

Hist 101: The Evolution of Western Ideas and Institutions to the 17th century

Spring 2025 Tuesdays/Thursdays 2:15-3:30 PM

Sala ____

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Office hours: Tuesdays/Thursdays 1:45-2:15 in the classroom and by appointment

Introduction and Course Description

This course is designed to give the student a general understanding of the persons, events, and cultural-intellectual trends and achievements which spawned Western civilization and influenced its development from approximately 4000 BC until AD 1700. The focus is primarily on continental Europe, including the ancient Greeks and Romans, the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and Reformation, and the Age of Enlightenment. Many areas all around the Mediterranean Sea that made significant contributions to Western civilization or interacted extensively with Western civilizations will also be considered, such as the Ancient Near East (Egypt, Sumeria, Babylonia, Persia), Anatolia, and north Africa.

One of the general themes that will run throughout this course is the "**world view**," that is, the collection of mental constructs which gave the world meaning for individuals in a given period. Another general theme is **technology and culture** as defining aspects of what it means to be "Western," in terms of the major innovations that have shaped life in Europe over the centuries. A third major theme is the **discipline of history** itself, in terms of how we know what we know about the past. The object of this course is to examine and connect world views, technological and cultural shifts, and approaches to history as they have appeared throughout the nearly 6000 years in consideration.

Learning Outcomes

As a result of this course the student should be able to:

- identify the key historical persons, events, ideas, and international trends of Western civilization from approximately 4000 BC through 1750 (see **examinations** and **homework** below);
- determine the main political, social, economic, cultural, technological, and intellectual aspects of the individual cultures contributing to Western civilization and assess their development (see **examinations** and **homework** below);
- assess the contributions, individual and collective, of the above two points to the development of Western civilization, both within and across historical periods (see **examinations** and **homework** below);
- develop basic skills in historical research, critical thinking, and communication (see **Assignments 1-2** below).

Required Textbooks and Materials

- L. Hunt, T. R. Martin, B. H. Rosenwein, and B. G. Smith, *The Making of the West: Peoples and Cultures*. Volume I: *To 1750*. 7th edition. Bedford-St. Martin's, 2022. [Available via VitalSource](#)
- Additional readings for assignments (PDFs and WWW links posted on Sakai).

Attendance Policy

In accordance with the JFRC mission to promote a higher level of academic rigor, all courses adhere to the following absence policy. Prompt attendance, preparation and active participation in course discussions are expected from every student.

- For all classes meeting once a week, one unexcused absence is permitted.
- For all classes meeting twice a week, two unexcused absences are permitted.
- For all classes meeting three times a week, two unexcused absences are permitted.

As this course meets twice a week, a total of two unexcused absences will be permitted. **Unexcused absences beyond these will result in a 1% lowering of the final course grade for every absence beyond the “approved limit.”**

Assessment Components and Schedule

Assessment	Date	%
Attendance and participation	N/A	10%
Homework (“Review Questions” and “Making Connections” x 17)	N/A	10%
Assignment 1	2/20	10%
Mid-term exam	3/6	25%
Assignment 2	4/22, 24	10%
Final Exam	5/1	35%
TOTAL		100%

Assessment Descriptions

The mid-term examination will test the student’s understanding of the major events, figures, trends, and achievements covered up to that moment. The final examination will concentrate on the major events, figures, trends, and achievements covered in the second half of the course. Both exams will be based comprehensively on notes taken during class lectures and discussions, assignments, and the course readings.

A. The **mid-term exam** will consist of

1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for the history of Western civilization;
2. a timeline of events to be arranged in chronological order; and
3. a map to be labeled (for example, with the names of major cultural centers).

B. The **final exam** will consist of

1. a series of terms (historical persons, places, concepts) to be identified briefly (2-4 sentences) in relation to their significance for the history of Western civilization;
2. a timeline of events, to be arranged in chronological order;
3. a map to be labeled (for example, with the names of major territories and cultural centers); and
4. one short (3+ page) essay addressing a theme in the history of Western civilization.

C. The **homework** consists of answering the “Review Questions” and “Making Connections” sections at the end of each chapter (17 total) in the textbook. The answers are submitted via Sakai or e-mail by midnight on the day the relevant chapter or material is covered in class.

D. **Assignment 1** is an in-class group exercise in understanding how history functions as a discipline.

F. **Assignment 2** is an individual research project relating the most important facts/details about, and the overall significance of, **a specific place or monument in Rome** (location, date of creation, creator, materials, notable associated events and personalities, etc.) within the context of the history of Western civilization.

For Assignment 2 the student will

1. compose a brief written summary (minimum 3 double-spaced typed pages of text) of the research to be submitted to the instructor via Sakai or e-mail, and
2. make a brief (6-minute) presentation of the research before the class with images and bulleted lists of the most important points.

The individual topics and presentation dates for Assignment 2 will be assigned after the mid-term exam. The instructor will provide guidance on research sources. The written summary must be submitted via Sakai or e-mail by midnight of the presentation date.

