HST122
The History of Western Civilization since 1500

Course Objectives

The objectives of this class are three-fold: to promote historical thinking and awareness, to help you think critically about the past and its impact upon our present lives and institutions, and to encourage you to view the study of the history as fertile ground for life-long learning and personal enrichment. To achieve this end, we will examine three threads of human development since 1500, specifically 1) the types of governments various societies in the European cultural area have developed and how individuals have related to those structures, 2) how social and economic change since the European discovery of Western Hemisphere have transformed the face of world civilization, and 3) how war and revolution have transformed the lives of Europeans.

Miami Plan goals and learning outcomes of History 122

History 122 is a foundation course for the Miami Plan. It is designed to be challenging and rigorous. Be prepared to work hard, to think hard and to read and write more than you have perhaps ever done in your life. As a foundation course, History 121 will help you to understand contexts by examining the many different institutions, beliefs, and life patterns of past human societies. We will meet the content goals (or learning objectives) of this class as you learn to situate the history of Western Civilization in a global context.

This course will increase your critical thinking skills by teaching you how to interpret the types of sources and evidence that historians use to create a picture of the past. Working in an introductory way with documents, texts, and physical evidence, you will learn to develop arguments based on historical evidence and understand events or phenomena in the context of larger narratives. You will also be introduced to the history of history - how our understanding of the past has changed in the course of human history.

In study group work, in class discussions about the assigned readings, and through bi-weekly posting on the Discussion Forum, you will have the opportunity to learn from other learners. Combining the perspectives of your classmates with your own, you will begin to ask historical questions and make historical arguments in your midterm and final essays.

As you gain specific knowledge about the major events and issues of Western Civilization, you will be better able to reflect and act as participants in the American democratic experiment. We will meet the reflecting and acting outcome criterion as you begin to apply your knowledge of the past through reflecting and writing about it.

Since clear writing is an essential life skill and an important hallmark of a well-educated citizenry, we will also accent writing in this course. We will build up to writing longer,
lucid, content-rich essays through a three-step program. You will write brief, critical thinking and reflection essays after each lecture. You will write more sustained analytical pieces in the tests over the supplemental texts. For the midterm and final examinations, you will write longer essays (each equivalent to eight pages) that will synthesize the information and concepts that you have learned. In this course - working in an introductory way with documents, texts, and physical evidence - you will learn how historians try to understand the past. You will learn to develop arguments based on historical evidence, and understand events or phenomena in the context of larger narratives. The content goals (or learning objectives) of this class are clearly laid out in the study guides available on the course web site.

**Textbook and other course resources**

There are four books that we will be reading:


Elizabeth Gaskell, *North & South.*


These assigned reading should be completed prior to lecture. If you don't read, you won't be able to follow the lectures and participate fully in class. You are responsible for acquiring and reading the assigned material by the time when each test is scheduled. The inefficiency of our campus bookstore is no excuse. If the bookstore is "out", pick the text up on Amazon. It will probably be cheaper.

*The West* is available in digital format if you prefer. Here are several options:

Coursesmart.com rental (online purchase - etext only): $34.99

*MyLab with etext (online purchase from [www.pearsonmylab.com](http://www.pearsonmylab.com)): $45.10*

Amazon Kindle etext (Kindle Fire HD/iPad/Android Tablet/PC/Mac): $58.00.

I have linked a PowerPoint and podcast for each lecture on this syllabus. You can open each PowerPoint, download and print it in "handout" format. (I suggest 3 slides per page.) In that way, you have all the important vocabulary and concepts and can take notes in the space provided on the left side of the handout. The podcasts are useful if you want to clarify parts of the lecture that you did not understand, if you are an "aural" person who learns best by hearing, or if you review better with the spoken than the written word or the visuals of the PowerPoints. You should not use these podcasts as a substitute for coming to class, but if you are ill or unable to make it to class, they might keep you up to speed.
Grades

Your grade will be determined in the following manner:

10%  Post-lecture assessments (PLAs)
10%  Voltaire quiz
10%  Gaskell quiz
10%  Levi quiz
30%  Midterm examination
30%  Final examination

I have posted post-lecture assessments (PLAs) for each class meeting on this site. (You can access each through the "Tests and Quizzes" button in the left menu bar. Each PLA is worth 0.5% of your total course grade and will be accessible for 48 hours after the lecture. These assessments will enable me to track how well the you comprehend the lecture material and how well we are fulfilling the goals of the Miami Plan in the course. Because these assessments review the learning objectives and content of each lecture, they will serve as an excellent means for you to review the lecture as well as provide you with systematic preparation for the midterm and final examinations.

I have created critical thinking and reflection threads in the "Forums" section of this site pertaining to each lecture topic (accessible through the left menu bar or the link following the lecture topic). You are expected to participate in at least 20 of these on-line discussions. Non-participation will result in the reduction of your grade by 10%. You can earn extra credit by participating in more than 20 discussions.

You will be tested on each of the three supplemental texts. The supplemental text quizzes will be available for 48 hours after the date posted in the syllabus. The tests will consist of objective and essay questions. Study guides for the essays can be accessed by clicking on the study guide link to each book in the course schedule below.

The midterm and final examinations for this course will be half objective and half essay. The objective questions will be drawn from a "random block" of all the PLAs. You can find a study guide listing the potential essay questions by following the Midterm examination and Final examination links in the syllabus.

There is no curve in this class. You are graded individually based on your performance; the grade you earn is your individual responsibility. After 21 years at Miami University - teaching over 2500 students in more than 40 sections of History 122 - the average student grade currently stands at a C.

