

HIST 120: World History to 1500

Instructor: William Holliday, Ph.D.

Office: 239 Ruffner

Office Hours: TBA

E-mail: hollidaywc@longwood.edu

Telephone: 395-2424

Course Description

A survey of world history from prehistory to the end of the Medieval Era. The course is a thematic and chronological treatment of events and developments in the history of major world regions, with an emphasis on religious ideas, patterns of economic and cultural development, and cross-cultural interactions. 3 credits. Fulfills General Education Goal 9.

Course Objectives

In accordance with General Education guidelines this course will:

- Teach a disciplinary mode of inquiry (e.g., literary analysis, statistical analysis, historical interpretation, philosophical reasoning, aesthetic judgment, the scientific method) and provide students with practice in applying their disciplinary mode of inquiry, critical thinking, or problem solving strategies.
- Provide examples of how disciplinary knowledge changes through creative applications of the chosen mode of inquiry.
- Consider questions of ethical values.
- Explore past, current, and future implications (e.g., social, political, economic, psychological or philosophical) of disciplinary knowledge.
- Encourage consideration of course content from diverse perspectives.
- Provide opportunities for students to increase information literacy through contemporary techniques of gathering, manipulating, and analyzing information and data.
- Require at least one substantive written paper, oral report, or course journal and also require students to articulate information or ideas in their own words on tests and exams.
- Foster awareness of the common elements among disciplines and the interconnectedness of disciplines.
- Provide a rationale as to why knowledge of this discipline is important to the development of an educated citizen.

In accordance with General Education Goal 9, students who successfully complete this course will:

- Understand the culture, society, and history of groups outside of the Western European tradition.
- Employ an appropriate vocabulary and rational argument to discuss complex issues involving race, nationality, gender, ethnicity, class, or sexual orientation.

- Understand the concept of ethnocentrism.
- Differentiate between personal discomfort and intellectual disagreement in situations where cultures may conflict.
- Distinguish between facts and cultural assumptions relating to issues of diversity.

Course Requirements

Quizzes – 25%

Midterm Exam – 25%

Book Review – 10%

Sundiata Paper –15%

Final Exam – 25%

Quizzes – Completing course readings in a timely manner and a regular program of study are keys to success in this course. To help you on your way there will be an unspecified number of quizzes, which may or may not be announced. The lowest two quiz grades will be dropped, and the remaining quiz grades will be averaged to determine the overall quiz grade. **The first missed quiz MAY NOT be made up and will count as one of the two dropped quiz grades.** All subsequent missed quizzes will be rescheduled at the instructor’s discretion.

Paper – Sundiata is an epic story about the past. Transmitted orally for hundreds of years, the versions of the story have changed over time, incorporating the creativity and facts of many generations. *Sundiata*, therefore, presents an interesting challenge for the historian because it combines elements of literal history and fiction. Keeping this in mind, select a central theme of the epic and comment on what can be learned about West African culture and society, using specific examples to support your arguments. Possible themes to focus on include: Gender roles; The role of the griot; The role of fate; The nature of religion; Social structure; The structure and function of government; The attributes of a leader, etc. Your commentary must be typed in a 12-point font, double-spaced, stapled, have numbered pages, and total at least five pages (title pages and bibliographies do NOT count toward the five page requirement). Additional instructions for this assignment will be provided.

Book Review – Students will utilize the library database to identify a scholarly monograph related to the subject matter of this course. After approval from the instructor, they will write an 800 word review of the monograph. Further instructions will be provided.

Exams – Exams will be primarily essay, but short answer and multiple choice questions may also appear. **Exam books (a.k.a. blue books) are required.**

