

Syllabus

History 100-13 Western Civilization

Fall 2009, George Mason University

INSTRUCTOR: Mark R. Stoneman, Ph.D.

CLASS TIMES: Mon., Wed., Fri, 12:30–1:20 p.m., Shenandoah 107

OFFICE HOURS: Mon., Wed., Fri., 9:30–10:20 a.m., Robinson B 373B, and by appointment

MASON USERNAME: mstonema

COURSE BLOG: <http://hist100.wordpress.com>

BLACKBOARD: <http://gmu.blackboard.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. History 100 offers a one-semester overview of the history of Western Civilization. Rather than cover many centuries chronologically and superficially, however, this section of the course focuses on a limited number of important events and themes in more detail than would otherwise be possible. Students will read and discuss a number of books, including documentary histories, political treatises, and works of fiction. There will also be a handful of lectures for background information. Additionally, the course emphasizes critical reading, critical thinking, analytical writing, and civil discourse. All of this should add up to a challenging, but fruitful term, whether or not you think you are good at or interested in history.

Requirements

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

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| • Attendance and Participation | 15% |
| • Reading Quizzes (regular, but unannounced) | 15% |
| • Source Analysis (3 @ 5% each) | 15% |
| • Midterm Exams (2@ 15% each) | 30% |
| • Final Exam | 25% |

Attendance and Participation: I calculate this component of your grade in two steps. First, I figure out the percentage of classes you attended without arriving late or leaving early. Perfect attendance is worth a B. Regular, informed participation can raise this grade by up to a full letter grade. With perfect attendance, that would be an A. Of course, I realize that with a class this large, not everyone can talk all the time. Do your best, while giving others a chance to offer their ideas as well. Your attendance and participation grade will contribute towards 15% of your grade in the course. (See “Other Policies” below for more on attendance.)

Reading Quizzes: I will regularly give quizzes at the very beginning of class, in order to make sure that everyone is doing the reading. These will be “surprise” quizzes, but you should count

on them happening at least once for every book, if not more often. They could also happen on a day with an electronic assignment, whether that involves reading or watching something. If you have an unexcused absence or come late, you will get a zero for that quiz. At the end of the semester I will drop your lowest quiz grade and average the rest. The result will be worth 15% of your grade in the course. (See “Other Policies” below for excused absences and making up work.)

Source Analysis: There will be three short writing assignments in which you analyze specific documents we are reading. Unlike a normal essay with an introduction, conclusion, and background material, however, you will present your clearly written, carefully considered answer to my question based only on a close reading of the texts before you. Your answer will be 1.5 to 2 pages long, double-spaced, and you need not worry about a proper introduction or conclusion, unless they are necessary to get your meaning across. You will email this analysis to me on the day it is due before midnight. There will be three of these assignments. I will give you the directions at least one week before each assignment is due. Each one contributes towards 5% of your grade for the course, which means together they are worth 15% of your grade.

Midterm Exams: Because we are covering such a broad range of material, I am breaking it up into two midterm exams and a final. Each midterm will have identification (ID) exercises and a short essay. There will probably also be a map. For the IDs you will write who, what, when, where, and historical significance, as appropriate, supplying examples as necessary. I will provide you a list of possible terms and essay questions one week prior to the exam so you know what to focus on. I will also give you instructions about what maps to study and how. For the older history, that will mean recognizing historical relationships on a map. For more recent history, you will have to be able to label a map too, including countries, capitals, and major geographic features. Each midterm counts towards 15% of your grade for the course, which means together they contribute towards 30% of your course average. (See also note about blue book exams under “Other Policies” below.)

Final Exam: Your final exam will follow a similar format to your midterm exam, and I will also provide questions, terms, and map information a week prior to it. The only difference is there will be two essays. The terms, map, and the first essay will *not* be cumulative, that is, they will only cover the material since the second midterm. However, the second essay will be cumulative. It will be a question that makes you integrate what you have learned in the course as a whole. (See also note about blue book exams under “Other Policies” below.)

Grading

Reading quizzes and source analysis assignments will earn letter grades on the usual A to F scale. In order to calculate course averages, then, I use the following conversions for these letter grades: A = 95 (or 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.

