

**HI 101: Western Civilization, I
Fall 2018
MWF 1:25-2:15. STH B-19**

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Office Hours: MWF 9:00-10:00
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This is an introductory course in Western history, beginning at the beginning (in Mesopotamia, around 3000 BCE) and ending around 1700 CE. That's almost five thousand years of history in fifteen weeks, so be warned: we move at a fast pace.

“Western Civ” courses were invented in this country after World War I in response to requests for rapid surveys that would explain how the world got into such a god-awful mess. They are designed to move quickly, like a speeding tourist bus that points out major landmarks and sites of interest as it rushes past. There is a genuine value to this kind of drive-by survey; nevertheless, Western Civ courses can be frustrating. Nearly every topic we shall discuss, and every text we shall read, deserves its own course. (Fortunately, the History Department offers many upper-level courses that provide just this type of close analysis; I invite you to check out our catalog.)

I lecture informally and invite you to interrupt me whenever you have a question to ask or a contrary opinion to share. Also, since I lecture without notes, I hope you'll stop and correct me if I make a mistake. I want to emphasize that the study of history is not about memorizing names and dates, but is about trying to understand the causes and consequences of change. If history is to be useful, it has to resist becoming a kind of sophisticated game of Trivial Pursuit. Focus on the main themes and dominant ideas, rather than the minutiae, and you should do fine. Here is a concrete example that might help: What, ultimately, is more important -- to know the dates of every major event in Adolf Hitler's wretched life, or to be able to explain (perhaps to your children, someday) why the people of Germany turned to him in the first place? These two tasks are not mutually exclusive, but clearly the latter is the more significant. And that is why my lectures will focus primarily on highlighting the most significant ideas in each textbook chapter.

There are two books required for the course, and they are available at the BU bookstore:

Clifford Backman, <u>Cultures of the West</u> (Oxford). 2 nd edn. }	These are bundled at
----- <u>Sources for the Cultures of the West</u> (Oxford). }	Barnes and Noble.

Two points about the textbooks:

1. I have assigned the full edition of the book rather than the split two-volume edition, because this saves about \$30.00 for those of you who will take HI 102 next semester.
2. I make no money by assigning my own books. I donate all royalties to the BU general scholarship fund.

Course-grades will be determined three non-cumulative in-class quizzes and three take-home essays:

Quiz #1//Take-home Essay #1	5 October // 9 October
Quiz #2//Take-home Essay #2	9 November // 12 November
Quiz #3//Take-home Essay #3	12 December // 17 December

Email is the best way to reach me. I check my email twice a day -- except for weekends, when I never go near it.

It is important that you attend class regularly. But I will not be taking attendance, so if you miss a class or two, I probably won't notice. Repeated absences will be noticed, however, and you can expect to hear from me.

If you are late to class, or if you need to leave the classroom for any personal reason, please just come and go as quietly as you can. My only request is that you be respectful and attentive when you are present: no whispered conversations, no reading of newspapers, no cellphone-calls, etc. You are welcome to use laptops, as long as you use them for class purposes. If I receive any complaints from your classmates that your computer activity is a distraction to them, I will speak with you privately.

The Academic Conduct Code is in force, and you will be expected to adhere to it. Copies of the Code are available online at

www.bu.edu/cas/undergraduate/conductcode

Some Important Semester Dates:

Last day to add a course:	Monday, 17 Sept.
Last day to drop a course without a "W" on your transcript:	Tuesday, 9 Oct.
Last day to drop this course with a "W" on your transcript:	Friday, 9 Nov.
Last day to withdraw from the university:	Tuesday, 27 Nov.

A note on Incompletes. CAS policy requires you to fill out a "Request for an Incomplete" form – they are available online at the CAS webpage – and hand it in to me before the last class of the semester, which for us is **Wednesday, 12 December**. Without such a form in hand, I am not allowed to grant an Incomplete to any student except in the case of medical- or family emergency.

