

Syllabus
History 100-25 Western Civilization

Spring 2011, George Mason University

INSTRUCTOR: Mark R. Stoneman, Ph.D.

CLASS TIMES: Mon., 7:20–10:00 p.m., David King Jr. Hall 2053

OFFICE HOURS: Mon., 6:00–7:00 p.m. in Robinson B 373C

EMAIL: mstonema@gmu.edu

COURSE WIKI: <https://hist100025s2011.pbworks.com/>

Description

100-level classes are so designated because they constitute beginnings, not because they are easy. These classes can actually seem harder than upper-level courses, because they cover a wide variety of material, and students are still learning the subject’s basic vocabulary, assumptions, and techniques. This is especially true for History 100, which covers a vast span of time and wide variety of topics—and which requires a lot of reading.

This section of Hist 100 offers a one-semester overview of Western Civilization from its beginnings to the present. To cover so much material in so little time, it follows a mixed chronological and thematic approach. Initially, the course will present the basic “facts” of this history in a broad overview of Western Civilization’s chronology and geography. The course will then turn to a narrower selection of special themes, which we will study by examining specific events in more detail, using testimony from the time. In the process, students will hone their skills in historical thinking, critical reading and thinking, and written and oral communication.

Requirements

Course grades will be determined by the following five components according to the percentages that follow them:

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| • Attendance (mandatory) and Participation | 10% |
| • Paper 1 (2–3 pages) | 20% |
| • Paper 2 (2–3 pages) | 20% |
| • Midterm Exam (map, terms, essay) | 25% |
| • Final Exam (map, terms, essay) | 25% |

Grading System

Grades for all assignments are based on a 100-point scale. You will either see that number on your assignment or you will see a letter grade. If you see a letter grade, please note that I record that letter grade in my spreadsheet thus: A = 95 (occasionally higher for particularly excellent work), A- = 92.5, A-/B+ = 90, B+ = 87.5, B = 85, B- = 82.5, B-/C+ = 80, C+ = 77.5, C = 75, C- = 72.5, C-/D+ = 70, D = 65, F = 55, and not submitting an assignment = 0.

I calculate course grades according to the weighting in the requirements section above. The cutoff for an A in the course is a 93 average, for an A- a 90 average, for a B+ an 87.5 average, for a B an 83, for a B- an 80, for a C+ a 77.5, for a C a 73, for a C- a 70, and for a D a 60. These cutoff scores are nonnegotiable.

Communication

The best way to reach me outside of class and office hours is via email to mstonema@gmu.edu. Also, you should contact me from your own Mason address to ensure I get your message. Please do not try to call me, as I have no campus phone.

I will normally make announcements via the course wiki (<https://hist100025s2011.pbworks.com/>), which you need to check a few times per week. You should also check your university email account regularly, because that is how I will contact individual students.

Attendance

Attendance in class is mandatory. Normally I require documentation for absences resulting from illness; however, I would like to be a little bit flexible during flu season. Here are my policies about missing class. Please read them carefully:

- The exams and other assignments in this course are geared very closely towards what happens in class, so missing class is never a good idea. If you are sick, however, missing class is a great idea. You will prevent the spread of whatever you have, and you will get better more quickly.
- If you have flu-like symptoms, especially a fever, or if you are otherwise clearly sick, you need to contact the clinic or your family doctor. If they want you to come in, then you should be able to get documentation of that visit for me, although the student clinic might resist, if its workload is too high. If you are able to obtain documentation, please show it to me.
- If the best course of action seems to be simply staying in bed, then do that. Only get attestation from the clinic or doctor if you actually need to visit them. (If you are unsure about whether or not to visit them, you can call them and ask.)
- The problem with the previous point is that sometimes you will not have documentation. That means I am going to have to give students a certain amount of leeway. If you are sick, tell me. Keep me updated. If you have documentation, please give it to me. If not, please explain why. In most cases, I will take your word for it, unless things seem to be getting out of hand. If I feel this is the case, I reserve the right to require documentation from you before I count the absence as excused. If you are getting sick that often, you should see a doctor anyway.
- I must have documentation if you miss the midterm exam or final exam. No exceptions.
- If you are participating in a school-sponsored sporting event or debate, you must present me with documentation prior to the event so that you do not get penalized for your absence. You must also schedule any makeup exam before you leave town. Of course, papers must still be turned in on time.
- Your work or training schedule is not a legitimate reason for missing class. Such absences will be considered unexcused.
- Students who add the class late cannot be penalized for absences prior to their enrollment; however, they are responsible for all of the material they missed. Catch up on your reading right away, and ask classmates for notes about what you have missed.
- Besides communicating with me about absences due to illness, you must also talk to or email me about rescheduling any missed exam. If you do not talk to me within a day of returning to class, you will get a "0" for the exam in question. Of course, I will only reschedule a missed exam for an excused absence.
- Do not ask me about getting notes for missed classes. While I will often post handouts to the course wiki, it is your responsibility to get notes from a classmate.

Classroom Policy

Taking notes with your laptop is okay. Checking out Facebook, surfing the internet, and instant messaging are not. It does not matter how good you think you are at multitasking. I can tell the difference, and I will mark down your participation grade accordingly. You will also find yourself scoring lower on the exams, because you were not paying attention as well as you thought you were.

Texting is not allowed either. You do not need your smart phone or other device for anything during class, not even fact-checking, so do not let me see them.

If I show any film footage, I will ask that even laptops be turned off, because the light is distracting to others.

Due to the length of the class, we will usually hold a ten-minute break around 8:30 p.m. Please try to restrict your bathroom visits to that time, so as not to disturb your neighbors.

Of course, you are also expected to treat your classmates well, not only in terms of how you engage them in discussion, but also by not distracting them with irrelevant conversations, playing on gadgets, and so on.

Honor System

Academic honesty is essential not only to the success of the course, but also to your academic and professional careers. Hence, you are expected to know what plagiarism is and abide by the GMU Honor System and Code at <http://www.gmu.edu/academics/catalog/9798/honorcod.html>. Unfortunately, I often catch and report violations of this code in student work. If you are at all unclear about what constitutes plagiarism, please talk to me.

The midterms and finals are “blue book” exams. You must purchase blue books for them at the bookstore and bring them to class completely empty. Any writing in the blue books from prior to the exam and any missing pages can be construed as an honor code violation. Bring clean, blank copies, and do not tear any pages out during the exams.

Special Accommodations

Students requiring an academic accommodation should see me immediately and also contact the Office of Disability Services at <http://ods.gmu.edu> or (703) 993-2474.

Readings

There are six *required* books for the course. You must own or have access to each one, in order to do the required work for this course.

- Aberth, John, *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents*. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005. [ISBN: 031240087X]
- Duras, Claire de, *Ourika: An English Translation*, trans. John Fowles. MLA 1994. [ISBN: 0873527801]
- Jacob, Margaret C., *The Scientific Revolution: A Brief History with Documents*. Reprint. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009 [ISBN: 9780312653491]
- Lualdi, Katherine J., *Sources of The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures*, Vol. II, *Since 1500*, Third Edition. Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin's, 2008 [ISBN: 0312465181]
- Moeller, Robert G., *The Nazi State and German Society: A Brief History with Documents*, Bedford/St. Martin's, 2009. [ISBN: 0312454686]
- Palmer, Svetlana and Sarah Wallis, eds. *Intimate Voices from the First World War*. New York: HarperCollins, 2005. [ISBN: 0060584203]

In addition to these books, there will be some online reading assignments, following the schedule below.

The required readings are mainly primary sources—writings from the past. I have not ordered a regular textbook, although many of you will find it helpful to purchase or borrow a standard Western Civilization textbook published sometime during the past decade, in order to read about a given period whenever anything becomes confusing. Ask me if you would like some recommendations, or email me a title you find (with the date of publication), if you would like to know what I think.