Midterm and final exams will earn grades in numerical form on a 100-point scale. The identification portion of the exams will be count for a certain number of points to be announced with each exam. Partial credit is possible, with only the very best answers earning full points.

Exam essays will earn a letter grade, which I will convert into a number according to the above scale multiplied by the percentage of the exam for which the essay counts.

Course grades are calculated 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. Like everything else in this syllabus, these cutoff scores are nonnegotiable.

Other Policies

Course updates, handouts, and assignments will be posted to <http://hist100.wordpress.com>. You are expected to visit this blog regularly. It is the main internet hub for the course. I plan only to use Blackboard for material that I need to password protect due to copyright restrictions.

- If you want, you can use the comments feature on the blog to ask questions related to specific posts there.

Communication outside of class and office hours will occur via email, which you are expected to check regularly. To ensure that you receive a timely response, please follow these guidelines:

- Use my Mason email address from your own Mason account.
- Specify Hist 100-13 in the subject line, along with whatever the topic is.
- When you email me an assignment, look for a receipt by the next day. If you do not get one, assume I never got the assignment.

Attendance in class is mandatory. Here are my policies about missing class:

- If you are sick, you must present me with documentation from the clinic as soon as you are back in class. You must also talk to me that day about rescheduling any missed exam or quizzes. If you do not reschedule such work in a timely fashion, you will get a “0” for the assignment in question.
- 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. The only exception are surprise quizzes. Those you must reschedule as soon as you return to class. Source analysis assignments 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.
- Whether your absence is excused or not, you are expected to get notes from a classmate for any material you missed. Do not email me for notes.
- 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.

When you are in class, you are expected to be in class both in mind and body.

- Taking notes with your laptop is okay. Surfing the internet and instant messaging is not. It does not matter how good you think you are at multitasking. I can tell the difference, and I will mark down your attendance and participation grade accordingly.

- The same goes for texting. You do not need your smart phone or PDA for anything during class, not even fact-checking, so do not let me see them.
- Bathroom visits in a short fifty-minute class should be extremely rare. While I realize that sometimes waiting is impossible, I do not expect to see the same students leaving the classroom on a regular basis. Students who regularly leave class like this will experience an adverse impact on their attendance and participation grade.
- On those rare days when I show a film, I will ask that even laptops be turned off, because the light is distracting. On those days any notes you take will have to be on paper, though you should be able to get by with writing down notes after you leave class.

Late work submitted during the semester will be marked down by as much as five points per day. No late work will be accepted after the final exam.

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 and abide by the GMU Honor System at <http://www.gmu.edu/catalog/9798/honorcod.html>. Unfortunately, I regularly catch and report violations of this code. 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.

Students requiring an academic accommodation should see me immediately and also contact the Office of Disability Services in SUB 1, room 222. All academic accommodations must be arranged through this office. For more information, visit <http://ods.gmu.edu> or call 703-993-2474.

Required Books

There are ten required books for this course. This might sound like too much, but two are quite short and two are separate volumes of a graphic novel. The reading load is manageable, if you plan ahead and have the next book with you to fill in any unexpected spare time you have.

You can purchase the books at the Mason bookstore or online via an Amazon link on the course blog. If you order any books online, please take into account availability and delivery time, which can vary according to seller and title. Not getting the books on time will not be an acceptable excuse on the quizzes.

- Brent D. Shaw, *Spartacus and the Slave Wars: A Brief History with Documents* [ISBN 0312183100]
- John Aberth, *The Black Death: The Great Mortality of 1348-1350: A Brief History with Documents* [ISBN 031240087X]
- Barbara B. Diefendorf, *The Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre: A Brief History with Documents* [ISBN 0312413602]
- Bertolt Brecht, *Galileo*, edited by Eric Bentley, translated by Charles Laughton [ISBN

0802130593]

- Voltaire, *Candide* [with additional documents], translated, edited, and with an Introduction by Daniel Gordon [ISBN 0312148542]
- Lynn Hunt, editor and translator, *The French Revolution and Human Rights: A Brief Documentary History* [ISBN 0312108028]
- Karl Marx and Frederick Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* [ISBN 0-7178-0241-8]
- Henrik Ibsen, *A Doll's House* [ISBN 0486270629]
- Art Spiegelman, *Maus I: A Survivor's Tale: My Father Bleeds History* [ISBN 0394747232]
- Art Spiegelman, *Maus II: A Survivor's Tale: And Here My Troubles Began* [ISBN 0679729771]

Online Material

For those weeks where we are not using a book, there will be online assignments. Usually those are short, but I have indicated in the schedule where you should allot more time for them.

