

# Syllabus, Western Civilization 1

## 1. Course Information

Fall 2016

Unit: 21, Subject: 510, Course: 201, Section: 81

Saturdays, 12:45pm to 4:00pm in Conklin 424

Rutgers University Newark

We will survey western civilization from the era before writing until 1700, reviewing selected social, political, economic, and military affairs.

These are our learning outcomes:

| <b>Task</b>              | <b>Desired Learning Outcome</b>  |
|--------------------------|--|
| Assigned Readings        | familiarity with use of primary sources, especially the connections between the author's goals and his or her arguments and his or her method of argumentation   |
| Lectures and Discussions | basic knowledge of western history before 1700 CE, recognition of broad patterns of history, familiarity with some common interpretations of western history, and ability to engage critically with others who often do not share the same interpretations of events |
| Debates and Exams        | improved skills in synthesizing and communicating historical information, constructing sound arguments, and using the English language demonstrably well   |

## 2. Instructor Information

Ray Ojserkis, PhD

[ray.ojserkis@gmail.com](mailto:ray.ojserkis@gmail.com)

Office Hours on Thursdays, 1:00pm to 2:00pm, Conklin 326

## 3. Grading Policy

Your course grade will be determined by weighting the graded components as follows:

|                             |   |
|-----------------------------|---|
| Unannounced Reading Quizzes | 25%                                     |
| Debate Notes                | Cancels two lowest reading quiz grades. |
| Midterm Exam                | 25%                                     |
| Final (non-cumulative) Exam | 25%                                     |
| Research Essay              | 25%                                     |

Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

If you are absent or tardy your score for a quiz or exam will be an F unless the absence is excusable. According to the Rutgers catalog, “The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions.” Documentation will be required.

#### **4. Classes**

Class sessions will be used for quizzes, examinations debates, and lectures. Each lecture will detail a historic topic, as listed in the schedule below, and for each of these topics I will post a handout to Blackboard listing key points we’ll discuss. Some of these handouts will include primary reading in addition to that assigned below.

Learning can be a collaborative process, and I will involve the class in discussions. Never feel that your comments or questions aren’t appreciated.

#### **5. Primary Sources**

Primary sources are first-hand accounts, often created by participants or witnesses of events, and sometimes created by first-recorders of events. Examples include, but aren’t limited to, memoirs, speeches, documents, data, polls, and contemporary newspaper accounts. Secondary sources are sources created by people who didn’t participate or witness events, but often have the benefit of perspective, and typically draw from a variety of sources to create a nuanced and complex history that can account for multiple interpretations. Examples include history books and lectures.

We’ll try to balance the lectures by reading primary sources in our out-of-class reading. An electronic copy of this syllabus is on Blackboard, and you will need to access the primary sources through hyperlinks in the schedule.

As we will discuss the primary sources in class, it will help to bring printed copies with you, or a laptop that is Internet-accessible.

#### **6. Research Essay**

Your research essay will address a question from a list posted to Blackboard.

Write your essays using MS Word, and email them to me at the address above. I will not accept printed copies of your essay.

I will submit the essay to plagiarism software, and mark essays using Track Changes in MS Word. If you're not sure what plagiarism is, consider this: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism>. Cite a source every time your essay makes use of an idea, quote, anecdote, study, or fact that you found in someone's work.

I call the essay a “research essay” to emphasize that the quality of your essay is largely dependent upon the quality of your research. Use at least four scholarly articles or published books. The phrase “at least” means you are allowed and encouraged to use more than four sources. The length of the essay should be 1,500 to 2,500 words.

Cite your sources wherever you rely on them, using footnotes, parenthetical notes or end notes. Be very specific when citing a source, using either the Chicago, APA, or MLA format throughout. For details, please consult the [Rutgers Library Guide](#). Cite a source every time you make use of someone's ideas.

## **7. Drop and Withdrawal Deadlines**

The last date for students to drop a course with no penalty is September 13<sup>th</sup>, 2016 and the last date to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade is November 7<sup>th</sup>, 2016.

## **8. Academic Integrity Agreement and Honor Pledge**

On each examination, you will be required to sign the following statement:

On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).

