



**MERCER**  
COUNTY COMMUNITY COLLEGE

# COURSE OUTLINE

**Course Number**  
**HIS 112**

**Course Title**  
**World History to 1500**

**Credits**  
**3**

**Hours:**  
**Lecture/Lab/Other**  
**3/0/0**

**Co- or Pre-requisite**  
**ENG 101**

**Implementation**  
**Semester & Year**  
**Fall 2022**

**Catalog description:** A survey of World History from prehistory to 1500 examining the development of ancient societies in Asia, Europe, Africa, the Americas, and Oceania. The course charts the development of individual societies focusing on interactions between peoples of different societies including ancient Egypt and Nubia, India, classical Greece and Rome, the Islamic states, Han China, early Korea and Japan and Andean and Mesoamerican societies.

**General Education Category:**  
**Goal 6: Humanities**  
**Goal 7: Historical Perspective**  
**Goal 8: Diversity and Global Perspective**

**Course coordinator:** Padhraig Higgins, [higginsp@mccc.edu](mailto:higginsp@mccc.edu), ext. 3495

**Required texts & Other materials:**

Jeremy Adelman, Elizabeth Pollard, Clifford Rosenberg, and Robert Tignor, *Worlds Together, Worlds Apart*, Volume One: Beginnings Through the Fifteenth Century, Concise 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition, Norton 2020.

**Course Student Learning Outcomes (SLO):**

***Upon successful completion of this course the student will be able to:***

1. read primary and secondary historical sources critically, with an understanding of their validity, perspective bias, audience, and context. (ILG 1, 5, 6,7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay; small and large-group discussions; individual writing assignments]*
2. analyze and interpret primary sources (whether they seem more “historical,” “literary,” or “philosophical”) and use them as evidence to support historical arguments. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay; small and large-group discussions]*
3. identify and describe the significance of major figures, ideas, and events of world history. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: quizzes; individual writing assignments]*
4. describe and analyze the context of major movements, trends, and developments of world history. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) *[Methods of assessment: Essay; individual writing assignments]*
5. discuss with authority, either in writing or verbally, the historical forces (e.g., religion, economics, politics, social stratification, gender, individual actors, technology, nature, intellectual and

aesthetic thought, etc.) behind the major movements, trends, and developments of world history. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) [Methods of assessment: Essay; individual writing assignments]

6. use information technologies in acquiring new knowledge and perspective. (ILG 4, 7, 10, 11) [Methods of assessment: Digital History project; essay]
7. construct an historical essay that presents a clear thesis, a persuasive argument, and uses detailed historical evidence. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) [Methods of assessment: Essay]
8. analyze other time periods and cultures with little or no ethnocentrism or modernism, thus displaying a sense of informed perspective and a deeper appreciation of the common threads of human nature. (ILG 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9) [Methods of assessment: small and large-group discussions; individual writing assignments]

### **Course-specific Institutional Learning Goals (ILG):**

**Institutional Learning Goal 1. Written and Oral Communication in English.** Students will communicate effectively in both speech and writing.

**Institutional Learning Goal 4. Technology.** Students will use computer systems or other appropriate forms of technology to achieve educational and personal goals.

**Institutional Learning Goal 5. Social Science.** Students will use social science theories and concepts to analyze human behavior and social and political institutions and to act as responsible citizens.

**Institutional Learning Goal 6. Humanities.** Students will analyze works in the fields of art, music, or theater; literature; philosophy and/or religious studies; and/or will gain competence in the use of a foreign language.

**Institutional Learning Goal 7. History.** Students will understand historical events and movements in World, Western, non-Western or American societies and assess their subsequent significance.

**Institutional Learning Goal 8. Diversity and Global Perspective:** Students will understand the importance of a global perspective and culturally diverse peoples

**Institutional Learning Goal 9. Ethical Reasoning and Action.** Students will understand ethical frameworks, issues, and situations.

**Institutional Learning Goal 10. Information Literacy:** Students will recognize when information is needed and have the knowledge and skills to locate, evaluate, and effectively use information for college level work.

**Institutional Learning Goal 11. Critical Thinking:** Students will use critical thinking skills understand, analyze, or apply information or solve problems.

