

Helen Steele
helen.steele@csun.edu
Sierra Tower 631. Ext. 7199
Office Hours: Tues/Thurs 10–10.45 and 12.45–1.45, and by appointment.

WESTERN CIVILIZATION, I

History 150
Spring Semester, 2008

This course will introduce you to the major topics, themes, literature and dreams of Western Civilization, from its beginnings in the Near East and Ancient Greece to the societies of Europe in the Early Modern Era. Our classes will focus on politics, government, war, leadership, art, literature, religion, love, family, and sex. A special theme running throughout our course will be the examination and comparison of the social ideals to which Western societies have aspired and the heroes whom their worlds have most admired (along with the mundane realities with which they lived) – from the characters in ancient epics and drama to chivalrous knights and their ladies, from the emperors of Rome to absolutist princes, from classical philosophers to Christian theologians to warriors who kill monsters.

Sources:

Note that there is indeed quite a bit of reading for this class. The art of being an historian is the interpretation of primary sources. Primary source readings therefore are at the heart of this class. The assignments listed below represent classics that everyone should know (*The Iliad*) and/or particularly appropriate or useful illustrations of an historical period (*Life of Alexander the Great*).

- 1) Burger, *Sources for History of Western Civilization*
- 2) *History 150: Western Civilization Workbook*

This is available as a PDF file on the Web. It contains timelines, discussion questions on the readings to help prepare you for the quizzes, and supplementary sources that we will read in class. Please download this file, print it out, staple the pages, and bring the workbook with you to every single class. The URL is:

<http://www.guernicus.com/academics/history150/>

- 3) Plato, “Euthyphro,” “Apology,” & “Crito” in *Last Days of Socrates*
- 4) Ovid, *The Art of Love*
- 5) *Beowulf*

Course Requirements:

You must attend all classes; you must be a persistent and tireless reader; you must be a lively, courteous, and thoughtful participant in discussions; you must complete all assignments with finesse and dignity. Students will be required to submit a short paper and to take ten short pass/fail quizzes on the assigned readings, one mid-term and one final examination.

Class Format:

This course meets twice a week, on Tuesdays and Thursdays. Certain meetings will be devoted to providing background material to help you better interpret the sources. Many of our meetings will also include a class discussion of the assigned primary sources, and these discussions will require you to have completed **ALL** of the assigned reading so that you can contribute to the discussion in an informed manner and complete in-class quizzes.

Grades will be apportioned as follows:

Pass/Fail Quizzes on Assigned Readings: 10%

Mid-Term Examination: 30%

Short paper: 30%

Final Examination: 30%

Quizzes

Quizzes will be given during the first five minutes of class. There are **NO MAKEUP** quizzes, so please don't ask. I would suggest that you arrive on time to ensure that you are given credit for the quiz.

Attendance Policy

I understand that the first two weeks of the semester can be quite chaotic for many students as you try to adjust your schedules. However, beginning Tuesday, February 5, you are expected and required to attend each and every class meeting. I do not take roll, as I hope that you will be responsible, but note that as most of the questions on the exams are based on material covered in class, you **WILL FAIL THE CLASS** without attending and taking notes.

Now I understand that sometimes the unexpected occurs, and that you have to miss a class because you are sick, or you have family obligations, etc. You should aim to minimize these occurrences, however, and arrange to borrow someone else's notes. You must take exams on the day set. I will only grant, *at my discretion*, a make-up exam in the case of serious illness or family crisis. You should inform me in advance – by phone or email – if this is the case.

Email Policy

While I will try to respond to emails promptly, please do not expect me to reply to your emails immediately, especially if you need a longer response. Please allow 24 hours for me to read and reply to email. If you need to ask me for something, or tell me something important, you had better plan ahead, especially if it is time sensitive.

Cell Phone Policy

All cell phones and other text messaging devices must be turned off for the duration of the class. I don't care who you are expecting a call from. So this means that the phone must actually be turned OFF, no text messaging allowed! Those who do not comply with this rule will be asked to leave the class.

Computer Policy

I will allow the use of laptop computers for note-taking on a trial basis. However, you must use your computer for note-taking **only**. You are **not** allowed to use your computer to surf the Internet, check email, play games or for any other non-class related purpose. Those who do not comply will be asked to put away their computer. If I note that such use is widespread, I will ban all computers.