My Schedule for Fall 2018

	Mondays	Tuesdays	Wednesdays	Thursdays	Fridays
8:00-8:50					
9:05-9:55	Office hour	Core lecture	Office hour		Office hour
10:10-11:00	CC 101	at 9:30	CC 101		CC 101
11:15-12:05			Dept. mtg.		
12:20-1:10	Committee		Dept. mtg.		Committee
1:25-2:15	HI 101		HI 101		HI 101
2:30-3:20	HI 200				
3:35-4:25	HI 200				
4:40-5:30	HI 200				

Note that there are no discussion sections with this course. There should be, but we did not receive funding for them this time. We do have a grader assigned to the course, though – one of our top PhD students:

Ben Welton: bwelton@bu.edu

Ben will contact you separately with information about his office hours and other class matters.

Lecture Schedule and Reading Assignments

We will read one chapter of the textbook and the sourcebook each week.

5 Sept.	Intro.	}	
7 Sept.	<i>No lecture today. Extra office hour instead.</i>	}	
10 Sept.	Why Geography Matters.	}	
12 Sept.	The Bronze Age Begins.	}	ch. 1-2
14 Sept.	From Bronze to Iron.	}	
17 Sept.	The Bible and Jewish History.	}	
19 Sept.	Priests and Prophets.	}	ch. 3
21 Sept.	Exiles and Rabbis.	}	
24 Sept.	Mycenaean Age to Archaic Age Greece.	}	
26 Sept.	The Classical Age.	}	ch. 4
28 Sept.	The Peloponnesian Disaster.	}	
1 Oct.	Historians and Philosophers.	}	
4 Oct.	The Hellenistic Age.	}	ch. 5
5 Oct.	In-class Quiz #1. [Chapters 1-5.]	}	
8→9 Oct.	Rome: From Origins to the Republic. Essay #1 due.	}	
10 Oct.	Rome: From Republic to Empire.	}	ch. 6
12 Oct.	The Roman Empire.	}	
15 Oct.	The Rise of Christianity, I.	}	
17 Oct.	The Rise of Christianity, II.	}	ch. 7
19 Oct.	Imperial Christianity and the Monastic Reaction.	}	
22 Oct.	The Dark Ages, East and West.	}	
24 Oct.	The Rise of Islam, I.	}	ch. 8
26 Oct.	The Rise of Islam, II.	}	
29 Oct.	The Carolingian Era.	}	
31 Oct.	Collapse, Recovery, and Islam.	}	ch. 9
2 Nov.	Arabs, Persians, and Turks.	}	
5 Nov.	The World as System.	}	
7 Nov.	From Order to Collapse.	}	ch. 10
9 Nov.	In-class Quiz #2. [Chapters 6-10.]	}	
12 Nov.	The Waste Land. Essay #2 due.	}	
14 Nov.	The Renaissances.	}	ch. 11-12
16 Nov.	The Reformations.	}	
19 Nov.	Age of Explorations.	}	No reading
21 Nov.	HOLIDAY	}	assignment
23 Nov.	HOLIDAY.	}	this week.
26 Nov.	<i>No lecture today. Extra office hour instead.</i>	}	
28 Nov.	The Wars of Religion.	}	ch. 13
30 Nov.	Witches! Witches!	}	

3 Dec.	The Scientific Breakthrough.	}	
5 Dec.	The Argument for Tyranny.	}	ch. 14
7 Dec.	Absolutisms.	}	
10 Dec.	Constitutional Alternatives.		
12 Dec.	In-class Quiz #3. [Chapters 11-14.]		
17 Dec.	Essay #3 due by 12:00 noon.		

THERE IS NO “FINAL EXAM” FOR THIS COURSE. ONCE YOUR THIRD ESSAY IS SUBMITTED, YOU’RE DONE!

Class Profile

You are a diverse bunch. Here’s the breakdown by year and by college:

Freshmen	2	CAS	28
Sophomores	20	CFA	1
Juniors	31	COM	36
Seniors	22	ENG	3
		QST	6
		SAR	1