

HIST 101: Western Civilization Since 1648

University of Illinois at Chicago
Mondays & Wednesdays, 12-12:50 PM



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This lecture course provides a broad overview of European history since 1648, with significant emphasis on Europe's interactions with the wider world. The course examines key events and processes that shaped Western modernity, including the Enlightenment and French Revolution; the trans-Atlantic slave trade and history of European empire; the industrial revolution, nationalism, and nineteenth-century social change; the world wars of the twentieth century; the rebuilding of post-war Europe, the Cold War, and the European Union. Across these disparate events and moments in time, we will unearth foundational histories of state power, democracy,

capitalism, and globalization. At the same time, we will also consider cultural histories of ideas, art, music, and memory—in connection with the many wars and upheavals that have marked the past three centuries.

READINGS & COURSE MATERIAL

This course emphasizes primary source material—that is, material written and imagined by individuals who lived through the events we are studying. As a result, most assigned readings will be available to you on Blackboard. In addition, the following books are available for purchase, at the UIC Bookstore and online:

- ❖ Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1928) (Ballantine Books, 1987).
 - ISBN-10: 9780449213940
- ❖ George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) (Mariner Books, 2015).
 - ISBN-10: 0544382048
- ❖ Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (1947) (Simon & Schuster, 1996).
 - ISBN-10: 9780684826806

ACTIVE PARTICIPATION

Active participation is an important part of this course. There are two required lectures each week. If watching a recorded lecture feels impersonal to you, you are more than welcome to tune in live. If, by contrast, you are unable to attend the live broadcast, or if you prefer to watch the recorded version, that is perfectly acceptable too. In either case, however, you should watch both lectures during the week in which they are assigned.

Apart from lectures, you will have two venues to discuss the assigned readings. On Fridays, your TAs will lead live discussion sections using Blackboard Collaborate. Meanwhile, leading up to section, designated discussion boards will be available to facilitate group discussions on the assigned readings. These discussion boards are described in more detail below, in Written Assignments.

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS

There are two writing assignments in this course. The first is participation in a weekly discussion board, which is your opportunity to reflect on the readings assigned each week. Discussion board responses should be brief (roughly 1 paragraph). Your aim should be to highlight a particular feature, idea, or aspect of the readings that seems important to you, and to explain why. You are welcome to raise questions, propose arguments, and respond to each other's posts as well (respectfully and constructively).

The second assignment is a 5-7 page essay, due at the end of Week 13. The subject of this essay will be one of the longer readings assigned in this course—those written by Equiano, Rousseau, Marx and Engels, Pankhurst, Remarque, Orwell, and Levi. The purpose of the essay is not to summarize the reading you choose. Instead, it is to develop a sustained, specific argument about

that reading. Further instructions as well as guiding questions will be distributed separately, and the specific subject of your essay must be planned in advance in consultation with your TA.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND EVALUATION

In addition to the written assignments described above, a final exam will be given. Final grades will reflect these assignments in the following proportions, and will also take into account improvement over time:

- ❖ Section participation (10%)
- ❖ Discussion board (15%)
- ❖ Essay (35%)
- ❖ Final Exam (40%)

OFFICE HOURS

Students are warmly invited to attend office hours, especially in light of the fact that this is a large course being conducted online. I am genuinely interested in getting to know you individually and in hearing your ideas about the course. My office hours will be held on Wednesdays, from 2-4 PM, and on Thursdays, from 10-11 AM. Office hours will be held online using Blackboard Collaborate, which you can access through the “Office Hours” tab on the left-hand menu of the Blackboard course site.

ACCESSIBILITY & ACCOMMODATIONS

The University of Illinois at Chicago is committed to maintaining a barrier-free environment so that students with disabilities can fully access all programs, courses, services, and activities. Students with disabilities who require accommodations for participation in this course should register with the Disability Resource Center (DRC). You may contact the DRC at 312-413-2183 (v) or 773-649-4535 (VP/Relay) and consult the DRC’s guide to accommodations at: <http://drc.uic.edu/guide-to-accommodations>.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

Plagiarism has no place in this class. Your written work must be your own, and all quotations from published material should be properly cited. This is for your own good: the purpose of this class is to develop *your* critical faculties, not to copy others. If you are ever unsure whether or how to cite material in your writing, please ask. (Your teaching assistants and I are happy to help)! Because the university treats plagiarism so seriously, infractions can result in a failing grade in this class.

COURSE SCHEDULE

WEEK 1 / Introduction

August 24. Introduction to the Course. Guiding Questions.

August 26. The Scientific Revolution. Nature and Knowledge. Republic of Letters. Knowledge and Empire. Social History of Knowledge. Concept of Revolution.

NO ASSIGNED READING. DISCUSSION SECTIONS WILL MEET AS SCHEDULED FOR INTRODUCTORY SESSIONS.

WEEK 2 / Sovereignty and State Power during the Eighteenth Century

August 31. Absolutism and the Growth of the State.

September 2. Empire and the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African* (1789), selections from chapters 1, 2, and 5, pp. 1-6, 29-31, 38-44, 45-88, 180-227 [Blackboard]

WEEK 3 / Age of Enlightenment

September 7. LABOR DAY: No Class.

September 9. The Enlightenment

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Jean-Jacques Rousseau, *Discourse on the Origins of Inequality* (1755), pp. 81-138 [Blackboard].

WEEK 4 / Age of Revolution

September 14. The French Revolution. Origins. Political Culture. Revolution as Rupture. Popular Sovereignty.

