Empires, Nations, and First Peoples:  
A Brief History of the World until 1960

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This introductory survey course covers many of the major themes, events, cultures and ideas that have shaped global history from the earliest days of humanity until the twentieth century. In this interactive digital learning course, we will explore the diversity of human culture and experience, paying special attention to how the evolution of states, nations, and empires have shaped our world. Through active guided readings, weekly activities and individual projects, this class offers students an opportunity to gain a strong core understanding of the dynamic interactions between states and peoples in world history, and to explore the many factors shaping these interactions. Upon completion of this course, students will able to identify the major patterns of change, continuity and connection in world history, and to analyze the complex historical role of power and inequality in shaping the roots of conflict. Students will have the opportunity to design interactive museum projects, and to think critically about the lessons that the past holds for the present.

Readings and media for this course will come primarily from Robert W. Strayer’s Ways of the World and its accompanying digital learning platform Launchpad. Each week, you will be asked to read about an important topic in World history, and you will examine primary documents written by people who experienced some of the events you are reading about. Each reading will be accompanied by quizzes and short answer questions designed to guide you through the main ideas of the text. You might also be asked to watch several short videos, or to listen to a podcast. Each week you will discuss what you have learned through an online forum and private journaling activities. Assessment for this course will be based on participation, quality of weekly responses, and two essay exams, which are described in detail below.
ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

Participation in Weekly Activities: 50%

Active Reading Exercises 10%: Each week you will complete informal open book quizzes, or alternate comprehension activities, related to the reading. You will be graded on participation, not how well you score.

Discussion Forum Posts 15%: Each week, I will post two interpretive questions related to the reading material. You must answer both of these questions in responses of 200-300 words each by Thursday of each week. Then, between Friday and Sunday, you must write a 150 word response to two of your peers’ answers – one for each discussion question. Thus, each week you will be writing 2 short answer posts, and 2 peer responses. They must be well thought out and backed up with evidence from the text. When referring to a specific piece of information from the text, you should indicate the page number. You will be graded on timeliness and quality of thought. Please see the "Discussion Forum Guidelines" sheet posted under "Course Resources".

Key Word Database 10%: This semester, we will build a collaborative, open source study guide on Google Docs that you all can use in your midterm and final exams. Each week, I will post a list of Key Words in our Keyword Database. Each of you must contribute a 2-3 sentence definition of ONE of these terms every week, for a total of 10 terms each. In your definition, you must clearly and efficiently explain: Who, What, Where, When, and Why is it significant? The keyword choices are first come, first serve – if your top choice has already been defined when you open the Google Doc, you must choose a keyword that has not been defined yet. Please see the "Keyword Guidelines" sheet posted under "Course Resources".

Progress Journaling (biweekly) 15%: Several times over the course of the semester, you will be asked to submit privately to me a 2 page informal response to a question, in which you will have freedom to express your own personal thoughts, ideas, questions, and observations about the course material. These will help form part of your study guide, and can be used when composing your mid-term and final essay assignments.

Open Book Essay Exams 40%

- Midterm Essay Exam 20%
- Final Essay Exam 20%

Note: Both of these exams will feature several short answer questions, a timeline, and one long essay question, in which you will be required to synthesize what you have learned, put keywords in context, and make your own arguments about the patterns that shape world history. You can use all of the course materials as well as the study guides in your responses, but you must cite the source of your evidence throughout.

Museum Project: 10%

In the first 3 weeks of the semester, each of you must visit a local museum. You must document your visit with photographs of at least 10 artifacts from different countries and time periods. Then in the second half of the semester you must post an annotated slideshow of your experience, and comment on the slideshow of one of your peers. You can get creative with this! You will be graded on effort. For detailed instructions see "Museum Project" sheet under "Course Resources".
REQUIRED TEXT

Ways of The World: A Brief Global History with Sources. 3rd Edition. Packaged with Launchpad. Available to order directly from the Macmillan Publishers warehouse. You should place your order 1-2 weeks before the start of class to ensure timely arrival of materials. When you purchase Launchpad, you will be given a code to access the digital course platform. Please let me know right away if you are experiencing any technical difficulties.

ISBN:

ISBN:

LEARNING GOALS

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to demonstrate knowledge of:

- The major trends in politics, economics, and intellectual/cultural life that have shaped human societies since the beginning of human history, and the ways in which those trends have crossed boundaries between peoples and continents
- The world historical transition from empires and first peoples to nation states as a political norm, and the role of both cultural and structural changes in causing this transformation
- The major debates that surround the question of how to measure 'modernity'
- The motives, major events, and legacies of the processes of colonization and decolonization, and their impact on contemporary global issues

This class will provide a strong preparation for students interested in Global Studies, Economics, Political Science, Middle East Studies, African Studies, History, Sociology, and Anthropology.