### **Units of study in detail – Unit Student Learning Outcomes:**

Learning Objectives: *Students will be able to*

- Describe the geographical and chronological parameters of World history. **(SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 5-11)**
- Demonstrate an understanding of the periodization and chronology of the course. **(SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 5-11)**
- Identify primary vs. secondary sources and discuss the uses and limitations of each. **(SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 5-11)**

### **Unit I: The Emergence of Human Communities, to 500 B.C.E. [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]**

#### **1. The Emergence of Human Societies: The First 4 Million Years**

Students will be able to

- Describe the types of evidence historians draw on in the study of the Paleolithic and Neolithic periods and how these sources differ from the information used for studying later periods.
- Discuss the significance of the fact that humans evolved as part of the natural world.
- Describe how the physical and mental abilities that humans gradually evolved gave them a unique capacity to adapt to new environments.
- Explain how human communities in different parts of the world learned how to manipulate the natural works, domesticating plants and animals for their food and use.
- Describe the Agricultural Revolution(s) and explain how they affected gender roles and changed the way people lived.

## **2. The First River Valley Civilizations: Mesopotamia, Egypt, and India, 3500-1200 B.C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Define the term “civilization” and discuss some explanations for the emergence of early civilizations.
- Discuss how the need to organize labor resources shaped the political and social structures of the societies of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley.
- Describe how the interaction of these societies with the environment was reflected in their religious beliefs and world-views, providing specific examples from relevant ancient documents.
- Evaluate how differences in the environment and geographical location affected the development of civilization in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley.
- Discuss the evidence for interaction between the civilizations of Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley and other peoples (including interaction between the three civilizations themselves) and evaluate the importance of interaction with other peoples for the development of the three civilizations.
- Discuss some of the possible reasons for the decline and fall of the Indus civilization, paying careful attention to those factors that might explain the decline of civilizations in general.
- Compare and contrast the types of evidence historians have available for the study of civilizations in Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Indus Valley with a focus on explaining how the differences in these sources affect our understanding of these civilizations.
- Describe the major political and cultural developments in New Kingdom Egypt and explain why Egypt became an expansive and aggressive state during the New Kingdom.
- Discuss how technological and cultural influences of ancient centers (such as Egypt) affected the formation of new civilizations (such as Nubia).
- Describe the reasons for the nearly simultaneous collapse of several civilizations in the Middle East and Mediterranean during the Late Bronze Age.
- Discuss the written and archaeological sources historians use in order to understand the history of the civilizations of the Late Bronze Age, focusing on their advantages and limitations.
- Assess key written and archaeological sources available for the study of early civilizations (e.g., archaeological finds, the Code of Hammurabi, Egyptian and Mesopotamian Royal Inscriptions, etc.)

## **3. Early Society in China, 2200-500 B.C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe the rise of civilization in China.
- Discuss the ideology of kingship during China’s Shang dynasty and compare it with that of the Zhou dynasty.
- Describe the philosophy of Legalism as it was instituted in the Qin empire and evaluate its short-term success and long-term legacy.
- Compare and contrast the political philosophies of the Mandate of Heaven, Confucius, Daoism, and Legalism and make a judgment concerning the relative short-term success and long term legacy of each.
- Assess key written sources available for the study of Confucianism, Legalism, and Daoism

## **4. The Ancient Near East in the 1<sup>st</sup> millennium B.C.E.**

- Explain why historians call the Assyrian Empire of the 1st millennium B.C.E. the first “true empire,” focusing on ways the Assyrians were able to conquer and control such a large and ethnically diverse empire.
- Discuss how the religion of the Hebrews differed from those of their contemporary cultures (for example, Mesopotamia, Egypt, and the Hittites) and how the extant sources for understanding the religious beliefs and rituals of the various cultures differ.
- Describe the development and spread of Phoenician culture and the contributions of the Phoenicians to Mediterranean civilization.

- Explain how the Persian Empire brought diverse peoples together in a stable realm.
- Describe the key tenets of Zoroastrianism and analyze the place of Zoroastrianism as a Great Tradition.

## **Unit II: The Formation of New Cultural Communities, 1000 B.C.E. – 400 C.E. [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]**

### **5. Early Civilizations in the Americas, 1200-250 B.C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Analyze the key characteristics of early Mesoamerican civilization.
- Discuss the ways that environmental challenges shaped the early civilizations of Central and South America.
- Compare the development of complex civilizations in the Western Hemisphere with those of the Eastern Hemisphere, describing the factors that account for the major differences.

