

## **Introduction to World History up to 1500**

History 1111-010

CRN 50409

Summer 2008

Monday/Wednesday 8:00-10:45

Meeting Location: GCB 423

Instructor: Matthew Myers

Office: TBA

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 11:00am - 12:00pm, and by appointment

Phone: TBA

E-mail: [hismkmx@langate.gsu.edu](mailto:hismkmx@langate.gsu.edu)

### **Description of the Course**

This course is an introduction to World History prior to 1500. By looking at history through the lenses of social, economic, political, and cultural developments, we will explore the past while finding its relevance to the present. The emphasis will always be on a global perspective, looking at the ways in which people and societies have been connected through time. Obviously we cannot cover every historical issue over the past 10,000 years in a single semester. We will instead focus our study around three themes: how and why cities and states began, the origins and spread of universal religions, and Eurasian history via the silk roads. As we examine these themes, we will also discuss some aspects and regions of history that are often overlooked, namely Africa and the Americas. In the light of global developments, we will also take a closer look at other periods and geographic regions that are more well known, such as the Roman Empire and Medieval Europe.

### **Prerequisites**

There are no prerequisites for this course. This course, however, will provide foundational information for History 1112 – *World History 1500 to the Present*. This course is also a requirement for those with a major or minor in History.

### **Goals of the Course**

During this course you will be challenged to examine primary and secondary historical sources and to think and write critically about them. You will also become familiar with the major concepts and scholarship dealing with World History. World history is the study of human patterns of interaction with a particular focus on change over time, global exchange, and those phenomena that connect people, places and ideas across regional boundaries. By focusing on human interaction on all levels you will be able to see the big picture as well as the details of individual lives. This course will also give you a perspective of the past that goes beyond a national or regional viewpoint. In other words, you will develop a perspective that embraces large comparisons both spatially and temporally.

As a student in this course, you will learn to

- Demonstrate an understanding of issues in world history by analyzing multicultural, global, and transnational questions
- Compare historical developments and problems across cultural and geographic boundaries, appreciating how temporal, cultural, and spatial dimensions affect historical responses
- Interpret the major events in world history and demonstrate an understanding of historiography by analyzing and critiquing written sources and different interpretations of historical events
- Appreciate, evaluate, and utilize material from other disciplines (geography, economics, art, literature, psychology, philosophy, etc.) in examining historical events and issues
- Support and argue for a particular interpretative position within course discussions and written assignments
- Design and compose a written project based on knowledge gained and a personal interpretation of a significant issue in world history

### **Texts**

There are four required texts for the course. These books may be purchased through the bookstore or online. If you choose to order these books online, please ensure that you receive them in sufficient time to have completed the assigned readings.

The required texts are:

- Johnson, Donald and Johnson, Jean Elliot, 2007. *Universal Religions in World History: The Spread of Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam to 1500*, McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0072954280
- Liu, Xinru and Lynda Norene Shaffer, 2007. *Connections Across Eurasia: Transportation, Communication, and Cultural Exchange on the Silk Roads*, McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0072843519
- Reilly, Kevin, 2007. *Worlds of History: A Comparative Reader, Volume 1*, (3rd ed), Bedford St. Martin's. ISBN: 031244687X
- Ristvet, Lauren, 2007. *In The Beginning: World History from Human Evolution to the First States*, McGraw-Hill. ISBN: 0072848030

In addition to these texts, additional readings will be posted on ULearn. You are responsible for reading these selections before each class. To access ULearn use the link located near the top right of the GSU homepage ([www.gsu.edu](http://www.gsu.edu)).

## Expectations

Students who do well in the course do the following:

1. Attend class regularly and participate in class discussions
2. Complete the readings prior to each class meeting
3. Complete all assignments on time
4. Ask questions of the professor inside and outside of the class meeting times

To help you do well in this class I will do the following:

1. Be prepared and on-time for class meetings
2. Encourage interest in the subject by relating it to current events and other academic disciplines
3. Be available outside of class times for questions and consultation
4. Return all submitted work within 10 days of submission

## Attendance

Regular attendance in this class is expected and contributes to your participation grade in the course. Roll will be taken each class meeting. I understand that perfect attendance is sometimes not possible. Due to the brevity of the term, each student may miss up to two class sessions before his or her participation grade is greatly affected. Any student missing 4 or more classes will automatically fail the course.

