

Western Civilization I

Dr. Allyson M. Poska

Monroe 226 x1478

Office Hours:
MWF 12-1pm
TR 1-2pm

aposka@umw.edu

This course will explore some of the major themes of Western Civilization from the beginning of time until 1600. Using documents written at the time, students will consider the evolution of key components of Western society such as Government and Leadership Roles, Warfare, Religion, and Gender.

COURSE GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

- Appreciation of the diversity of methods and processes.
- Ability to analyze sources and arguments.
- Comprehension of historical process.
- Ability to read critically primary sources and modern authorities.
- Ability to communicate in a group setting.

This course counts as Human Experience and Society. As such, you will learn

- to explain human and social experiences and activities from multiple perspectives
- to draw appropriate conclusions based on evidence
- to transfer knowledge and skills learned to a novel situation.

Required Textbook:

Sherman and Salisbury, *The West in the World* vol.1 to 1715 (McGraw Hill, 5th Edition)

Readings available online:

Epic of Gilgamesh

<http://www.aina.org/books/eog/eog.pdf>

1 Samuel (Revised Standard Version)

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/r/rsv/browse.html>

Sophocles, *Antigone*

https://mthoyibi.files.wordpress.com/2011/05/antigone_2.pdf

Livy, *History of Rome*, Book 34

<http://mcadams.posc.mu.edu/txt/ah/Livy/Livy34.html>

The Gospel of Mary Magdalene

<http://www.gnosis.org/library/marygosp.htm>

The Sophia of Jesus

<http://www.gnosis.org/naghamm/sjc.html>

The Gospel of Mark (Revised Standard Version)

<http://www.hti.umich.edu/r/rsv/browse.html>

Gregory of Tours *History of the Franks* Book 2 and 3 THINK ABOUT ONLY BOOK 2

<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/basis/gregory-hist.html#book1>

The Poem of the Cid

<http://www.laits.utexas.edu/cid/>

click “views,” click the first shield, click the third of the three buttons on the right hand side of the screen for the english translation

Boccaccio, *The Decameron*

http://www.brown.edu/Departments/Italian_Studies/dweb/texts/

Alberti, *The Family in Renaissance Florence* (ON CANVAS)

Christopher Columbus, *Diary*

<http://www.ems.kcl.ac.uk/content/etext/e020.html>

Luther, “Open Letter to the Christian Nobility” (also titled “Address to the Christian nobility”)

all parts

<http://www.iclnet.org/pub/resources/text/wittenberg/wittenberg-luther.html#sw-nobility>

Class requirements:

The grading for this class will be divided into two major parts.

- 1) The mid-term exam and the final exam will count for 25% each.
- 2) Participation in class discussions, weekly writing assignments and learnsmart activities (30%)
- 3) Two short papers (10% each). The paper assignments follow at the end of the syllabus

Students requiring special accommodations:

If you already receive services through the Office of Disability Services and require accommodations for this class, please make an appointment with me as soon as possible to discuss your approved accommodation needs. Please bring your accommodation letter with you to the appointment. I will hold any information you share with me in the strictest confidence unless you give me permission to do otherwise. If you have not contacted the Office of Disability Services and need special accommodations, please contact them at 540-654-1266.

UMW Honor Code

All of your work is subject to the UMW honor code. You must pledge and sign all of your assignments. Details of the UMW Honor System are available at

<http://students.umw.edu/honor-system/> and <http://honor.umwblogs.org/honor-2-0/f-a-q/>

Class Participation

Class participation is an important aspect of this class and of your grade. We will have a discussion on the assigned readings most Fridays. I will expect you to integrate the primary source readings with the textbook. Your class participation will consist of three components. ***YOU MUST COMPLETE ALL THREE IN ORDER TO RECEIVE FULL CREDIT***

1) Class discussion

During class discussion, you receive the same credit for asking a question, answering a question, or responding to your classmates. I DO NOT EXPECT YOU TO BE WISE AND ASTUTE EVERY CLASS. I JUST EXPECT YOU TO TRY TO PARTICIPATE TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY. TALKING IN CLASS HELPS YOU LEARN TO THINK!! However, in order to receive credit, your participation must indicate that you have read the work being discussed. All at times, I request that you respect the opinions of others. Remember that there is no single way to understand history and that the same incident has numerous interpretations. Do not feel constrained to rely on either my interpretations or the interpretation in the textbook.