Schedule

The class will follow a mixed format of class discussions, lectures, and a couple films. When looking at the reading schedule below, please remember that the readings must be completed prior to the class for which they are scheduled. The only exception is the assignment for 8/31.

This schedule is subject to change. Any changes will be announced in class and on the blog.

If class is cancelled due to inclement weather or your professor falling ill, [check the blog](#) for instructions on what to do. In some cases, it might be necessary for me to set up a forum on [Blackboard](#) for us to have an online discussion, or I might have to replace a lecture with a short reading assignment.

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| 8/31 | M | Introduction to Course
– Read the syllabus from beginning to end. |
| 9/2 | W | Historical Thinking
– Read material linked from blog entry for this day. (Will be posted on 8/31.) |
| 9/4 | F | Periodization: Overview of Western Civilization |
| 9/7 | M | <i>Labor Day: No Class</i> |
| 9/9 | W | Slave Wars in Ancient Rome (1)
– Read Shaw, <i>Spartacus</i> , pp. v–vi, 1–78. Refer to the reference material on pp. 167–179 as needed. Think about questions 3 and 5 on p. 180. |
| 9/11 | F | Slave Wars in Ancient Rome (2)
– Read Shaw, <i>Spartacus</i> , pp. 79–165. Refer to the reference material on pp. 167–179 as needed. Think about questions 1, 2, 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 11 on pp. 180–181. |

Per university policy, 9/15 is the last day to add the course, but you are still responsible for all material prior to this date.

- 9/14 M The Middle Ages
- 9/16 W The Black Death (1)
– Read Aberth, *Black Death*, pp. vii–ix (top), 1–93. Consult the chronology on pp. 179–180 as necessary. Think about questions 1–7 on p. 181.
- 9/18 F The Black Death (2)
– Read Aberth, *Black Death*, pp. 94–178. If you cannot understand the words in the poems near the end because of their spelling, try saying them out loud. You will recognize some of them. Consult the chronology on pp. 179–180, as necessary. Think about questions 8–17 on pp. 181–182.
- 9/21 M The Protestant and Catholic Reformations
⇒ SOURCE ANALYSIS I (*Submit via email before midnight.*)
- 9/23 W The Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre (1)
– Read Diefendorf, *Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, pp. vii–viii, 1–81. Consult the chronology on pp. 159–160 as necessary. Think about questions 1–4 on p. 161.
- 9/25 F The Saint Bartholomew’s Day Massacre (2)
– Read Diefendorf, *Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, pp. 82–158. Consult the chronology on pp. 159–160 as necessary. Think about questions 5–16 on pp. 161–162.
- 9/28 M Witchcraft Persecution
- 9/30 W **Midterm Exam 1**
- 10/2 F The Scientific Revolution
- 10/5 M Bertolt Brecht’s Galileo (1)
– Read material linked from blog entry for this day. (Will be posted on 10/2)
– Read Brecht, *Galileo*, pp. 8–14, 133–150, and see the questions for consideration in the blog entry that contains today's online material.
- 10/7 W Bertolt Brecht’s Galileo (2)
– Read Brecht, *Galileo*, pp. 43–129. Think about the links between this reading and the material we covered in the previous class.
- 10/9 F Seventeenth-Century Europe at War
- 10/12 M *Columbus Day Schedule Change*
– Monday classes meet on Tuesday, and Tuesday classes are cancelled.
- 10/13 T Absolutism and Constitutionalism (1)
– Read material linked from blog entry for this week. (Will be posted on 10/8.)
- 10/14 W Absolutism and Constitutionalism (2)
– Read material linked from blog entry for this week.

