

Course Outline

1, Course Number/Name: Hist105, Western Civilization: 1700 to the Present.

Credits: 3

2. Course Description: “Western Civilization from 1700 to the Present” approaches the study of the modern era from a practical level and on a deeper, philosophical level. The course is designed to give students an understanding of the sweep of modern history from 1710 to the modern day. Underlying this course of study is the assumption that problems of modern society, like those of past societies, have their roots in constants of human thought and behavior---one might even say, permanent character flaws. This class will develop in the student’s mind an appreciation for the constants of history, as well as for those aspects of the human history that are in constant flux. In other words, the course asks what it is about us that is the same as with other civilizations, past and present, and what about us is different? More important, what is significant, or true, about either the similarities or differences?

3. Course Goals: As students examine the ways in which different civilizations have developed, changed, merged, and diverged, they will develop a rational way of comparing and criticizing the differences and similarities among civilizations of both the past and present. By following the readings and assignments and mastering the subject matter of this course, students will develop a number of skills that they can apply to any profession or occupation: critical thinking, analysis of factual material and—what is often overlooked—basic work and study habits. All are necessary for successful performance in this class and in life.

4. Learning Outcomes: Students successfully completing this course should be able to:

1. Explain how the commercialization of Europe accelerated the collapse of feudalism.
2. Describe the State of Nature theorists and their concepts of life, liberty, and property and how these theories affect notions of just political rule.
3. Compare and contrast how the Declaration of Independence and Declaration of Rights of Man and Citizen reflect the concepts related the State of Nature theories and theorists.
4. Assess the historical significance of Napoleon to Europe’s map, its laws, and modern European politics.
5. Evaluate the uniqueness of the Industrial Revolution to the West and the uniqueness of its affect on Western political thought.
6. Summarize the life of Karl Marx and how his intellectual positions were colored by the events in Europe.

7. Contrast the differences in the expansion of the franchise in economic liberty between Britain, France, and Germany in the mid 19th century.
8. Identify and elaborate on the causes of imperialism and why Europeans were so successful at it.
9. Describe and assess the relative importance among the causes of WWI.
10. Outline the causes and course of the Russian Revolution, Treaty of Versailles, establishment of Weimar Republic, and the rise of fascism.
11. Identify the important people and policies in the restoration of Europe to a world power from post WW II through the mid 1960s.
12. Explain the origins of the Cold War.
13. Argue if and how the US weakened in power, or not, from 1960-1980.
14. Examine the relationship between democracies and “big government.”

5. Course Concepts:

1. Constitutional crisis and settlement in Stuart England; rise of absolute monarchy in France; the Scientific revolution; Francis Bacon; Rene Descartes; Thomas Hobbes; John Locke; Galileo; Blaise Pascal; maritime exploration; Russia;
2. The Old Regime; revolution in agriculture and the industrial revolution; mercantile empires; Spanish colonial system; Black African slavery; the American Revolution; the Philosophes; the Enlightenment; the French Revolution
3. Napoleon Bonaparte; the Congress of Vienna; the Romantic Movement; nationalism and liberalism;
4. The industrial society; classical economics; early Socialism; 1848 Year of Revolutions; the Crimean War; German unification; France’s Third Republic; Russia; Great Britain;
5. Universal education; Comte, Positivism; Darwin; Christianity and the Church; Nietzsche; psychoanalysis; New Imperialism; Alliance systems; World War I; the Russian Revolution; the Versailles Treaty;
6. Postwar economic problems; Trotsky; The Third International; Italian Fascism; Mussolini; Eastern Europe; World War II; the Atlantic Charter
7. Soviet Union; Stalin; the Welfare State;
8. The Cold War; Khrushchev; the Suez; Polish; Hungarian crises; European Christian Democratic parties; Brezhnev; Gorbachev; collapse of European Communism

6. Required Texts:

Kagan, Donald, Steven Ozment, and Frank M. Turner. *The Western Heritage: Vol. II: Since 1648*, brief edition, third edition. Upper Saddle River, New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 2002. ISBN: 0-13-041577-4

7. Recommended Reading:

In addition to these, the following two books are strongly recommended for an overview of modern European history: Paul Johnson, *Modern Times: A History of the World from the Twenties to the Nineties* (New York: HarperCollins, 1991), and Mark Mazower, *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (New York: Knopf, 1999).