## Grading & Assignments

Your final grade for this course will be composed of the following:

- Participation and quizzes 25%
- Midterm Exam 35%  
(Take-home essay worth 40% of exam, In-class portion is worth 60%)
- Final Exam (cumulative) 40%  
(Take-home essay worth 40% of exam, In-class portion is worth 60%)

Final grades for the course will be assigned as follows:

	A (100-94)	A- (90-93)
B+ (87-89)	B (84-86)	B- (80-83)
C+ (77-79)	C (74-76)	C- (70-73)
D (66-69)		
F (0-65)		

Quizzes will be given to those in attendance at the beginning of class on the day of the quiz. These quizzes will be unannounced and will cover the assigned reading and the content of the previous class session.

The exams will be a combination of take-home essay responses and in-class objective and subjective questions. Short-answer and essay questions will compose the majority of the exam's value. As a general rule, grammatical and spelling errors will not count against your grade on the in-class portions

of the exams. However, your writing should exhibit clarity of thought, and it should directly answer the question(s) being asked.

The larger take-home essays must be typewritten. Handwritten essays will not be accepted. You should be careful to proofread your work to correct grammar and spelling errors. I am available to help you with writing your essays. If you would like me to review your essay draft, please get it to me no later than 5 days before the deadline. If you need further help with your writing skills, please see the College of Arts and Sciences Writing Studio (976 General Classroom Building, [www.writingstudio.gsu.edu](http://www.writingstudio.gsu.edu)).

When you quote, borrow, or otherwise use the words or ideas of someone else in your essays, you **must** cite the source you are using. Failure to do so is plagiarism and will not be tolerated. (See the section on Academic Honesty below.) If you are in doubt as to whether you should cite something, err on the side of caution and give a citation. When citing sources in your essays, you should follow the latest edition of the *Chicago Manual of Style*.

Essays must be submitted at the **beginning** of the class period in which they are due. Of course, essays may be turned in earlier than the stated deadline. Essays received after the first 10 minutes of class will receive a penalty. Penalties for grades will be assessed in the following manner. Papers are considered to be 1-day late 10 minutes after the class begins, and 10 points will be deducted from each late essay. An additional 10 points will be deducted beginning on the second and third days (24-hour periods, not class meetings) that the paper is late. No late papers will be accepted more than three days after the date of the original deadline. Late papers may be e-mailed to the address on the first page of the syllabus.

These take-home essays will be graded according to the following criteria.

	Beginning (D or F)	Comprehension (C)	Progressing (B)	Mastery (A)
Thesis/Conclusion 25%	Neither the thesis nor the conclusion is clear and identifiable.	Either the thesis or the conclusion is absent or unclear.	The thesis is identifiable and adequately stated. Conclusion summarizes argument and points.	The thesis is well-defined and identifiable. Conclusion clearly summarizes argument and points.
Content 60%	The essay is lacking in logical order, and argumentation and evidence are severely lacking.	The essay's argumentation is unpersuasive and not clearly substantiated by evidence. The order and logic of the essay is lacking.	The essay exhibits thoughtful argumentation in support of the thesis, but the structure of the paper's logic needs improvement.	The essay is logically well-structured, flows well, and contains strong argumentation in support of the thesis.

Style 10%	The writing style is poor and the paper is difficult to understand. Major grammatical errors are present throughout the paper.	The writing style is wooden and transition sentences are absent. Several major grammatical errors are evidenced.	The writing style is adequate and understandable, but structural and transition elements need improvement. Some minor grammatical errors are present.	The essay meets or exceeds the requirement. No grammatical errors are noted.
Length 5%	The essay does not meet the required length.	The essay meets the bare minimum requirement.	The essay goes beyond the minimum requirement, but is not long enough to clearly communicate the argument.	The essay meets or exceeds the requirement.