Grading Scale

A	93-100	A-	90-92
B+	87-89	B	83-86
B-	80-82	C+	77-79
C	73-76	C-	70-72
D+	67-69	D	63-66
D-	60-62	F	0-59

General Guidelines for the Evaluation of Written Work

- (A) *Exceptional.* Writing is focused, well organized, clear, precise, and there are no significant problems with spelling, punctuation, grammar, citations and format. Thesis is extremely well conceptualized, constructed, and/or articulated. Writing contains insights which go beyond the basic facts, and integrates examples with explanations/analysis. Writing reflects an awareness of the complexities of the subject and considers multiple perspectives. Use of research (if research is called for) is exceptionally thoughtful, perspicacious, and skillfully integrated into the entire argument. The student has clearly demonstrated an in-depth engagement with the topic.
- (B) *Good.* Writing is focused, well organized, coherent, and there are no significant problems with spelling, punctuation, grammar, citations and format. Thesis, though not perfect, is distinctive in some way and is well conceptualized, constructed, and/or articulated. Explanations/analysis are mostly based on examples/evidence, but fewer connections are made between ideas. New insights are offered, but are not fully developed. Use of research (if research is called for) is thoughtful and skillfully integrated into parts of the argument. The student has demonstrated significant engagement with the topic.
- (C) *Satisfactory.* Writing is relevant, but loosely organized and lacking in detail. **Meets all minimum requirements (such as page length and font size).** A few minor problems with spelling, punctuation, grammar, citations and format may be present. Thesis is only passably conceptualized, constructed, and/or articulated. Conclusions/arguments may be generally obvious. A few factual errors may be present. Writing lacks consideration of alternative perspectives, and few connections are made between ideas. Use of evidence and research (if research is called for) are just sufficient. The student has demonstrated a passing engagement with the topic.
- (D) *Unsatisfactory.* Writing contains some relevant material but is generally unfocused and characterized by weak organization, errors, and confusion. Thesis is poorly conceptualized, constructed, and/or articulated. Use of evidence is non-existent or minimally relevant to the argument it is meant to support. Use of research (if research is called for) is minimal at best. The student demonstrates little evidence of engagement with the topic.
- (F) *Unsatisfactory.* Same as D, but worse.

Policies

Honor Code: Students are expected to comply with the Longwood University Honor Code on all work in this course. **Please read and understand all of the Honor Code's provisions.** If you have any questions, meet with me. All work submitted will be considered pledged. Regarding plagiarism, please keep in mind that according to the *Random House Dictionary of the English Language*, plagiarism is "the appropriation or imitation of the language, ideas, and thoughts of another author, and representation of them as one's original work." At the very minimum, the penalty for plagiarism, cheating, and other Honor Code violations will be a zero on the assignment in question.

Late Work: Your future employers/customers/business associates will expect you to complete tasks on time. Therefore, late work in this course will be marked down 20% for each day it is late. Exams and quizzes will be rescheduled at the instructor's discretion under exceptional circumstances. If a problem arises, contact me. I can be quite flexible and very understanding. HOWEVER, just because I MAY give you an extension does not mean I have eliminated all grade deductions. This will be handled on a case-by-case basis.

Attendance: Your future employers/customers/business associates will expect you to show up to work. Therefore, students in this course are expected to comply with the University's attendance policy. Unexcused absences totaling 10% or more of scheduled class meetings will result in a one letter grade reduction for the course. Students absent (excused and unexcused) from 25% or more of the scheduled class meetings will receive an automatic F for the course. PLEASE NOTE: Every student in this course deserves a classroom environment conducive to learning. Failure to extend proper courtesy to fellow students and/or the instructor will result in an unexcused absence. Examples of discourteous behavior include – arriving late, going to the bathroom in the middle of class when it is not a dire emergency, texting, setting your fantasy football lineup, whispering to the person next to you, etc.

Accommodations: Any student in this class who has a disability that may prevent him/her from fully demonstrating his/her abilities should contact me as soon as possible so we can discuss how to ensure full participation and facilitate this educational opportunity. Documentation of this need should be provided from Longwood's Office of Disability Resources.

Course Textbooks

Bentley, Ziegler, & Streets, *Traditions & Encounters: A Brief Global History Volume 1, 3rd Edition*. McGraw Hill, 2014.

D. T. Niane, *Sundiata: An Epic of Old Mali*, 2006 Pearson Revised Edition.

Schedule

All readings must be completed prior to the start of class on the day they are listed on the syllabus.

Part I: Early Complex Societies

Week 1

Transition to Agriculture; Mesopotamia; Indo-European Migrations; Early Agricultural Society in Africa; Bantu Migrations

Readings: *Traditions & Encounters* (hereafter T&E), Chapters 1-2; William H. McNeill, "Mythistory, or Truth, Myth, History, and Historians," *The American Historical Review* 91, No. 1 (1986): 1-10 (Canvas).

Week 2

Harappan Society; Early China; Mesoamerica; South America; Oceania
Readings: T&E, Chapters 3-4.

Part II: The Formation of Classical Societies

Week 3

Persia – Rise and Fall of the Persian Empire; Zoroastrianism
China – The Unification of China; Confucius, Daoism, Legalism
Readings: T&E, Chapters 5-6.

Week 4

Classical India; Jainism; Buddhism; Hinduism
Readings: T&E, Chapter 7.

Week 5

Early Greek Society; Classical Greece; Rome from Kingdom to Republic; Rome from Republic to Empire; **Book Review Due**
Readings: T&E, Chapter 8.

Week 6

The Silk Roads Network; China After the Fall of the Han Dynasty; Fall of the Roman Empire
Readings: T&E, Chapter 9.