Schedule

Class meets on Monday evenings, 7:20–10:00 p.m., in David King Jr. Hall 2053, according to the schedule below.

The required reading assignments in this schedule must be completed prior to the class under which they are listed.

If no page numbers are provided in the schedule for book assignments, then read the whole book, including any introductory material. If the assignment reads “to be announced,” it will be a relatively short one for which you will need to budget about an hour of your time. Check the course wiki for details about a week before the reading assignment is due.

If the university cancels class due to inclement weather, it will announce this cancellation on its home page (<http://www.gmu.edu>). If I have to cancel class because I am ill, I will post a notice on the course wiki and also send everyone an email. If class is cancelled for either of these two reasons, please check the wiki (<https://hist100025s2011.pbworks.com/>) for instructions on any required makeup work.

- 1/24 (M) INTRODUCTION
- 1/31 (M) CHRONOLOGICAL OVERVIEW
- Required reading: Frankforter and Spellman, “Introduction” (see readings on course wiki)
 - Recommended reading: browse through a Western Civilization textbook of your choice or review the entries for “Western culture” and “History of Western civilization” on Wikipedia, in order to familiarize yourself with the broad brushstrokes of this history.
- 2/7 (M) PRIMARY SOURCE WORKSHOP
- Required reading: Lualdi, *Sources*, pp. 1–14, 293–307.
- 2/14 (M) THE BLACK DEATH
- Required reading: Aberth, *Black Death*.
- 2/21 (M) SACRAL & TEMPORAL AUTHORITY IN EARLY MODERN EUROPE
- Required reading: selections in Lualdi and online *to be announced*
- 2/28 (M) THE SCIENTIFIC REVOLUTION
- Required reading: Jacob, *Scientific Revolution*.
 - Required reading: Lualdi, pp. 39(bottom)–43.
 - Recommended reading: Lualdi, pp. 43–52.
- 3/2 (W) **Paper 1 due anytime before midnight via email**
- The assignment will be posted to the wiki no later than 2/21.
- 3/7 (M) **MIDTERM EXAM**
- A study guide will be posted to the wiki by 2/28.
 - Please remember your blue books.
- 3/14–3/20 *Spring Break*
- 3/21 (M) THE FRENCH REVOLUTION
- Required reading: Lualdi, pp. 93–125.
 - Required reading: Duras, *Ourika*.
 - Recommended viewing: video clips explaining key aspects of the Revolution (see media on course wiki).
- 3/28 (M) INDUSTRIALIZATION AND SOCIAL CHANGE
- Required reading: selections in Lualdi (and possibly online) *to be announced*
- 4/4 (M) IMPERIALISM
- Required reading: selections in Lualdi (and possibly online) *to be announced*

- 4/11 (M) MODERN SOCIETIES AT WAR
– Required reading: Palmer and Wallis, *Intimate Voices*.
– Recommended reading: Lualdi, pp. 211–216, 241–245.
- 4/18 (M) SOCIALISM AND COMMUNISM
– Required reading: Marx and Engels, *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, read Preamble, Chapters I-II and IV (see readings on course wiki).
- 4/25 (M) FASCISM AND NAZISM
– Required reading: Lualdi, pp. 218–223.
– Required reading: Moeller, *Nazi State and German Society*.
– Recommended reading: Lualdi, pp. 223–233, 235–241, 283–291(top).
- 5/2 (M) STOCK-TAKING
– Required reading: selections in Lualdi and/or online *to be announced*
- 5/4 (W) Paper 2 due anytime before midnight via email**
– The assignment will be posted to the wiki no later than 4/25.
- 5/16 (M) FINAL EXAM, 7:30–10:15 P.M.**
– A study guide will be posted by the last day of class.
– Please remember your blue books.