The paper and presentation for Assignment 2 will be evaluated on

1. the quality and depth of the research and
2. the clarity of the delivery, both written and oral.

The assignments and the chapter homeworks must be submitted in standard document formats (.doc/x, .pdf, or .rtf ONLY).

Grading

The course grade scale is 94-100 = A, 90-93 = A-, 87-89 = B+, 84-86 = B, 80-83 = B-, 77-79 = C+, 74-76 = C, 70-73 = C-, 67-69 = D+, 60-66 = D, 59 and below = F.

Academic Honesty

Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty are unacceptable at the JFRC and will be dealt with in accordance with Loyola University Chicago’s guidelines. Please familiarize yourself with Loyola’s standards [here](#):

http://www.luc.edu/academics/catalog/undergrad/reg_academicintegrity.shtml.

Students are not allowed to use AI (artificial intelligence) or other such assisted technology for any assignment or deliverable that will be graded as part of the course unless they are specifically authorized to do so by the instructor.

Students are responsible for complying with the LUC Student Handbook.

Late or Missed Assignments

Late or missed assignments will not be accepted for grading without the instructor's authorization.

Accessibility Accommodations

Students registered with the Student Accessibility Center requiring academic accommodations should contact the Office of the Dean at the John Felice Rome Center in the first week of classes.

Class Policies

- All work in class will be based on lectures, readings, assignments, and discussions. As history is by nature largely subjective and often touches sensitive subjects (race, gender, politics, religion, class, sexuality), there is a lot of room for debate, disagreement, and definition. Be curious and forthright, and always respectful.
- During class smartphones and other personal communication devices should be switched off or set to silent mode.
- Lectures may be recorded for study purposes, but only with the instructor's prior and express permission.
- Students are expected to do all of their assigned work independently, including the assignments and the homework.

Disruptive Classroom Behavior

The classroom is a particular environment in which students and faculty come together to promote learning and growth. It is essential to this learning environment that respect for the rights of others seeking to learn, respect for the professionalism of the instructor, and the general goals of academic freedom are maintained. Differences of viewpoint or concerns should be expressed in terms which are supportive of the learning process, creating an environment in which students and faculty may learn to reason with clarity and compassion, to share of themselves without losing their identities, and to develop an understanding of the community in which they live. Student conduct which disrupts the learning process will count significantly against the participation grade component and may lead to disciplinary action and/or removal from class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to, habitually:

- cross-talking or talking out of turn
- whispering or talking to classmates
- reading non-related materials on paper or digital media
- communicating with external parties in any format (phone, text message, VoIP, e-mail, etc.)
- working on any other coursework during class
- arriving to class late or leaving class early
- exiting and re-entering the classroom for bathroom breaks and other non-emergency uses
- sleeping
- eating

Subject to Change Statement

This syllabus and schedule are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances. It is the student's responsibility to check for announcements made during his/her absence.

Weekly course schedule

Week 1

T 1/21: Course introduction

Th 1/23: What is history, and how do you make it?

Week 2

T 1/28: Early Western civilization

Readings: Chapter 1

Th 1/30: Near Eastern empires and the reemergence of civilization in Greece

Readings: Chapter 2

Week 3

T 2/4: The Greek golden age

Readings: Chapter 3

Th 2/6: From the Classical to the Hellenistic world

Readings: Chapter 4

Week 4

T 2/11: The rise of Rome and its republic

Readings: Chapter 5

Th 2/13: The creation of the Roman empire

Readings: Chapter 6

Week 5

T 2/18: The transformation of the Roman empire

Readings: Chapter 7

Th 2/20: Assignment 1

Assignment 1 due at midnight

Week 6

T 2/25: The heirs of Rome: Islam, Byzantium, and Europe

Readings: Chapter 8

Th 2/27: review for mid-term exam (Chapters 1-8)

Week 7

T 3/4: From centralization to fragmentation

Readings: Chapter 9

Th 3/6: Mid-term exam

Week 8

Spring Break NO CLASS

Week 9

T 3/18: Commercial quickening and religious reform

Readings: Chapter 10

Th 3/20: The flowering of the Middle Ages

Readings: Chapter 11

Week 10

T 3/25: The Medieval synthesis – and its cracks

Readings: Chapter 12

Th 3/27: Crisis and Renaissance

Readings: Chapter 13

Week 11

T 4/1: Global encounters and the shock of reformation

Readings: Chapter 14

Th 4/3: Wars of religion and the clash of worldviews

Readings: Chapter 15

Week 12

T 4/8: Absolutism, constitutionalism, and the search for order

Readings: Chapter 16

Th 4/10: The Atlantic System and Its Consequences

Readings: Chapter 17

Week 13

T 4/15: Brief history of slavery

Th 4/17: review for final exam

Week 14

T 4/22: Assignment 2 presentations (group 1)

Th 4/24: Assignment 2 presentations (group 2)

Assignment 2 paper due at midnight

Week 15

Th 5/1 final exam 11:30-1:30