

**HIST 1111: World History to 1500 Honors (Section 25H)**

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**Course Description and Objectives:**

This honors section of HIST 1111 explores major issues in world history from the time of ancient Mesopotamia in the 3000s BC to the era of Chinese dominance around 1500 AD. Rather than a standard survey of events, we will instead focus on a series of crucial moments in order to gain better understanding of people from the past and how they saw their world. Therefore, I have assigned a fair bit of reading through which we will encounter those past people and their views. You will be writing on and discussing those readings every week.

A major objective of this honors class is to introduce students to crucial skills of written and oral analysis, interpretation, and argumentation. In contrast to a mere opinion, an interpretation makes an original argument that is firmly based on source evidence. Again and again in the coming weeks, you will be required to read historical sources critically, to analyze them, and to craft well-written original arguments that move beyond just summarizing the text. Thus, students who complete this class successfully will not only gain introductory knowledge of certain pivotal trends and issues in the history of the globe, but, as importantly, improved abilities in processing and analyzing information and in making arguments built upon a strong foundation of sources.

**Course Readings and Materials:**

There are a variety of materials assigned this semester. Make sure to complete the readings and online virtual walking tour by the dates marked in the Course Outline, below.

**A. Books:**

1. W.J. Johnson, trans., *The Bhagavad Gita* (Oxford, 2009); ISBN 978-0199538126
2. F.Max Müller, trans., *Wisdom of the Buddha: The Unabridged Dhammapada* (Dover Books, 2000); ISBN 0486411206
3. Sima Qian, *The First Emperor: Selections From The Historical Records* (Oxford, 2009); ISBN 978-0199574391
4. Saint Augustine, *Saint Augustine's Confessions* (Oxford, 2009); ISBN 978-0199537822
5. Muhammed Ibn-Battuta, *Ibn Battuta in Black Africa* (Markus Wiener, 2005); ISBN 78-1558763364
6. Wu Ch'eng-en, Arthur Waley, trans., *Monkey: Folk Novel of China* (Grove, 1994); ISBN 978-0802130860

All works are available at the bookstore. However, cheaper editions can be found online. No matter how you acquire them, you must have both books read by the date indicated on the Course Outline below. Also, please purchase the editions indicated above. I urge you to start reading the works right away. The longer you delay, the harder it will get.

## B. On-Line Readings

1. The Epic of Gilgamesh (Tablets 1 and 11)  
<http://ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab1.htm>  
<http://ancienttexts.org/library/mesopotamian/gilgamesh/tab11.htm>
2. The Book of Genesis (Creation and The Flood)  
<http://www.thenagain.info/Classes/Sources/Genesis1.html>  
<http://www.wsu.edu/~dee/HEBREWS/GENFLOOD.HTM>
3. Persian Documents
  - A. Cyrus the Great – Decree for the Return of the Jews (539BC)  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/539cyrus1.html>
  - B. Zoroaster – The Gatha of the Choice  
<http://www.mircea-eliade.com/from-primitives-to-zen/038.html>
4. Greek Documents
  - A. Thucydides – History of the Peloponnesian War-Pericles’ Funeral Oration  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/pericles-funeralspeech.html>
  - B. Thucydides – History of the Peloponnesian War-The Melian Dialogue  
<http://mccandlessa.people.cofc.edu/thucydides.htm#The Melian Dialogue>
5. Chinese Philosophy Documents
  - A. Confucius, excerpts from *The Analects* (5<sup>th</sup> Century BC)  
<http://web.archive.org/web/20001215223500/http://www.humanities.cuny.cuny.edu/history/reader/analects.htm>
  - B. Lao Tzu, excerpts from the *Tao te Ching*  
[www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_1/lao-tzu.html](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_1/lao-tzu.html)
  - C. Han Fei-tzu, Legalist Views of Good Government  
[www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world\\_civ\\_reader/world\\_civ\\_reader\\_1/hanfeitzu.html](http://www.wsu.edu:8080/~wldciv/world_civ_reader/world_civ_reader_1/hanfeitzu.html)