## **9. Information for Students with Disabilities**

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information, please contact Kate Torres at [\(973\) 353-5375](tel:973-353-5375) or in the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219 or by contacting [odsnewark@rutgers.edu](mailto:odsnewark@rutgers.edu).

Calendar

| CLASS | DATE   | TOPIC   | ASSIGNED READING (to be done before class)   |
|-------|--------|---|--|
| 1     | Sep 10 | Humans Before Written History                 | n/a  |
| 2     | Sep 17 | Neolithic Revolution                          | <a href="#">Patricia Cohen, <i>History That's Written in Beads as Well as Words</i>, NYT, 2011</a><br><a href="#">Jared Diamond, <i>The Worst Mistake in the History of the Human Race</i>, Discover, 1987</a><br><i>(Because humans weren't writing yet, our written accounts this week are secondary sources.)</i> |
| 3     | Sep 24 | Mesopotamia and Hebrews                       | <a href="#">Advice of Akkadian Father to His Son</a> <i>(We have four readings this week, but three are very short.)</i><br><a href="#">Hammurabi's Code</a><br><a href="#">Abraham Seeks to Convert Terah</a><br><a href="#">Wikipedia article containing tale of Abraham &amp; Idol Shop</a>                       |
| 4     | Oct 1  | Classical Greece                              | <a href="#">Demosthenes, <i>For the Freedom of The Rhodians</i></a> (6 pages)<br><a href="#">The Polity of the Athenians, c. 424 BCE</a>   |
| 5     | Oct 8  | Rome: from Republic to Empire                 | <a href="#">Appian, <i>On The Civil Wars</i>, excerpt: <i>The Gracchi</i></a><br><a href="#">Tacitus, <i>The End of the Republic</i></a>   |
| 6     | Oct 15 | Roman Society, Fall, and Rise of Christianity | <a href="#">Julian Marriage Laws</a><br><a href="#">Laws of the Twelve Tables</a><br><a href="#">Tacitus, <i>Germania</i></a>  |
| 7     | Oct 22 | <b>Midterm Exam</b>                           | n/a  |

|    |        |  |   |
|----|--------|--|---|
| 8  | Oct 29 | Medieval Europe  | <a href="#">Boniface VIII, Clericis Laicos, 1296</a><br><a href="#">de Vitry, Life of the Students at Paris</a><br><a href="#">C. Munro, The Medieval Universities, excerpts</a> (This is a secondary source from the 20 <sup>th</sup> century with many quotes from primary sources.)                        |
| 9  | Nov 5  | Renaissance<br>(Also, pick debate topics.)                   | <a href="#">Vasari, Life of Leonardo Da Vinci, 1550</a><br>Also, come to class with a suggested debate topic.   |
| 10 | Nov 12 | Oceanic Voyages, Mercantilism, and Global Empires            | <a href="#">King Ferdinand's letter to the Tainos</a><br><a href="#">Journal and letters for 1497-99 da Gama voyage</a><br><a href="#">Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olandah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, The African, Chapter 2</a><br><a href="#">R. Hakluyt, Discourse on Western Planting, 1584</a> |
| 11 | Nov 19 | <b>Debates</b>   | Create debate notes that cite research, and submit debate notes via email.  |
|    | Nov 26 | <b>No Class- Thanksgiving Break</b>                          | n/a   |
| 12 | Dec 3  | <b>Finish Debates</b><br>Reformation and Counter-Reformation | <a href="#">J. Hus, Final Declaration, 1415</a><br><a href="#">J. Calvin, Necessity of Reforming the Church, Excerpt: Reformation Required Without Delay, 1543</a>  |
| 13 | Dec 10 | Scientific Revolution  | <a href="#">N. Copernicus, Dedication of the Revolutions of the Heavenly Bodies, 1543</a><br><a href="#">K. Popper, Science As Falsification, 1963</a> (This is a hard reading. Take your time.)  |
|    | Dec 14 | <b>Research Essay due</b><br>(We don't have class this day.) | <a href="#">Rutgers University Libraries, Don't Plagiarize! Document Your Research</a>  |
|    | Dec 17 | <b>Final Exam</b><br>(11:45am in regular classroom)          | n/a   |