To get the most out of class discussion, you should bring the readings to class with you and take notes on the discussion.

In order to receive a 70 for this component of class participation, you must speak in at least 7 of the 11 class discussions and receive credit for *all* of the weekly writing assignments (see below). To keep track of your class participation, you will hand me a 3x5 card with your name on it. No 5x7 cards, no paper cut into 3x5 pieces

2) Weekly writing assignment

In order to facilitate class discussion and the process of learning from it, each week you will go to the Quizzes section of Canvas and compose a paragraph that relates that week's reading (both the primary source reading and the textbook) to one of the major themes of the class. This paragraph should be no more than ½ page long. You must submit your assignment prior to class time and your paragraph must clearly indicate that you did the reading in order to receive credit. Failure to complete this component of the class each week will result in a deduction from your class participation grade.

3) Learnsmart assignments

Each week, you will complete the textbook's LEARNSMART assignment online that corresponds to that week's topic. You will read the appropriate sections/chapters of the textbook and answer some basic questions about the readings. You must complete the Learnsmart assignment before class on Monday.

LAPTOP POLICY: Laptops may be used in the classroom for *notetaking only*. I reserve the right to prohibit laptop use at any time for any reason.

Grade scale

A 95-100	A- 90-94
B+ 87-89	B 84-86
B- 80-83	C+ 77-79

C 74-76
D+ 67-69

C- 70-73
D 63-66

Students with an average of 69 or lower will receive an unsatisfactory on mid-semester reports

SCHEDULE

Week 1 Prehistory

READ: Sherman and Salisbury (S&S) "Before Western Civilization"

Learnsmart due by class time Friday September 2

Week 2

NO Class MONDAY Labor Day

Iceman Murder mystery

After watching the video, you must complete the weekly writing assignment on canvas by Monday September 12 at 2pm.

Week 3

Discuss *Epic of Gilgamesh* (online)

READ: *The Epic of Gilgamesh* and S&S "Struggling with the Forces of Nature"

Learnsmart due by class time Monday September 12

Week 4 The Israelites

READ: 1 Samuel (on-line) and S&S "Peoples of the Mediterranean Coast"

Learnsmart due by class time Monday September 19

Week 5 The Greeks

READ: *Antigone* (online) S&S chapter 2

Learnsmart due by class time Monday September 26

Week 6 The Romans

READ: Livy, History of Rome Book 34, (online)

Read 34.1-34.10 carefully, then skim (but don't ignore) the middle sections on warfare. Get a sense of Roman warfare. Start again at 34.43 and read until the end. S&S chapter 4

Learnsmart due by class time Monday October 3

Week 7 Early Christianity

READ: The Gnostic Gospels: Gospel of Mary Magdalene, the Sophia of Jesus, and the *Gospel of Mark* (on-line) and S&S 151-167 (Only the sections of chapter 5 entitled "The

Longing for Religious Fulfillment" and "From Christian Persecution to the City of God" the last two sections)

Learnsmart due by class time Monday October 10

Week 8 No class Monday Fall Break

Wednesday Midterm REVIEW

Friday MIDTERM

Week 9 Early Medieval Society

READ: Gregory of Tours, *History of the Franks*, Books 2 and 3 (online) and S&S pages 171-181 (chapter 6 section “The Making of the Western Kingdoms”) and chapter 7
 Learnsmart due by class time Monday October 24