Plagiarism

Plagiarism will not be tolerated in this class. You will receive a failing grade IN THE COURSE if you copy another student's work. You will receive a failing grade IN THE COURSE if you copy your answers off the World Wide Web, from a text book or a reference work. Don't even think of using the Web to research your short answers for the exams. I will catch you, and you will FAIL THE COURSE. Your answers are to be based on material covered in lecture. Again, I would encourage you to take notes.

Schedule:

WEEK ONE

Tuesday, Jan. 22:

Introduction to Western Civilization

Thursday, Jan. 24:

Near Eastern Civilizations

The Code of Hammurabi (In *Sources*, pp. 20-31)

WEEK TWO

Tuesday, Jan. 29:

Early Greece: Minos and Mycenae

Begin *The Iliad* (In *Sources*, pp. 69-107)

Thursday, Jan. 31:

Achilles' Rage: Troy, the Dark Ages and the Birth of the Polis

Finish *The Iliad*, (*Sources* 69-107); Quiz #1

WEEK THREE

Tuesday, Feb. 5:

Life in the Polis: Politics, Society and War

Begin *Aristophanes' Lysistrata* (*Sources* 124-145)

Thursday, Feb. 7:

Women in Athens and Sparta

Finish *Aristophanes' Lysistrata* (*Sources* 124-145); Quiz #2

WEEK FOUR

Tuesday, Feb. 12

The Golden Age: Greek Philosophy, Art and Architecture

Plato, Last Days of Socrates, Euthyphro; Quiz #3

Thursday, Feb. 14:

The Conquests of Alexander

Begin *Plutarch's Alexander the Great* (*Sources*, 174-196); Quiz #4

WEEK FIVE

Tuesday, Feb. 19:

The Hellenistic World

Finish *Plutarch's Alexander the Great* (*Sources*, 174-196); Quiz #5

Thursday, Feb. 21:

Mid-Term Review

WEEK SIX

Tuesday, Feb. 26:

Mid-Term Examination

Thursday, Feb. 28:

The Roman Republic

WEEK SEVEN

Tuesday, Mar. 4:
Thursday, Mar. 11:

Julius Caesar and the End of the Republic
The Early Empire: Augustus and Life in Rome
Augustus, *The Deeds of the Divine Augustus* (*Sources*, 270-276)

WEEK EIGHT

Tuesday, Mar. 11:
Thursday, Mar. 13:

Life in the Empire
Ovid, *Art of Love*; Quiz #6
A World Full of Gods: Early Christianity
Begin Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 1-9 (*Sources*, 310-326)

WEEK NINE

Tuesday, Mar. 25:
Thursday, Mar. 27:

Late Antiquity & Christianity: Diocletian and Constantine
Finish Augustine, *Confessions*, Book 10 (*Sources*, 326-334); Quiz #7
The “Fall” of Rome? Transformation & Continuity in Late Antiquity: Begin reading *Beowulf*

WEEK TEN

Tuesday, Apr. 1:
Thursday, Apr. 3:

New Kingdoms
Finish *Beowulf*; Quiz #8
Europe in the “Dark Ages”

WEEK ELEVEN

Tuesday, Apr. 8:
Thursday, Apr. 10:

Charlemagne
Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* (*Sources*, 391-405); Quiz #9
After Charlemagne: New politics and new politics

WEEK TWELVE

Tuesday, Apr. 15:
Thursday, Apr. 17:

Church and Society in the High Middle Ages
PAPER DUE
Culture, Chivalry and Learning

WEEK THIRTEEN

Tuesday, Apr. 22:
Thursday Apr. 24:

The Crusades
Two Letters from Crusaders (*Sources*, 426-430)
The Black Death

WEEK FOURTEEN

Tuesday, Apr. 29:
Thursday, May 1:

The End and a Beginning: the Late Medieval
The Renaissance
Begin Machiavelli, *The Prince* (*Sources*, 546-574)

WEEK FIFTEEN

Tuesday, May. 6:
Thursday, May 8:

Power and Imagination
Finish Machiavelli, *The Prince*, chapters 15-26 (*Sources*, 546-574); Quiz # 10
Final Exam Review