

HISTORY 153
BRANDON UNIVERSITY
World History to 1500
Autumn Term 2008

This and other department syllabi and information are available on line at the History Dept. Web Site at www.brandonu.ca/history/

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This course charts the rise of civilisation from the beginning of recorded history (around 3500 BCE*) to the discovery of the New World at the end of the fifteenth century CE*. During this long time span societies rose and fell, at first in isolation from one another. With the passing of time, however, communication between various societies increased and became more complex. Some societies were able to dominate their neighbours and even to acquire vast empires. Others, though learned and sophisticated, did not. One of the questions we will address is why this was so.

World History, at the best of times, can be overwhelming: so much information about so many societies. To try to help you cope - and to avoid information overload - I've broken the course into three sections (set out below). In each of these sections we'll look at the major societies that emerged, and often declined. Using lectures, films, visual images and readings, we will try to get some sense of what life was like for these people and how they understood the world.

*BCE = Before the Common Era (In Christian societies BC – Before Christ - is equivalent)

*CE = Common Era (In Christian societies AD - Anno Domini 'in the year of our Lord' – is equivalent)

PART ONE (3,500 BCE – 1,000 BCE)

Several important stages of development occurred during this time span. The period saw the rise of agriculture and the development of what we call 'civilisation'. The societies that formed during this period were regional and generally did not have a lot of contact with one another. By 2,500 BCE there were four major regional societies: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Northwest India, and Northern China. All had declined or were regrouping by 1,000 BCE.

PART TWO (1,000 BCE – 500 CE)

This period saw the elaboration of a number of major civilisations: the great classical societies of China, India, and the Mediterranean (that is, Greece and Rome).

PART THREE (500 CE – 1,500 CE)

This period saw the spread of a number of major religions – Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism. It also saw an expansion of civilisation and especially, of the establishment of new commercial and cultural linkages between the major societies.

Required Texts

Albert M. Craig, *et.al.*, *The Heritage of World Civilizations*, Vol. 1 (Upper Saddle River, N.J.: Pearson Prentice Hall, 2009).

Peter N. Stearns, *et.al.*, *Documents in World History* Vol. 1 (New York: Pearson Longman, 2009).

(these are sold at the bookstore as a bundle which also includes a world atlas)

Assignments

You will be required to write three 1,000 word assignments. They must be typed in 12 point Times New Roman font and be double-spaced. You must provide title pages, endnotes or footnotes, and bibliographies.

There will be a 50-minute in-class mid-term test. Finally, there will be a three-hour final examination on all of the material in the course.

Deadlines, Dates & Grade Breakdown

First Written Assignment	20%	Wed. 24 Sept.
Test	15%	Wed. 15 Oct.
Second Written Assignment	20%	Wed. 29 Oct.
Third Written Assignment	20%	Wed. 26 Oct.
Final Exam	20%	Wed. 17 Dec., A.M.
Participation in Class	5%	

Grade Scheme

A+	90 – 100	B-	70 – 72	F	0 - 49
A	85 – 89	C+	67 - 69		
A-	80 – 84	C	63 - 66		
B+	77 – 79	C-	60 - 62		
B	73 – 76	D	50 - 59		

Please Note the Following:

Attendance is expected at all lectures and tutorials. The lectures do not simply rehash course readings; they often focus on matters not covered in your texts. Please come ready to talk in the tutorial sessions. Any questions you may have can be explored in the tutorials.

In fairness to students who produce their written assignments on time, I will penalise late work. If you are having difficulty with an assignment for any reason or you have any problems or questions concerning the course, please feel free to contact me by coming to my office, Rm. 307, Clark Hall, by telephoning me at 727-9719 (leave a message with your number on voice mail if I'm not in) or by e-mail at MacKay@BrandonU.ca.