Week 10 The Clash with Islam

READ: The Poem of the Cid (online) and S&S pages 197-209 (chapter 6 section “Islam, 600-1000”) and chapter 8
 Learnsmart due by class time Monday October 31

Week 11 The Black Death

READ: Boccaccio, *The Decameron* (on-line) Introduction to day one, Day one story one, Day one story two, Day five story nine, Day nine story two, and two stories of your choice and S&S chapter 9 pages 265-280 ONLY (Do not read the final section entitled “Empires in the East”)
 Learnsmart due by class time Monday November 7

Week 12 The Renaissance

READ: Alberti *The Family in Renaissance Florence*, (On Canvas) S&S chapter 10
 Learnsmart due by class time Monday November 14

Week 13 Columbus and the Americas

NO Class Wednesday or Friday THANKSGIVING
 READ: Columbus, *Diary* (online) and S&S chapter 12
 Learnsmart due by class time on Monday November 21

Week 14

MONDAY LECTURE ON Columbus
 WEDNESDAY Discuss Columbus, *Diary*
 Friday LECTURE ON Luther
 Learnsmart due by class time on Friday December 2

Week 15 The Reformation

Monday – Discuss Martin Luther “Open Letter”
 Wednesday final review
 Friday no class History department symposium
 Read: Martin Luther, “An Open Letter to the Christian Nobility” (online) and S&S chapter 11

Papers:

Everyone will write **TWO** short (2 pages) primary source analyses of the readings. Each paper must be at least TWO full pages long.

1) Choose one of the four themes of the class

- 2) **Based on your reading of the primary text**, decide on a thesis that argues something (ONE THING) about the society in question. I encourage you to consult with me either in person or by email about your topic and thesis.
- 3) **You must use the primary source as the basis of your argument.** SUMMARIES OF THE TEXT ARE NOT ACCEPTABLE. Do NOT compare civilizations or compare the past with the present. You do not need to do additional research. **You must fill out** and attach the **Paper checksheet** (at Files on Canvas) to each paper and the **Putting feedback to use** (at Files on Canvas) sheet to your second paper.
- 4) **You must use the textbook to provide additional context and/or background.** However, you cannot use the information in the textbook as evidence for your thesis.
- 5) **A two page paper will have at least three citations to the primary material and at least two to the textbook.**

You must write one paper before the midterm and one after the midterm. NO EXCEPTIONS! NOTE: Failure to turn in both papers will result in an automatic F for the course.

The papers will be due at the beginning of the next class AFTER we discuss that text. I do not give extensions. Remember that your work is subject to the UMW honor code.

Papers will be typed in 12 pt. font, double-spaced, and will have 1" margins (please note that the default in WORD is 1.25"). Be sure to spellcheck and grammar check your papers. Set the default on your grammar check to indicate ALL potential errors, both grammatical and stylistic. Late papers (even one minute late), will be penalized one grade for each 24 hour period. Computer breakdowns are NOT an excuse.

If you have any questions about format, see Kate Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses and Dissertations* or visit the History Department home page. Be sure to proofread your papers before turning them in, so as to avoid embarrassing errors.

Additional resources about writing history papers can be found at <http://cas.umw.edu/historyamericanstudies/history-department-resources/>

Check your paper to ensure that:

- 1) You have a thesis that responds directly to the text
- 2) The thesis is stated clearly
- 3) Each paragraph asserts something that relates back to the thesis
- 4) This assertion is backed up by specific details from the text
- 5) Each paragraph contains some of your own ideas
- 6) The conclusion reasserts the paper's argument clearly and concisely

Remember you must cite all references to the text, both direct quotes and paraphrases. Whenever possible, you should use parenthetical citations (author, page number). Biblical citations are to chapter and verse (chapter: verse). If no page numbers are available on internet texts, provide some other appropriate indicators of the place in the text such as line #, chapter #, or section #. For the *Decameron*, use day, story #.