### **6. Greece and Iran, 1000-30 B.C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Discuss the reasons for the sudden growth of the Persian Empire.
- Describe how and why the governments of Sparta and Athens developed and changed from the Archaic through the Classical periods.
- Explain the reasons and outcomes of the conflicts between the Persians and the Greeks in the 5<sup>th</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> centuries B.C.E. (Persian Wars and Alexander's conquest).
- Describe and explain the influence of the Persians and of the Greeks on western Asia and Egypt.

### **7. An Age of Empires: Rome and Han China, 753 B.C.E.-330 C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Discuss the key characteristics of Roman government during the Republic and Empire.
- Explain how Augustus transformed Rome from a republic into an empire.
- Describe the causes and consequences of Roman expansion during the Republic and Empire.
- Explain why Christianity developed when and as it did and analyze the context for how Judaism and Christianity posed challenges to the Roman belief system.
- Describe the roles of Jesus, St. Paul, and Emperor Constantine in the ultimate survival and success of Christianity.
- Compare the success of the empires of Rome and Han China, describing the sources of their stability or instability and the weaknesses that eventually led to their downfall.
- Describe how the Roman and Han Chinese Empires were both quantitatively and qualitatively different from earlier empires.
- Analyze how environmental, geographical, religious, and ideological factors explain the different long-term legacies of the Roman and Han empires.
- Compare and contrast the role and status of women in Han China and Rome, citing specific examples from primary source documents.
- Discuss the role that nomadic peoples played in the history of both Rome and China.

### **8. India and Southeast Asia, 1500 B.C.E. – 1100 C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Explain the origin of the Indian class system during the Vedic Age, citing brief descriptions of the major class divisions and the connections with the *Vedic Hymn to Purusha*.
- Compare and contrast the basic beliefs, practices, and success of Jainism and Buddhism and analyze the appeal of each.
- Discuss the origins, evolution, and basic tenets of Hinduism.
- Compare the condition of Indian women during the Gupta Empire with that of women in Rome and Han China, citing specific examples from primary source documents.

- Describe the factors that combined to encourage the development of large political entities in Southeast Asia.
- Compare and contrast the Gupta Empire and the Srivijayan states of Southeast Asia, paying particular attention to how each controlled the population, raised money, and maintained power.

**Unit III: Growth and Interaction of Human Communities, 300 B.C.E. – 1200 C.E. [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]**

**9. Networks of Communication and Exchange, 300 B.C.E. – 1100 C.E.**

*Students will be able to*

- Identify the locations and describe the participants and the major trade goods of the Silk Road, the Indian Ocean, and the trans-Saharan trade routes.
- Describe the locations of the Silk Road and its importance for spreading technological advances and new ideas.
- Describe the development and the mechanics of the trans-Saharan trading system, explaining how it differed from the maritime systems of the Mediterranean and Indian Ocean.
- Analyze the role of the Bantu migrations in the development of civilization in Africa.
- Using specific examples, discuss the causes and patterns of the spread of Buddhism and Christianity.

**10. The Sasanid Empire and the Rise of Islam, 200-1200**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe the beliefs and requirements of Islam.
- Explain how Islam was able to spread from Spain to India in a relatively short amount of time, dominating a wide range of territories and societies.
- Describe the characteristics of Islamic civilization including the Shari'a, the role of cities in Islam, intellectual life, and the role of women.

**11. The Emergence of Christian Europe and Byzantium, 200-1200**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe life in feudal society in the period from 200-1200, with careful attention to various economic, gender, and social groups.
- Discuss the power and the limitations of the Christian church in Europe from 300-1200.
- Compare and contrast the development of the Byzantine Empire and the development of western Europe.
- Explain the reasons for the Crusades, the groups who benefited from them, and the way they affected Christian-Muslim relations.

**12. Central and Eastern Asia, 400-1200**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe how China flourished under a restored empire? (Sui and Tang).
- Discuss the history and significance of the relationships between China and its neighbors including Central Asia, Korea, Japan, and Vietnam.
- Explain the different roles of Buddhism in China, Tibet, Korea, and Japan.
- Evaluate the impact of Chinese culture on Japan and Korea.
- Explain the nature and significance of technological innovation in the Song Empire.