September 16. The Haitian Revolution. Anti-Slavery as Enlightenment. Slave Rebellion from Below. Limits of Modern Democracy.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Abbé Sieyès, *What is the Third Estate?* (1789) [Blackboard]
- ❖ *Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen* (1789) [Blackboard]
- ❖ The Free Citizens of Color, *Address to the National Assembly* (1789) [Blackboard]

- ❖ Toussaint L'Ouverture, *Constitution of the French Colony of Saint Domingue* (1801) [Blackboard]
- ❖ *Haitian Declaration of Independence* (1804) [Blackboard]

WEEK 5 / The Industrial Revolution

September 21. Burning Coal. Revolutions in trade, production, and the environment.

September 23. Industry and Social Change. Urbanization. Labor and Experience. Unrest. Three views of the modern city: London, San Francisco, and Johannesburg.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Frederick Engels, *The Condition of the Working-Class in England* (1844), pp. 1-74 [Blackboard]
- ❖ E.P. Thompson, *The Making of the English Working Class* (preface) (1963) [Blackboard]

WEEK 6 / Politics, Reform, and Democracy

September 28. Liberalism and Social Reform. Formation of liberal parties. Liberalism as Economic Policy. Reform Acts in Britain. Birth of Mass Politics.

September 30. Socialism and Social Unrest. 1848. Imperial Convulsions. Imperial Exclusions.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ John Stuart Mill, *On Liberty* (1859), pp. 7-9, 21-30 [Blackboard]
- ❖ Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), pp. 73-92 [Blackboard]

WEEK 7 / The Nation-State

October 5. Nationalism and National Unification. Consolidation of National Identity. The public sphere. Romanticism in art, music, philosophy. Unification of Germany and Italy.

October 7. Feminism and Citizenship. Victorian domesticity. Middle-class life. Women's movements in Britain and America. Citizenship from the margins.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Emmeline Pankhurst, *My Own Story* (1914), pp. 1-17, 57-78, 205-48 [Blackboard]

WEEK 8 / Imperialism

October 12. The Scramble for Africa. Expansion of European empires in context. Solidification of imperial power. Contradictions of the imperial state.

October 14. Race and Racism. Conceptions of Racial Difference. Scientific Racism. The Colonial Encounter. The Role of Race in Post-Emancipation Societies.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Thomas Carlyle, “Occasional Discourse on the Negro Question,” *Fraser’s Magazine*, vol. 40 (1849), pp. 670-79 [Blackboard]
- ❖ John Stuart Mill, “The Negro Question,” *Fraser’s Magazine*, vol. 41 (1850), pp. 25-31 [Blackboard]

WEEK 9 / The Great War

October 19. Total War. Origins of WWI. Trench warfare. The Western Front and the homefront. WWI as global war. Women and war.

October 21. Memory and Modernity. The Great War and the Western tradition. Modernism. The Great War and empire.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Erich Maria Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (1928)

WEEK 10 / The Interwar Period

October 26. The Great Depression and the Russian Revolution. Versailles, war debt, depression. Lenin. “Marxist-Leninism.”

October 28. The Rise of Fascism. Fascism in Italy. Weimar and the Nazi seizure of power. The Spanish Civil War as crucible of ideologies.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ George Orwell, *Homage to Catalonia* (1938) (selections)

WEEK 11 / The Second World War

November 2. Conflagration. Nazism and leibenstraum. Stalin and the Eastern war. The Allied powers and rise of American power. War economy. Death.

November 4. The Holocaust. Ideology of the Holocaust. The Holocaust and “civilization.”

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (1947) (selections)

WEEK 12 / Rebuilding Postwar Europe

November 9. The Welfare State. The Beveridge Report. Origins of Social Democracy. Social Democracy as postwar reformulation of nineteenth-century ideologies (liberalism and socialism)

November 11. The “trente glorieuses.” The Marshall Plan and American influence. Economic growth. Immigration and labor. Mass culture and consumerism.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ The Beveridge Report (1942), pp. 5-17, 48 (paragraph 106), 158-63 [Blackboard]
- ❖ Scenes from “Rome, Open City,” a film by Roberto Rossellini (1945) [Kanopy]
- ❖ Scenes from “La Notte,” a film by Michelangelo Antonioni (1961) [Kanopy]

WEEK 13 / The Cold War

November 16. The Soviet Union. Recap to 1930s. Stalinism and Soviet communism. Berlin divided.

November 18. The West in the World. Decolonization. Cold War idea of “the West.” American intervention in South America.

MATERIAL FOR DISCUSSION SECTIONS:

- ❖ Anna Akhmatova, “Requiem” (1935-40) [Blackboard]
- ❖ Jochen Hellbeck, *Revolution on My Mind: Writing a Diary under Stalin* (Cambridge, 2009), Preface, Ch. 3 [Blackboard]

Note: Essay Due Friday, November 20

WEEK 14 / Political Transformations of the Late-Twentieth Century

November 23. Economic and Political Change, East and West. Stagflation. Conservative reactions. Privatization. Neoliberalism. Thatcher and Reagan.

November 25. The Fall of Communism. 1989 and the Berlin Wall.

[No Friday recitation: 11/27 Thanksgiving holiday]

WEEK 15 / The European Union, Capitalism, and Inequality

November 30. The European Union. End of Ideology. Ideals of supranational governance. History of the European Economic Community. Creation of European Parliament. The EU and the Enlightenment. The Euro.

December 2. Capitalism, Inequality, Crisis. Free markets in Eastern Europe in the post-1989 period. Inequality. Financial crisis of 2008.

NO ASSIGNED READINGS. DISCUSSION OF FINAL EXAM IN SECTIONS.

FINAL EXAM: date TBD