**Note:** The last two links have proven temperamental in the past. If they do not work automatically, try the following: Google “WSU World Civ Reader;” that will take you to the mainpage, at which you should click on the link for “Reading About the World, Volume 1,” following which you must scroll down to the section on China where you will see the above selections. If you continue to have problems, please contact me.
6. Roman Traditional Religion Documents
  - A. Accounts of Roman State Religion  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/romrelig3.html>
  - B. Accounts of Personal Religion  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/ancient/personalrelig.html>
7. Roman and Early Christians Documents
  - A. Pliny the Younger, Letter on the Christians (111AD)  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/pliny1.html>
  - B. *The Martyrdom of Saints Perpetua and Felicitas* (203AD)  
<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/religion/maps/primary/perpetua.html>
8. Muhammed’s Last Sermon  
<http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/source/muhm-sermon.html>
9. Sinbad’s First Voyage (from A Thousand and One Arabian Nights)  
<http://classclit.about.com/library/bl-etexts/arabian/bl-arabian-1sinbad.htm>

## C. Multimedia

1. Movie: *Hero* (China, 2002) – to be shown in class 22, 24 February
2. A Virtual Walking Tour of Al-Haram Al-Sharif (The Dome of the Rock):  
<http://saudiaramcoworld.com/issue/200901/al-haram/tour.htm>  
*Note: Take the virtual tour before our discussion on 9 April.*

You will notice that I decided not to assign a traditional textbook. Although all necessary information to understand the readings and to complete the assignments will be provided

in lectures, I understand that you may be more comfortable with a text, and having a reference is highly recommended. I suggest looking at the following two books:

John P. McKay, et al., *A History of World Societies*  
Peter Stearns, et al., *World Civilizations: The Global Experience*

You can find easily lots of used editions of both works online. In short, acquiring a textbook is your choice. Either way, however, you are expected to demonstrate mastery of lectures and not to view a textbook as a substitute for the same.

Again, you must complete all required readings by the dates indicated in the Course Outline below. Make sure to bring your books or print-outs of the online readings to class on the relevant discussion days.

### **Grading and Policies:**

#### **•Your Grade:**

Your semester grade will be factored as follows:

Brief Response Papers (connected to online readings and tour)	30%
Extended Response Papers (connected to books and movie)	40%
Class Participation	30%

#### **•Written Assignments:**

All assignments are written in nature for the most part, and designed to test your abilities at moving beyond summarizing lectures and readings to analyzing class materials and offering original interpretations using information from lectures and readings.

More information regarding course assignments will be provided during the semester.

All assignments will be either due or held at the beginning of class on the date indicated in the Course Outline below—DO NOT BE LATE AS THERE ARE NO MAKEUPS. Only a serious and unavoidable cause, such as a documented medical condition or family emergency, will be accepted as an excuse for failing to completing an assignment on time. Documentation must be provided for all causes.

#### **•Grading Criteria**

Assignment and final grades reflect your mastery of assigned materials, particularly lectures and readings.

In general, “A” grades reflect totally excellent work—work that is well written, well organized, and well argued; work that avoids summarizing and instead integrates lecture and reading material into a deep analysis. “A” work contains no factual errors, excellent writing with no mistakes in spelling, grammar, or organization, and displays complete mastery of the main issues of our class.

“B” grades indicate good work—work that mixes analysis with summary. “B” work contains few factual errors, good writing with few mistakes in spelling, grammar, or organization, and displays a good command of the main issues of our class.

“C” grades indicate average work that offers only summary and lacks analysis and organization. “C” work contains some factual errors, average writing with some mistakes in spelling, grammar, or organization, and displays an average command of the main issues of our class. Something to think about: a “C” reflects summarizing of the material (the questions of who, what, and when)—“B” and “A” indicate you have gone beyond mere summary to address the crucial questions of why and how.

“D” grades reflect poor work that fails to demonstrate a mastery of assigned material. “D” work contains many factual errors, poor writing with many mistakes in spelling, grammar, or organization, and displays a less-than-average mastery of the main issues of our class.

“F” grades reflect work that fails to achieve any of the above criteria and display no mastery of assigned materials whatsoever.