**13. Peoples and Civilizations of the Americas, 200-1500**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe the ways in which the environment affected the development of the economies, politics, and culture of the various parts of the Americas.
- Compare and contrast the key characteristics of Olmec, Mayan, and Toltec civilizations.

- Compare the development of Mesoamerican and Andean civilizations, particularly the Aztec and Inca Empires.

#### **Unit IV: Interregional Patterns of Culture and Contact, 1200-1550 [SLO 1-8; ILG 1, 4-11]**

##### **14. Western Eurasia, 1200-1500**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe the success of the Mongol invasions of Western Eurasia, with particular attention to Iran and Russia.
- Discuss the effects of Mongol rule in the territories directly ruled by the Il-khan and the Golden Horde and compare those with the effects of Mongol rule on peripheral areas including Mamluk Egypt, Lithuania, and Western Europe.
- Describe and give some examples of the ways in which Islamic science, technology and intellectual life flourished under Mongol rule.

##### **15. Eastern Eurasia, 1200-1500**

*Students will be able to*

- Describe how Chinese and Japanese politics and society changed following the invasion of the Mongols.
- Discuss the significance of the Zheng He voyages.
- Explain the relationship between China's technological stagnation and its economic growth in the early Ming period.
- Compare and contrast the development of political and technological development of Korea, Japan, and Vietnam between 1200-1500.

##### **16. Tropical Africa and Asia, 1200-1500**

*Students will be able to*

- Identify the location and environmental characteristics of the tropics and its environmental zones and explain how people made their livings in these various zones.
- Identify and compare the two Islamic empires of Mali and the Delhi Sultanate.
- Describe the Indian Ocean trade and identify the roles played in that trade by the Swahili city-states, Aden, Gujarat and the Malabar coast, and Malacca.
- Describe and give examples of the ways in which trade and the spread of Islam changed the societies and cultures of places connected to each other through the trans-Saharan and Indian Ocean trade networks.

##### **17. The Latin West, 1200-1500**

*Students will be able to*

- Analyze the causes and consequences of the disastrous 14<sup>th</sup> century.
- Explain the significance in world history of technological development and urbanization in the Latin West in the later Middle Ages.
- Analyze the ways in which the intellectual developments of the later Middle Ages reflected Westerners' views of themselves and of their relationship to the past.
- Discuss the ways in which the Hundred Years' War and the emergence of the "new monarchies" laid the foundations for the modern European state system.

##### **18. The Maritime Revolution, to 1550**

*Students will be able to*

- Compare the routes, motives, and sailing technologies of those people who undertook global maritime expansion before 1450 to the routes, motives, and sailing technologies of the Portuguese and Spanish explorers of 1400-1500.

- Explain the reasons for the various different reactions of African and Asian peoples to the Portuguese trading empire.
- Describe and account for the Spanish ability to conquer a territorial empire in the America.

### **Evaluation of student learning:**

Instructors have some discretion in determining the format and content of required work. However, written and verbal assignments in any history course are designed to help students develop the General Education skills (historical perspective, critical thinking, information literacy, writing, and public speaking) listed above. Instructors will emphasize these goals in their assignments and should state them in their written and verbal instructions to the students.

History courses will, therefore, utilize essay examinations, written reports and oral presentations as standard methods of assessing student learning. Below are the parameters within which instructors may operate:

#### **Reading Assignments**

- ♦ Textbook as well as primary documents (packaged with the textbook and other sources) will be clearly assigned to the students

#### **Exams & Quizzes**

- ♦ At least two (2), one-hour exams
- ♦ A Final Exam
- ♦ Exams should include at least a short essay component

**Writing Assignments** (to assess discipline specific knowledge, communication skills, and critical thinking skills). Students are expected to develop the ability to construct narratives—written or verbal or both—that clearly present their own thesis based on solid evidence that has been thoroughly and critically evaluated. Students are directed in developing competencies in accumulating evidence from a variety of sources, assessing the validity of the evidence, and extracting substantive generalizations from what they have discovered (Information Literacy).

- A minimum of two (2), but preferable three (3), writing assignments
  - At least one (1) essay should concentrate on primary documents
  - At least one (1) one assignment should incorporate library or internet research or both; this assignment may be a term paper or group presentation or some other type of project
- Length of the essays may be determined by the instructor; short (e.g., two-three page) essays are acceptable.
- Writing assignments should all be designed to develop student learning outcomes in critical thinking, information literacy, and writing.