Per university policy, 10/2 is the last day to drop the course. After this date, you must seek permission of the department chair to drop the course, but that only is possible from 10/5 to 10/30.

- 10/16 F Absolutism and Constitutionalism (3)
- Read material linked from blog entry for this week. Please be advised that this online assignment is longer than the other two for this week. Instead of short documents, you will be reading four chapters, two from Thomas Hobbes, *Leviathan* (chs. 13–14), and two from John Locke, *Two Treatises* (chs. 2 and 7).
- 10/19 M The Enlightenment (1)
- Read Hunt, *French Revolution and Human Rights*, pp. 1–11(middle), pp. 35–59, and consider question 3 on p. 142. This is all material from the pre-revolutionary period. We will return to this book after the second midterm exam.
 - Reread Diefendorf, *Saint Bartholomew's Day Massacre*, pp. 152–154.
- 10/21 W The Enlightenment (2)
- Read Voltaire, *Candide*, edited by Gordon, pp. vii–viii, 1–67, referring to the chronology on p. 132–133 as necessary. Consider questions 1, 4, 5, and 6 on p. 134.
- 10/23 F The Enlightenment (3)
- Read Voltaire, *Candide*, edited by Gordon, pp. 68–131. Consider all of the questions on p. 134, including the ones you already looked at for the previous class.
- 10/26 M Economic Thought and Practice
- ⇒ SOURCE ANALYSIS 2 (*Submit via email before midnight.*)
- 10/28 W **Midterm Exam 2**
- 10/30 F The French Revolution (1)
- View all of the videos in the French Revolution folder on Blackboard. Unlike the reading assignments however, watch these videos *after* class, not before.
- 11/2 M The French Revolution (2)
- Read Hunt, *French Revolution and Human Rights*, pp. 11(middle)–15, 63–79. Consider questions 4 and 5 on p. 142, recalling the Enlightenment discourse on natural law and rights that we read before the second midterm.
- 11/4 W The French Revolution (3)
- Read Hunt, *French Revolution and Human Rights*, pp. 16–31, 60–63(top), and 80–139. Refer to the chronology on pp. 140–141 as necessary. Consider questions 1, 2, and 6–13 on pp. 142–143.
- 11/6 F Nineteenth-Century European Politics (1)
- 11/9 M The Industrial Revolution
- 11/11 W The Communist Manifesto
- Read Marx and Engels, *Communist Manifesto*, pp. 3–31, 43–44. If you prefer to read this text online, or if you read a different edition, you will miss Engels'

preface, but you can catch the rest by reading parts I, II, and IV. (See blog entry for link to online version; it will be posted on 11/6.)

- 11/13 F Women in Nineteenth-Century Europe
- Read Ibsen, *A Doll's House*.
 - Play online women's rights game, which is linked to from today's blog entry. (Will be posted on 11/6.)
- 11/16 M Nineteenth-Century European Politics (2)
- ⇒ SOURCE ANALYSIS 3 (*Submit via email before midnight.*)
- 11/18 W New Imperialism
- Read material linked from blog entry for today. (Will be posted on 11/13.)
- 11/20 F The Great War (1)
- Read material in "Great War, Part 1" folder on Blackboard.
- 11/23 M The Great War (2)
- Read, view, and listen to material in "Great War, Part 2" folder on Blackboard.
- 11/25 W *Thanksgiving Recess*
- 11/27 F *Thanksgiving Recess*
- 11/30 M Comic Relief: Charlie Chaplin, "Modern Times"
- 12/2 W Totalitarianism (1)
- Read and view material in "Totalitarianism" folder on Blackboard.
- 12/4 F Totalitarianism (2)
- Visit online exhibits linked to from today's blog entry. (Will be posted on 11/30.)
- 12/7 M The Second World War and the Holocaust
- Read Spiegelman, *Maus*, vol. I.
- 12/9 W The Second World War and the Holocaust
- Read Spiegelman, *Maus*, vol. II.
- 12/11 F The Cold War and After
- Read material linked from blog entry for today. (Will be posted on 12/7.)
- 12/14 M **Final Exam from 10:30 a.m. to 1:15 p.m.**