8. Additional Resources:

See Resources

Course Syllabus

Course Number: Hist105

Course Title: Western Civilization from 1700 to Present.

Faculty: Carey Roberts, Ph.D.

Class Participation and Assignment Submission:

Students are ultimately responsible for participating in the course through the following academic activities: uploading assignments, posting to discussion topics, responding to instructor inquiries, submitting written papers and taking quizzes and exams. Students are expected to be involved in ongoing instructional activities based on the recommended schedule for course completion as detailed in the syllabus. In order to actively participate in a course, Students must make contact with their faculty mentor on a regular basis through one of the following methods:

- Uploading weekly written discussion topic responses into the Discussion section of the course delivery system for grading by your Instructor.
- Participation in discussion threads with the instructor and other students.
- Posting of other assignments as identified by the course instructor.

Assessments: Students are expected to give special attention to the reading assignments for every session of the course and are further encouraged to complete all coursework in sixteen weeks or less.

Your comprehension of these readings will be assessed by means of ten “**Discussion Topics**” (found by clicking “Discussion” on the Control Panel in Izio) that enables you to join your Instructor and other students in discussing what you and they have read.

Students are required to respond to those topics in the Discussion area of their course template and are expected to participate in all discussions. Each initial response should be no less than 250 words. Contributions to Discussion are valued at 40% of your final grade. Each session’s discussion exchange will be graded.

There will be 5 writing assignments. Each is valued at 6% (30% of your final grade).

Finally, there will be a final exam, each valued at 15% of your final grade.

Assessment Percentages:

Contribution to Discussion Topics:	40%
Five Writing Assignments (6% each)	30%
Final Exam	30%

Yorktown University official grade and writing rubrics are located at http://www.yorktownuniversity.com/grad_rubrics.cfm

Academic Integrity

Available both in the student and faculty handbooks.

Recommended Schedule for Course Completion

Session 1: Feudal Europe. The basis for the political development of an emerging Europe is the result of the breakdown of the Roman Empire, the ascendancy of the Church, the continuation of the tribal clans, the rise of fiefdoms and monarchs, and the foment of martial, cultural, and economic activity amongst all these populations.

Lectures

Audio: 1: and 2

Assignment

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 13-15: Feudal Europe in its Death Throes

Writing assignment number 1 due (see Assignments in Izio)

Discussion Question: How did property rights and personal freedom emerge from the social, economic and military activity of feudal Europe? Why or why not was it inevitable?

Session Outcomes: 4.1

Session 2: Enlightenment and Revolution: America and France. The grandiose thinking spurred by the scientific inquiry into nature arrives as at a connection between mankind's political arrangements and natural law. This connection provides the rationale for mankind's "natural rights," and accordingly, the right to install what the governed deem a more just government. Yet two different revolutions, based on the same set of principles, result in very different outcomes.

Lecture

Audio: 4 and 5

Assignment

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 16—19: The Enlightenment Basis of Western Society and the End of Absolutism and Revolutions in America and France, 1775-1799

Writing assignment number 2 due (see Assignments in Izio)

Discussion Question: How did the concept of the "state of nature" develop and change (especially with regard to life, liberty, and property) in

the views of Thomas Hobbes and John Locke? How did they affect the two different outcomes of the American and French revolutions?

Session Outcomes: 4.2 and 4.3

Session 3: Napoleon's Rise, Conquest, and Fall. Out of the cinders of the French Revolution for liberty, equality, and fraternity comes an imperial dictator, who by force of arms conquers Europe. Yet, he also established the first real "rule of law" through the Code Napoleon. The code was the first codification of law established with a civil legal system that emphasized clear, written and accessible law. Many European countries either adopted or adapted this code for their own governance.

Lecture

Audio 6

Assignment

Required reading:

Kagan ch. 20-21: Napoleon: Last Man of "Old Europe" or the First Modern Dictator?

Discussion Question: Make the case for why Napoleon was either the last man of "Old" Europe—i.e., a monarch—or the first modern authoritarian, or a bit of both; and what difference does it make in our appreciation of his place in history?

Session Outcomes: 4.4

Session 4: From Pre to Post-Industrial Revolution. The machinery of progress, although quickly assigned to malign political intent, is always disruptive and painful, most often and most painfully to those attached by necessity to the subsequent economic model. Economic transitions are inherently chaotic, no less the transitions around the Industrial Revolution in Europe, in particular.