#### *•Plagiarism*

All assignments in this course are designed to test your ability to use and analyze class materials, including readings and lectures. Outside materials, including the internet, are not necessary to answer any of the assigned questions. To be more precise, only your discussion of required class material will count towards your grade—information from outside WILL NOT BE FACTORED IN YOUR GRADE.

However, ANY ACT of plagiarism (the use of someone else’s words or ideas without citation) from ANY SOURCE (class materials and/or outside, including from the internet) will be dealt with severely, so remember to always cite all words and ideas that are not your own. Please recall that when you entered UWG, you consented to uphold our Honor Code, in which all students “pledge to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrications, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing.” Moreover, you agreed to the following: “[a]s a West Georgia student, I will represent myself truthfully and complete all academic assignments honestly. I understand that if I violate this code, I will accept the penalties imposed, should I be found guilty of violations through processes due me as a university community member.” You can review the Honor Code at: <http://www.westga.edu/~handbook/index.php?page=honorcode>.

For any instance of plagiarism discovered, I will impose the same penalty: an absolute 0 points for the assignment (for any part of the source paper assignment, that means the entire paper grade). At the least, this will have an adverse impact on the final grade; at the worst, it may result in failure for the course. Plagiarism is simple to avoid: if in doubt, cite! If you have any questions regarding plagiarism and the policies stated above, please come see me.

#### *•Participation*

Your active participation is absolutely critical for the success of our honors class. Discussions are a central component of this course and I expect you to be ready to ask and answer questions at all times. Beyond speaking during discussions, participation means being actively engaged in the process of learning. This includes being alert and taking notes during lectures and taking advantage of office hours. Thirty percent of your final grade rests on your participation—in short, failure to participate in class will have severe consequences as regards your final class grade.

In order to encourage active intellectual engagement with the class, an attendance policy will also be in effect for the semester. Attendance will be taken at the beginning of every lecture. Absences, arriving late or leaving early, and failures to remain alert during class (sleeping, texting, and similar behaviors) will earn you 0 participation points for the day. The first six “0s” will not count against you; however, for each “0” beyond that limit will result in one point off from your final grade. In other words, stay engaged.

•*Etiquette and Obligations*

Inside the classroom, I expect you to behave with civility and courtesy. By choosing to enter UWG, you have decided to engage in a professional endeavor, and must comport yourself accordingly. Not only does this mean always being respectful of your colleagues even when you disagree with their viewpoints, but also means continually contributing to a productive learning environment for all.

These contributions include making sure your cell phone and other electronic devices (I-Pods, etc.) are turned off and not used or consulted during class. This ban includes laptops, which are only permitted with valid documentation from the University’s medical authorities. Recording of lectures is similarly not permitted.

It should go without saying that when you come to class, you are to remain awake, alert, and mentally engaged for the entire 50 minutes. If you chose to come to class, you must stay awake and remain. Do not sleep or leave early.

Unprofessional behavior and any disruption of the learning environment cannot and will not be tolerated. Continual behavioral issues constitute grounds for being dropped from the course.

Enrolling in this course means that you and I have a contractual obligation to one another: I am obligated to teach to the best of my ability; you are obligated to know the material provided in lectures, to complete the readings and writing assignments in a timely manner, and to participate actively in the process of learning.

•*Communications*

All electronic communication must use your UWG e-mail account. Please keep in mind that I will check my e-mail only during normal business hours Monday through Friday. In other words, do not expect instantaneous responses. In addition, in order to respect your privacy, I will not discuss grades over e-mail.

•*Resources*

There are a variety of resources to help you get through this class. They include UWG’s University Writing Center at TLC 1201 (<http://www.westga.edu/~writing>).

Your most important resource as regards this course in particular is me. I urge you to take advantage of my office hours to discuss assignments or any other issues concerning the class. I am always open to discussing matters *before assignments are due*.

•*Final Note*

I reserve the right to modify this syllabus during the semester if circumstances warrant. You will be informed at all times of any changes. If changes are substantial, I will issue a revised syllabus.