Your textbook, *The Heritage of World Civilizations*, gives you the narrative of events during the period covered by the course. We will not focus specifically on it in the tutorials. Rather, I would recommend strongly that you read the relevant chapters *before* the lectures each day since you will need to understand clearly what happened. Often the lectures will focus on problems or issues rather than giving you a narrative of events. In the tutorials we will focus on the readings from *Documents in World History*.

Lecture & Tutorial Schedule

HWC = Heritage of World Civilizations

DWH = Documents in World History

PART ONE – BEGINNINGS

WEEK ONE – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 1, pp. 1-12.*

Wed. 3 Sept. Lecture: Introduction
Fri. 5 Sept. Film: *Guns, Germs, Steel, Episode One*

WEEK TWO – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 1, pp. 12-18 & 25-28.*

Mon. 8 Sept. Lecture: Rise of Agriculture
Wed. 10 Sept. Lecture: Mesopotamia
Fri. 12 Sept. Writing Session

WEEK THREE – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 1, pp.12-18.*

Mon. 15 Sept. Lecture: Egypt
Wed. 17 Sept. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.7-31.**
Fri. 19 Sept. **NO CLASS**

WEEK FOUR – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 1, pp.28-41 & Ch. 2, pp.49-63.*

Mon. 22 Sept. **Library Session**
Wed. 24 Sept. Lecture: Early India **First Written Assignment is Due**
Fri. 26 Sept. Lecture: Early China

WEEK FIVE – *Background Reading HWC Ch.4, pp.140-147 & Ch. 14, pp.402-415.*

Mon. 29 Sept. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.43-72.**
Wed. 1 Oct. The Mayans (film)
Fri. 3 Oct. Lecture: Classical India

WEEK SIX – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 7, pp.222-241.*

Mon. 6 Oct. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.109-135.**
Wed. 8 Oct. **Test Preparation Session**
Fri. 10 Oct. **NO CLASS**

WEEK SEVEN – *Background Reading HWC Ch.6, pp.182-220.*

Mon 13 Oct. **Thanksgiving**
Wed. 15 Oct. **TEST**
Fri. 17 Oct. Lecture: Rome & Byzantium

WEEK EIGHT – *Background Reading HWC Ch.3, pp.86-129.*

Mon. 20 Oct. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.73-99.**
Wed. 22 Oct. The Spartans I (film)
Fri. 24 Oct. The Spartans II (film)

WEEK NINE – *Background Reading HWC Ch.11, pp.328-349 & Ch. 7, pp.222-241.*

Mon. 27 Oct. Lecture: Classical China
Wed. 29 Oct. Lecture: Post Classical & Islam **Second Written Assignment is Due**
Fri. 31 Oct. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.165-184.**

WEEK TEN – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 5, pp.154-181 & Ch. 8, pp.244-273.*

Mon. 3 Nov. Africa (film)
Wed. 5 Nov. Lecture: Tang & Song
Fri. 7 Nov. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.190-208.**

WEEK ELEVEN

Mon. 10 Nov. **No Class**
Wed. 12 Nov. The Vikings I (film)
Fri. 14 Nov. The Vikings II (film)

WEEK TWELVE – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 16, pp.456-478.*

Mon. 17 Nov. Lecture: The Middle Ages
Wed. 19 Nov. Lecture: The Black Death
Fri. 21 Nov. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.221-245.**

WEEK THIRTEEN – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 16, pp.478-487.*

Mon. 24 Nov. Lecture: The Renaissance
Wed. 26 Nov. Lecture: Zheng He **Third Written Assignment is Due**
Fri. 28 Nov. **Tutorial: Read DWH pp.323-329.**

WEEK FOURTEEN – *Background Reading HWC Ch. 18, pp.528-546.*

Mon. 1 Dec. Lecture: Indigenous Societies (film)
Wed. 3 Dec. Lecture: Contact
Fri. 5 Dec. Contact (film)

WEEK FIFTEEN

Mon. 8 Dec. **Exam Review**