### Makeup Policy

Students may **not** makeup a quiz for any reason – tardiness, illness, etc. If you enter the classroom while a quiz is in progress, you may attempt to complete as much of the quiz as possible until time is called for the papers to be submitted. Late quizzes will not be accepted.

Students may be allowed to take a makeup exam only with the approval of the instructor. Students who anticipate missing an exam should contact me **prior** to the administering of the exam if at all possible. A confirmed reason for having missed the exam is required to take a makeup exam. Examples of sufficient confirmation include, but are not limited to, a doctor’s note, a funeral program or obituary for a close relative, etc.

### Disability

Academic accommodation will be made for those students having a documented special need. Please see me by the end of the first week of class so that appropriate arrangements can be made. You should also contact the Office of Disability Services at 404/651-1487 (TDD 404/463-9048).

### Withdrawal Policy

The last day on which you may withdraw from this class and receive a “W” is **July 1, 2008**. I encourage you to see me prior to that date if you have concerns about your progress in this course. A full statement of the University withdrawal policy may be found at [www.gsu.edu/es/withdrawal from classes.html](http://www.gsu.edu/es/withdrawal_from_classes.html).

**Incomplete Policy**

The University policy states that students may only receive an incomplete for non-academic reasons. See section 1350.10 in the current undergraduate catalog, available at [http://www.gsu.edu/images/Downloadables/catalog\\_undergrad\\_07-08.pdf](http://www.gsu.edu/images/Downloadables/catalog_undergrad_07-08.pdf)

**Academic Honesty**

The University has a strong policy against academic dishonesty (See section 1380 in the current undergraduate catalog, available at [http://www.gsu.edu/images/Downloadables/catalog\\_undergrad\\_07-08.pdf](http://www.gsu.edu/images/Downloadables/catalog_undergrad_07-08.pdf).) Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated in this course. Any student who is caught violating this policy will be reported to the College of Arts and Sciences and will receive an "F" for the course.

**Course & Assignment Schedule**

The schedule of lectures and assignments will be maintained separately on ULearn. The tentative schedule will be given out on the first day of class.

**Important note:** The course syllabus and course schedule provide a general plan for the course; deviations may be necessary. When modifications to the syllabus or schedule are made, you can find updated copies of the documents on ULearn.

## Course & Assignment Schedule

- June 9 Introduction to the course,  
Pre-history, the agricultural revolution, and changing gender roles  
Reading: Reilly, Chapter 1; Ristvet, pages 14-75
- June 11 The rise and fall of the state: civilization rise and collapse  
Reading: Reilly, Chapter 2; Ristvet, Chapters 3-5
- June 16 Empire Building (From Sargon to Alexander)  
Reading: TBA
- June 18 Empire Building II (Africa, Asia, and the Americas)  
Reading: TBA
- June 23 Trade and Cross-cultural Encounters  
Reading: TBA
- June 25 Rome & Byzantium  
Reading: TBA
- Review for Midterm Exam
- June 30 Ancient tribal religions and the development of universal religions  
Reading: TBA

### **Essay 1 due at the beginning of class session**

### **Midterm exam during second half of class**

- July 2 Faith and Empire: Zoroastrianism, Christianity, and Buddhism  
Reading: TBA
- July 7 Encounters and Conversions  
Reading: TBA
- July 9 European, Islamic, and Chinese Medieval Societies  
Reading: TBA
- July 14 Conquest and Crusade  
Reading: TBA

July 16	The Resurgence of the City Reading: TBA
July 21	The Mongol World Order Reading: TBA
July 23	East Meets West: the Columbian Exchange Reading: TBA
July 25	Diseases, Technology, Ecology, and Science Reading: TBA
	Review for Final Exam
July 30	<b>Final Exam - 8:00am</b> <b>Essay 2 due at the beginning of the exam</b>

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