Every test and quiz in this course will be available for 48 hours. You must take all exams in the scheduled time frame. If for any reason you cannot make an exam, you must contact me. Otherwise, a make-up will only be possible with a doctor's or mechanic's excuse.
I will be following the standard Miami University grading system:

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<td>A-</td>
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According to the Miami University Student Handbook, you may withdraw from a full-semester course through the ninth calendar week of the semester. After the end of the ninth week, you may NOT withdraw from the course unless a petition is approved by the Interdivisional Committee of Advisors. For the full policy, see: [www.miami.muohio.edu/documents_and_policies/handbook/](http://www.miami.muohio.edu/documents_and_policies/handbook/)

**Student Services and Disability Services**

Miami Hamilton has an excellent Learning Assistance center. If you are experiencing difficulties with any aspect of this course or with the adjustment to college life, our learning experts would be glad to help you. Make sure to check out the Office of Learning Assistance in 107 Rentschler Hall. Any student who feels that s/he may need an accommodation based on the impact of a disability should contact the Office of Disability Services at 785-3211 in 121 Rentschler (also in the Student Services area). If you have already registered with this office and have requested accommodations for this class, please talk with me privately. I will look forward to discussing the arrangements that are outlined in the faculty letter.

**Office Hours**

I will be holding office hours on Tuesday from 1:00-2:15 and 3:30-5:00. If these hours are not convenient, I’m glad to arrange an appointment at another time. The most efficient way to contact me is via e-mail at vascikgs@muohio.edu. I leave my e-mail connected throughout the business day and on weekends, and will try to respond to your question on the day that I receive it. Last semester, I exchanged more than 400 e-mails with students in my large Civ section while I had fewer than two dozen office hour drop-bys, suggesting that the preferred method of contact for most students for most questions is virtual rather than personal. You are also welcome to call my office 513-785-3272. Be sure to leave a voice mail message as that is then sent as a wav file to my e-mail account! I check this site frequently during the day, so if your screen freezes on one of the tests, please e-mail me immediately and I will reset your test within the hour.
Problems with Niihka

Niihka means "friend" but it is an inconstant friend. It is "freeware" that Miami - in a fit of madness - decided to use in order to save money. The techies among you know that freeware is a synonym for buggy. If you are having a problem, e-mail me with your exact problem. Report to me your operating system (PC or MAC), your browser (i.e., Internet Explorer), and whether you had any other windows or applications open at the time (Be warned: friend Niihka appears to hate Facebook). I will then forward your problem report to the crack team of tech people in Oxford who will solve your issue. Or not. In the order in which it was received. *Update:* Niihka seems to work better when accessed using Google Chrome.

A personal note

Do not be distracted if you find me doing the majority of my lecturing from a wheelchair. I have a rare Cogenital Muscular Dystrophy know as Bethlem Myopathy that results in progressive cramping, physical exhaustion, and muscle death. In the past few years, I have found that after a normal day of lecturing my muscles cramp so badly that I cannot work. I hope that by restricting myself to a sitting position when teaching I can avoid extreme pain medications (and stay mentally coherent). Please bear with me as change my teaching style to conform to life in a chair.

Lecture Outline

*All lectures are available on Niihka in downloadable podcast and PowerPoint formats. I am currently making YouTube videos for each lecture as well. I strongly suggest that you download each lecture PowerPoint in "handout" format and bring it to class to take notes on. I frequently send e-mails to remind you of assignments or to make emendations to this outline. IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY, PER THE MIAMI HANDBOOK, TO CHECK YOUR E-MAIL AT LEAST ONCE EVERY TWO DAYS. Failure on your part to miss a change or assignment that I send to you via e-mail does not constitute an excuse for missed work.*

Lectures and readings

01/15  Course introduction


01/22  The early modern nobility. (*pdf*, podcast, PLA)
01/24  The expansion of Europe, The West, pp. 346-353. (pdf, PLA) Film: The West and the Wider World

01/29  The roots of French absolutism, The West, pp. 376-381. (pdf, PLA)

01/31  Louis XIV and Versailles, The West, pp. 390-404. (podcast, pdf, PLA) Film: Versailles

02/05  Absolutism in Eastern Europe, The West, pp. 408-417. (podcast, pdf, PLA)

02/07  Power and politics in Tudor England, The West, pp. 369-378. (podcast, pdf, PLA)

02/12  Stuart Absolutism, The West, pp. 398-399. (podcast, pdf, PLA)

02/14  British Constitutionalism, The West, pp. 404-408. (podcast, pdf, PLA) English royal iconography

02/19  Discussion of Voltaire, Letters on England (study guide)

02/21  Quiz on Voltaire, Letters on England

02/26  French Revolution, The West, pp. 462-480. (podcast, PLA)

02/28  Midterm examination review day (study guide)

03/05  Midterm examination (midterm analysis)

03/07  The Industrial Revolution, The West, pp. 490-517. (podcast, PLA)

03/12  Spring Break

03/14  Spring Break

03/19  Discussion of Gaskell, North and South (study guide)

03/21  Quiz on Gaskell, North and South

03/26  Industry and Empire, The West, pp. 546-575, 576-601. (podcast, PLA) Film: Industry & Empire

03/28  The Great War, The West, pp. 604-620. (podcast, PLA)

04/02  The Russian Revolution, The West, pp. 620-631. (podcast, PLA)

04/04  Stalinist Russia, The West, pp. 651-655. (podcast, PLA)
04/09  Weimar Germany, The West, pp. 632-651. (podcast, PLA)

04/11  Hitler's War, The West, pp. 656-681. (podcast, PLA)

04/16  Discussion of Levi, Survival in Auschwitz  (study guide)

04/18  Quiz on Levi, Survival in Auschwitz

04/23  Soviet rule in Eastern Europe, The West, pp. 714-747. (podcast, PLA)


04/30  The European Welfare State, The West, pp. 701-716. (podcast, PLA)

05/02  Final examination review day  (study guide)

05/07  Final examination