**Course Outline:**

<b>Week:</b>	<b>Monday:</b>	<b>Wednesday:</b>	<b>Friday:</b>
<b>01</b>		<b>01/06:</b>  Class Introduction	<b>01/08:</b>  Lect: Skills
<b>02</b>	<b>01/11:</b>  Lect: River Civilizations and Mesopotamia	<b>01/13:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> <i>Epic of Gilgamesh (Tablets 1, 11)</i> <u><b>Due:</b></u> Brief Response Paper	<b>01/15:</b>  Lect: The Hebrews
<b>03</b>	<b>01/18:</b>  <u><b>No Class – MLK, Jr Day</b></u>	<b>01/20:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> Genesis (Creation and the Flood) <u><b>Due:</b></u> Brief Response Paper	<b>01/22:</b>  Lect: The Persians
<b>04</b>	<b>01/25:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> Persian Documents <u><b>Due:</b></u> Brief Response Paper	<b>01/27:</b>  Lect: Greece – Kingdoms to Poleis	<b>01/29:</b>  Lect: Greece – Wars and Empire
<b>05</b>	<b>02/01:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> Greek Documents <u><b>Due:</b></u> Brief Response Paper	<b>02/03:</b>  Lect: India	<b>02/05:</b>  Lect: Indian Spirituality and Hinduism
<b>06</b>	<b>02/08:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> <i>The Bhagavad Gita</i>	<b>02/10:</b>  Lect: Buddhism	<b>02/12:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> <i>Dhammapada</i> <u><b>Due:</b></u> Extended Response Paper ( <i>Gita</i> and <i>Dhammapada</i> )
<b>07</b>	<b>02/15:</b>  Lect: Chinese Philosophies	<b>02/17:</b>  <u><b>Discuss:</b></u> Chinese Philosophy Documents <u><b>Due:</b></u> Brief Response Paper	<b>02/19:</b>  Lect: The First Emperor

08	02/22: Film: <i>Hero</i>	02/24: Film: <i>Hero</i>	02/26: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Hero and The First Emperor</i>
09	03/01: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Hero and The First Emperor</i> <b><u>Due:</u></b> Extended Response Paper	03/03: Lect: Rome – Republic to Empire	03/05: Lect: The Roman Empire
10	03/08: Lect: Imperial Culture and Religion	03/10: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> Roman Traditional Religion Documents <b><u>Due:</u></b> Brief Response Paper	03/12: Lect: The Coming of Christianity
11	03/15: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> Romans and Early Christians Documents <b><u>Due:</u></b> Brief Response Paper	03/17: Lect: Imperial Christianity	03/19: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Saint Augustine's Confessions</i>
12	03/22: <b><u>No Class – Spring Break</u></b>	03/24: <b><u>No Class – Spring Break</u></b>	03/26: <b><u>No Class – Spring Break</u></b>
13	03/29: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Saint Augustine's Confessions</i>	03/31: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Saint Augustine's Confessions</i> <b><u>Due:</u></b> Extended Response Paper	04/02: Lect: The Emergence of Islam
14	04/05: Lect: The Emergence of Islam, Continued	04/07: Lect: The Height of the "Muslim World"	04/09: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> Virtual Walking Tour of Al-Haram and Muhammad's Last Sermon <b><u>Due:</u></b> Brief Response Paper
15	04/12: Lect: Africa and Islam <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Ibn-Battuta in Black Africa</i>	04/14: <b><u>Discuss:</u></b> <i>Ibn-Battuta in Black Africa</i> <b><u>Due:</u></b> Extended Response Paper	04/16: Lect: The Indian Ocean World

<b>16</b>	<b>04/19:</b> <u>Discuss:</u> Sinbad's First Voyage <u>Due:</u> Brief Response Paper	<b>04/21:</b> Lect: The Middle Kingdom	<b>04/23:</b> Lect: The Middle Kingdom, Continued
<b>17</b>	<b>04/26:</b> <u>Discuss:</u> <i>Monkey</i>	<b>04/28:</b> <u>Discuss:</u> <i>Monkey</i> <u>Due:</u> Extended Response Paper	<b>04/30:</b> <u>No Class - Exams</u>