “Mongol raid,” or “bout of black plague”).

Required Texts

- Blainey, Geoffrey. *A Short History of the World*. Chicago: Ivan R. Dee, 2002. ISBN 978-1-56663-507-3
- Penguin Custom Editions. *The Western World*. New York: Pearson Learning Solutions, 2012 or 2014.
THIS IS A CUSTOM TEXT MADE EXPRESSLY FOR THIS CLASS AND IS ONLY AVAILABLE AT THE VANGUARD BOOKSTORE—DON'T BE FOOLED BY IMPOSTERS ON AMAZON!
- Any other supplementary readings will be given as handouts in class and posted on Moodle.

Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, or the use of someone else's text without quotes and proper citation, is considered a violation of the university's standards of academic integrity and will be grounds for serious disciplinary action. A first offense will be an F on the assignment; a second offence will be an F in the class and a referral to the Dean.

Disabilities

The Office of Disability and Learning Services provides reasonable accommodations for students who need assistance with learning, and for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your professor(s) and Disability and Learning Services. If you have a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include but not limited to; attention-related, learning, mental health, vision, hearing, physical or other health conditions), please contact The Office of Disability and Learning Services at 714-619-6550 or disabilityservices@vanguard.edu.

Classroom Etiquette

At all times, please act with respect toward the professor and toward your classmates. Please **no talking during lectures, no cell phones or other nifty and noisy electronic devices, and no laptops except by special permission**. If you have a special reason for requiring a laptop, please turn in a one page request to be reviewed by the professor. If approved, you are agreeing to sit in the first two rows and to send your notes every day after class to the professor.

WORLD CIVILIZATIONS I: READING SCHEDULE

I. The Ancient World (800 B.C. – 500 B.C.)

Week 1 – Introduction: Liberal Arts Education and the Human Story

January 12

Introduction
C.S. Lewis, “On the Reading of Old Books” (in class)

January 14

Blainey, *A Short History of the World*, Chapter 2, pp. 16-30; Chapter 3, pp. 31-44

Week 2 – The Formation of the Ancient City: Farming, Seasons, Stars and Rivers

January 19

Blainey, *A Short History of the World*, Chapter 4, pp. 45-52.
Western World, pp. 1-5 – The Epic of Gilgamesh.

January 21

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 5, pp. 53-67.
Western World, pp. 6-15 – Herodotus: The Egyptians; Persian Customs; Three Types of Government.

Week 3 – Enduring Questions from the Greeks: How do we Know Things? What is Happiness?

January 26

Western World, pp. 16-29 – Plato: The Simile of the Cave; The Inferiority of the Written to the Spoken Word.

January 28

Western World, pp. 30-35 – Aristotle: Happiness is the Goal of Human Life; pp. 36-41 –What Makes a Good Friendship?

Week 4 – Sparta and Athens: What is True Freedom?

February 2

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 6, pp. 68-84.
Western World, pp. 43-50 – Plutarch: Growing Up Spartan; Sparta’s Peculiar Society.

February 4

Western World, pp. 51-57 – Solon and Democracy; Plutarch: Thermopylae: Last Stand of the Spartans.

Week 5 – Athenian Empire: What is Justice?

February 9

Western World, pp. 58-65 – Thucydides: Pericles’ Funeral Oration; pp. 66-74 – Thucydides: The Melian Dialogue.

February 11

Western World, pp. 75-90 – Plato: Right is in the Interest of the Stronger; Ring of Gyges; pp. 91-95 – Plato: Nothing Can Harm the Good Man.

Week 6 – Eastern Kingdoms and Belief: Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism

February 16

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 7, pp. 85-100; Chapter 12, pp. 150-158; Chapter 14, pp. 175-185.
Western World, pp. 96-106 –The Wisdom of Confucius.

February 18

Midterm

Midterm Exam I – February 18

II. Rome: Republic, Empire and Christianity (500 B.C. – 400 A.D.)

Week 7 – Rome: The Republic’s Rise and Fall

February 23

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 8, pp. 101-113.
Western World, pp. 107-117; Livy: Horatius at the Bridge; The Bravery of Mucius Scaevola; Cincinnatus Leaves his Plow.

February 25

Western World, pp. 118-140 – Plutarch, Life of Caesar.

Week 8 – The Roman Empire and the Gods

March 1

Western World, pp. 141-143 – Sallust: Roman Decline; pp. 144-152

March 3

Western World, pp. 141-143 – Cicero, The Dream of Scipio.

Week 9 – Jews and Christians: Heaven, Earth and the Fall of Rome

March 8

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 9, pp. 114-123; Chapter 10, 124-139.
Western World, Polycarp: Polycarp's Martyrdom.

March 10

Western World, pp. 171-184 – Athanasius: Battling Demons in the Desert; pp. 185-197 – Augustine: The Two Cities.

III. The Middle Ages (400 A.D. – 1400 A.D.)

Week 10 – Islam

March 22

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 11, pp. 140-149.
Western World, pp. 199-208 – The Koran: The Believer's Duties; Heaven and Hell.

March 24

Western World, pp. 210–218 – Mary, Mother of Jesus; Jews and Christians.
Review Chapter 12, pp. 156-158 ONLY.

Week 11 – The Formation of Medieval Europe: Christendom

March 29

Blainey, *Short History*, pp. 173-174; Chapter 15, pp. 186-195.
Western World, pp. 231-237 – Thomas Aquinas: *Summa Contra Gentiles*.

March 31

Midterm

Midterm Exam I – February 18

IV. Renaissance, Exploration, Reformation, and the Dawn of Modernity (1400-1650AD)

Week 12 – Renaissance

April 5

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 16, pp. 196-204; Chapter 17, pp. 205-208 ONLY.
Western World, pp. 239-254 Dante: The Gates of Hell and Limbo; the Beatific Vision.

April 7

Western World, pp. 260-282 – Vasari: The Genius of Leonardo da Vinci; Da Vinci: Portrait of a Renaissance Artist.

Week 13 – Renaissance and Exploration

April 12

Western World, pp.283-292 – Machiavelli: Whether it is Better to be Loved than Feared; Fortune is a Woman.

April 14

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapters 17 & 18 pp. 209-230.
Western World, 293-302 – Hernan Cortez: A Conquistador Describes the Capital of Mexico.

Week 14 – The Protestant Reformation

April 19

Blainey, *Short History*, Chapter 19, pp. 231-247.
Western World, pp. 309-323– Martin Luther:
Luther Describes His Own Conversion; Christian
Freedom.

April 21

Western World, pp. 324-341 – John Calvin: Free
Will and Predestination; Erasmus: How to Restore
Unity to the Church.

Week 15 – The Dawn of Modernism

April 26

Blainey, *A Short History of the World*, Chapters
22-23, pp. 269-294; Chapter 31 & Epilogue, 402-
417.

April 28

Western World, pp. 342-347 – Galileo Galilei:
Science and Scripture.

Final Exam Schedule
Thursday, May 5, 10:30-12:30