

History 103 Western Civilization I

Dr. Grenier
432C Capers Hall
Email: grenierk@citadel.edu
Phone: 953-6935

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Office hours: 1:00-2:30

This course is an introduction to the history, society, and culture of the Western world, from the earliest civilizations to 1600. Over the course of the semester we will endeavor to understand the main characteristics, thoughts, and beliefs of different eras of history, considering such questions as: what are the characteristics of Western, as opposed to other civilizations? Who are its heroes and heroines? How have Western values and religious ideals developed over the centuries?

The objectives of this course are that students will:

- develop a basic understanding of the trends of ancient, medieval and early modern history.
- become familiar with the use of primary sources in studying history.
- improve their abilities to develop and defend an argument based on differing types of evidence.
- improve their writing abilities.

Requirements: This class will be a combination of lecture, discussion and reading. The only way to successfully complete the course – and get a good grade at the end – is to energetically and thoughtfully do the assignments as they are listed in the syllabus. Simply coming to class and listening is not enough.

Required reading:

Coffin, *Western Civilizations* vol. I (Brief edition)
Sophocles, *Antigone*
The Song of Roland
Steven Ozment, *Magdalena and Balthasar* (PDF file)

The reading should be done according to the schedule below; the day's reading should be done before coming to class.

Class participation: There will be a great deal of discussion in this class. I hope that all students will feel comfortable taking part in discussions; the more students who participate, the more interesting and productive the class. As incentive to keep up with the reading and to get involved with the conversations, 10% of your final grade will be based on my assessment of your participation in the life of the class. This includes attendance, alertness, contributions to discussion, demonstrations that the assigned reading has been done, and occasional quizzes and in-class writing assignments. Remember that The Citadel has a mandatory attendance policy. While the Commandant's Office can at times excuse students from the military consequences of missing class, it cannot excuse them from the academic consequences. Missing more

than four classes, for any reason other than illness, will have negative consequences upon your grade. And, in accordance with college policy, missing more than 20% of classes can result in withdrawal from the course.

Written assignments:

Tests: There will be three tests in this course; two during the semester and one at the end. These will be essay tests and will evaluate students' understanding of the concepts and information covered in readings, discussions and lectures. Students are urged to keep up with the material throughout the semester and to talk with the professor about questions or problems. This will make it much easier to study for tests. Each test counts 20% of your final grade. **Please note that scheduled tests are considered mandatory formations. If you have to miss a test, you must consult with the professor ahead of time. Otherwise, make-up tests will not be given without a written note from a doctor or other appropriate official. Guard duty or other military activities are not exceptions from scheduled tests.**

Papers: There are three paper topics listed below; each student is to write papers on **two** of them. Each paper should be 3-5 pages. You may also choose to write all three papers and only the highest two grades will count. However, papers are due on the days listed below; you can't decide at the end of the semester that you wanted to write an earlier paper. Students are encouraged to discuss their papers with the professor and even to submit a rough draft for comments. Each paper will count 15% of your final grade. **Pay attention to due dates. Late papers will lose half a letter grade for every day they are late.**

Class Schedule

Aug. 26 – introduction

Aug. 28 – Sep. 2- Ancient Near East

Reading: Coffin, chaps. 1, 2

Sep. 4- 9 – Ancient Greece

Reading: Coffin, chap. 3

Sep. 11 – **Reading:** *Antigone*

Paper #1 due: Question: Why is Antigone so determined to bury her brother's body? What values is she representing, what message is she sending to her community?

Sep. 14 -16 – Greece

Sep. 18 - 23 – Roman Republic

Reading: Coffin, chaps. 4, 5

Sep. 25 - 30 – Roman Empire

Oct. 2 – **Test #1**

Oct. 5 - 7 – Early Christianity

Reading: Coffin, chap. 6

Oct. 9 – **Reading:** Life of St. Antony (Handout)

Oct. 12 -14 – Fall of Rome

Oct. 16 – 23- Early Middle Ages

Reading: Coffin, chap. 7

Oct. 26 – expansion of Europe

Reading: Coffin, chap. 8

Oct. 30 – **Reading:** *Song of Roland*

Paper #2 due: Question: By medieval standards of feudalism, which knight in the poem would be considered the best knight, and why?

Nov. 2 – 4 – Middle Ages

Reading: Coffin, chap. 9

Nov. 6 – **Test #2**

Nov. 9 – 13 – Late Middle Ages

Reading: Coffin, chap. 10, 11

Nov. 16-18 – Renaissance

Reading: Coffin, chap. 12

Nov. 20 – Reformation

Reading: Coffin, chap. 13

Nov. 23-27 – Thanksgiving break

Nov. 30 – Reformation

Dec. 2 – **Reading:** *Magdalena and Balthasar* (PDF file)

Paper #3 due: Who do Magdalena and Balthasar believe determines their fates – themselves or God?

Dec. 4-7 – Thirty Years War

Reading: Coffin, chap. 14.

General Paper Guidelines

Papers should be typed, double-spaced and with proper paragraphs, spelling and grammar. There should be a works cited page, and all sources used should be cited. You are not required to use any sources other than class reading for these papers, but the book which is the subject of the paper should still be cited. All direct quotes, as well as ideas borrowed from another source, should be cited.

Examples:

Works cited page: Homer, *The Iliad* E. V. Rieu, trans. (London: Penguin, 2003).

Parenthetical citation: (Homer, p. 23).

Your paper should have a strong thesis statement, which is supported by evidence drawn from the source you are writing about. Your thesis statement should be in the first paragraph. The body of the paper should explain and develop your thesis: present and explain the evidence, show that your thesis is true. Conclude with a paragraph that summarizes your ideas. Please note that a paper can consist of more than three paragraphs - use as many as you need, but each major idea should have its own paragraph.

Below is a general idea of grading standards. Be aware that there are a lot of “gray areas” within these guidelines:

A = Paper is well organized, with a strong, specific thesis statement and supporting evidence. It is free of major spelling or grammatical errors. It shows careful and thoughtful reading of the source being discussed. There is a works cited page, and all quotations and ideas borrowed from other sources are cited.

B = Paper is generally well organized, with a good thesis and supporting material. The thesis may be a little vague, and the evidence is not discussed as well. The paper has a few structural errors. It shows a good understanding of the source, but may misinterpret it in some way. Citations are done correctly.

C = Paper is loosely organized and the thesis is not clear, nor well supported by evidence. It contains a fair number of structural errors. While it may summarize the material fairly accurately, it does not attempt to analyze the author’s point of view.

D = Paper is basically unorganized with glaring grammatical and spelling errors. It shows little understanding of the source or of the historical background.

F = Paper is unorganized with substantial structural and historical errors. The author’s message cannot be understood.