Part III: The Postclassical Era

Week 7

Byzantium; **Midterm Exam**
Readings: T&E, Chapter 10.

Week 8

The Rise of Islam; Islamic Values & Cultural Exchanges
Readings: T&E, Chapter 11.

Week 9

Tang & Song China; Chinese Influence in East Asia
Readings: T&E, Chapter 12.

Week 10

Islamic and Hindu Kingdoms in India; The Influence of Indian Society in Southeast Asia
Readings: T&E, Chapter 13.

Week 11

Early Medieval Europe
Readings: T&E, Chapter 14.

Part IV: An Age of Cross Cultural Interaction

Week 12

Turkish Migrations and Imperial Expansion; The Mongol Empires

Readings: T&E, Chapter 15.

Week 13

States & Societies of Sub-Saharan Africa; **Paper Due**

Readings: T&E, Chapter 16; *Sundiata*, all.

Week 14

Europe & the High Middle Ages

Readings: T&E, Chapter 17.

Week 15

States & Empires in Mesoamerica; States & Empires in South America; Long-Distance Trade and Travel; Exploration and Colonization

Readings: T&E, Chapters 18 – 19.

Final Exam – TBA

General Education Component Matrix

Department: History

Proposed Course Prefix/Number: HIST 120

Course Title: World History to 1500

What General Education Goal is this course intended to address? Goal 9

Required Outcomes for this Goal	Relevant Course/Institutional Components (refer specifically to syllabus)	Specific Assessment Method for Outcome
Students will understand the culture, society, and history of groups outside the Western European tradition	Students will learn about major world regions, including China, India, and sub-Saharan Africa – see course schedule.	Common questions on final exam.
Students will employ an appropriate vocabulary and rational argument to discuss complex issues involving race, nationality, gender, ethnicity, class, or sexual orientation	Book review, <i>Sundiata</i> paper, exams, classroom discussions.	Common rubric for paper assignment (<i>Sundiata</i> or other depending upon instructor).
Students will understand the concept of ethnocentrism	Through course readings, classroom activities, and assignments, students will become aware of other world views and reflect on their own world view.	Common questions on final exam.
Students will differentiate between personal discomfort and intellectual disagreement in situations where cultures may conflict	<i>Sundiata</i> paper; Discussions of information pertaining to comparative religious and spiritual traditions (e.g. Zoroastrianism, Jainism, Hinduism).	Common rubric for paper assignment (<i>Sundiata</i> or other depending upon instructor).
Students will distinguish between facts and cultural assumptions relating to issues of diversity	Students will learn and be assessed on facts relating to the diverse societies of major world regions.	Common questions on final exam.

General Education Criteria	Relevant Course Components (refer specifically to course syllabus)
1. Teach a disciplinary mode of inquiry and provide students with practice in applying their disciplinary mode of inquiry, critical thinking, or problem solving strategies.	Students will learn to think historically through readings, classroom activities and assignments. For example, students will be introduced to the “close reading” of primary source materials, which are included in each chapter of the main course text as well as the <i>Sundiata</i> text.
2. Provide examples of how disciplinary knowledge changes through creative applications of the chosen mode of inquiry.	Major world regions will be examined through the application of multiple historical modes of inquiry, including gender, environmental, cultural, economic, and political analysis.
3. Consider questions of ethical values.	The examination of major world regions includes the consideration of many questions of ethical values, especially through an examination of major world religions, including Jainism, Islam, Hinduism, Zoroastrianism, etc. See schedule for topics.
4. Explore past, current, and future implications of disciplinary knowledge.	Beginning with William McNeill’s essay on the development of history as a field, students will learn how historical knowledge and ontology has affected past and contemporary practices of power and governance.
5. Encourage consideration of course content from diverse perspectives.	Multiple modes of historical inquiry will be used, including gender, environmental, cultural, economic, and political analysis.
6. Provide opportunities for students to increase information literacy through contemporary techniques of gathering, manipulating, and analyzing information and data.	See book review for information gathering; see book review, <i>Sundiata</i> paper, and exams for the analysis of information and data.
7. Require at least one substantive written paper, oral report, or course journal and also require students to articulate information or ideas in their own words on tests and exams.	<i>Sundiata</i> paper, essay midterm and final exams.
8. Foster awareness of the common elements among disciplines and the interconnectedness of disciplines.	Readings, Classroom Activities. Extensive references to geography, cultural anthropology, economic and political models, literature, and art.
9. Provide a rationale as to why knowledge of this discipline is important to the development of an educated citizen.	This course offers a global perspective on the past. A global perspective is an essential tool for informed and responsible citizenship as it is impossible to understand the contemporary world by approaching it exclusively from the viewpoint of the United States, western Europe, or any other individual society.