Lecture

Audio, 7

Assignment

Required reading

Kagan, ch. **22-24**: Why the West Grew Rich, or, Europe's Industrial Revolution and Marx's Whine: Responses to the Industrial Revolution--- Economic, Political, and Artistic

Additional reading: "The Communist Manifesto" [available in "Links"]

Writing assignment number 3 is due (see Assignment in Izio)

Discussion Question: Why might it be argued that the Industrial Revolution and the political responses to it were unique to Western Europe and incapable of occurring anywhere else in the world, regardless of physical resources? Criticize and defend the argument supporting historical “moments” of convergence of ideas.

Session Outcomes: 4.5 and 4.6

Session 5: European Politics and the Age of Imperialism Just as the new economic models were gaining strength by virtue of the working and middle classes, the old style of monarchical governance throughout the Continent was being questioned. But they were not turned over before a final gasp.

Lecture

None

Assignment:

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 25-26: European Politics in Turmoil, from the Congress of Vienna to the Revolutions of 1848.

Writing assignment number 4 is due (see Assignments in Izio)

Discussion Question: Why, among all Europe’s major powers, did England avoid the revolutions of the mid-1800s, explain this in terms of its cultural traditions, its distinct philosophical schools of thought, and its demography?

Session Outcomes: 4.7 and 4.8

Session 6: The World of Wars (I and II) and Between. The final gasp was World War I, which set the stage for World War II and eventually the Cold War. Arguably what was lost during WWI was the generation of men who could have stopped or diverted the slide into the next wars. Meanwhile, the United States was becoming stronger and more representative of the “rights of man” than Europe.

Lecture

Audio: 9, Pt. 1, 2

Assignment:

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 26—29: Europe's Attempted Suicide and the First World War; The Fragile Peace---Europe and America Between the War: The Great

Depression; Demonic Aggression, Divine Intercession---the World War II Experience

Discussion Question: How might it be argued that WWII was merely a continuation of WWI with a 20-year interlude and what does this imply about how wars are resolved, if ever?

Session Outcomes: 4.9 and 4.10

Session 7: American Ascension and European Decline and Recovery. The American role in WWII both in on the Continent and in the Pacific speaks for itself. Just as critical for Europe, in particular, was the American role in its recovery through the Marshall Plan. The plan and its implementation provided the basis for both an economic and a political renewal built on solid democratic principles.

Lecture

None

Assignment:

Require reading:

Kagan, ch. 30: European Decline, American Ascension, 1945-1960

Discussion Question: Using your arguments from session 4 about historical “moments,” or inevitability, explain what political, economic, and moral factors account for American ascension and European decline from 1850-1950?

Session Outcomes: 4.11

Session 8: Cold War. The Cold War, though typically seen from the Stalin era to the Gorbachev’s Glasnost, was also a result of the Imperial Age gone awry, predominantly but not exclusively in Russia. German thinkers led the way to violent Bolshevik expansionism and the Soviet Union.

Lecture

None

Assignment:

Required reading

Kagan, ch. 31 p. 594 through p. 601: Origins and Course of the Cold War, 1945-1980

Writing assignment number 5 is due (see Assignments in Izio)

Discussion Question: What strategies did the West develop for dealing with Soviet Russia's expansionism after WWII, and how did those policies stand Lenin's thesis of "imperialism" on its head?

Session Outcomes: 4.12

Session 9: A New Day Dawns (1980-1990) America overcomes its leadership isolationism after Viet Nam and the Iran hostage affair when a new president proclaims "it's morning in America."

Lecture

None

Assignment:

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 31, pp. 602-607: American Retreat and the Lapse of World Leadership, 1960-1980

Discussion Question: Describe why the period 1960-1980 is sometimes regarded as "America's Suicide Attempt" and explain why that view may or may not be justified by the historical context?

Session Outcomes: 4.13

Session 10: The Drift Leftward (1990s to the present day)

Lecture

None

Assignment

Required reading:

Kagan, ch. 31, 608-619.

Discussion Question: What are the internal dynamics of democratic societies that impel them toward populism and collective welfare-state policies; is this an "inevitable" end for democratic regimes, if so, why, if not, why?

Session Outcomes: 4.14.

FINAL EXAM