POLICIES

Academic Integrity: Students are expected to know and respect University policies regarding academic integrity. All cases of suspected dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Development and Conduct. Instances of academic dishonesty may result in sanctions including but not limited to failure in the course, failure on the assignment in question, suspension from the university and/or educational programs. If you have questions about plagiarism or academic standards of originality, please see me.

Accommodations: If you are a student with a documented disability on record at Brandeis University and wish to have a reasonable accommodation made for you in class, please email me immediately. Accommodations will not be granted retroactively.

Communication and Virtual Office Hours:
Ready? Let's Get Started!

Your first step is to introduce yourself on our 'Introductions' Forum. Tell us a bit about your interests, and about why you are taking this class. What is one thing you are curious or excited to learn this summer? Please take a minute to do this now.

Once you have introduced yourself, please take a few minutes to read through this syllabus carefully. If you have any questions, you may post them to our 'Course Logistics' forum. As with all communication, please allow me 24 hours to respond. You should also feel free to respond to each other, as this is an open forum for all logistical aspects of our class. Please take a minute to read the syllabus now.

As you can see, each week you have a Reading Checklist, an Activity Checklist, and a list of Project Deadlines. Items are listed in the order of their due dates. Every week, your reading and notes should be completed between Monday and Thursday. Your Reading Quizzes will be due Thursday. Your Discussion Forum posts will be due Friday, and your peer responses will be due Saturday. Every day, the deadline for assignment completion is 9 PM EST. Late assignments will be deducted from your final grade.

WEEK ONE

Civilization and Its Alternatives

Reading Checklist: ( pp )
- Prologue
- 2-8 (Part One 'Big Picture': Turning Points in Early World History)
- Selection (Agricultural Revolution) (Ch 1)
- 38-39 (Zooming In: Ishi, Last of His People) (Ch 1)
- 59-70; 75-90 (First Civilizations) (Ch 2)
- 252-258 (Bantu and Mound Builders) (Ch 6)
- 500-505 Paleolithic Persistence: The Iroquois, Igbo and Fulbe (Ch 12)

Activity Checklist
- Introduce Yourself Forum (Due Weds)
- Watch Instructor video: What is Active Reading and how can it help you learn? (Due Thurs)
- Keyword # 1 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sat)
- Progress Journaling #1: Respond to "Ishi, Last of his People" in several paragraphs. (Due Sunday)

Project Deadline:
Choose a museum or archive in your area, and plan a day/time to visit it within the next two weeks. Post your choice in the "Museum Project" forum. Try to choose a museum which allows photographs, and which contains artifacts from at least 3 different continents and 3 different centuries. For a list of Boston area museums and archives, see "Museum List" in "Course Resources".
WEEK TWO
Second Wave Civilizations: Economic and Cultural Connections

Reading Checklist (50 pp)

- 97-103 (Part Two 'Big Picture': What Changed? What Didn't?)
- 107-114 (Greeks and Persians: Origins of East/West myth) (Ch 3)
- 131-135 (Ancient Empires in India) (Ch 3)
- 203-207 (Slavery in the Roman Empire) (Ch 5)
- 213-218 (Patriarchy in Athens and Sparta) (Ch 5)
- 233, 239-241 (African and Mayan Civilizations) (Ch 6)
- 263 (Reflection: Balance in History)
- 281-288 (The Silk Road) (Ch 7)
- 291-292 (Indian Ocean Trade) (Ch 7)
- 299-305 (Trade in Africa and the Sahara) (Ch 7)
- 310 (Reflections on Economic Globalization)

Activity Checklist:

- Active Reading Quiz (Due Thurs)
- Keyword # 2 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sat)

Project Deadline:
By Sunday, in the 'Museum Project' forum, please post a list of 3 questions that you hope to explore during your museum trip. What will you be looking out for, what are you most interested/curious to see? Try to complete this assignment before your museum trip.

WEEK THREE
Monotheism and the Middle East

Reading Checklist (58 pp)

- 273-279 (Part Three 'Big Picture': Defining a Millennium)
- 165-181 (Monotheism in the Middle East with Buddhist Comparisons) (Ch 4)
- 349-354 (China and Buddhism) (Ch 8)
- 363-371; 375-380; 382-391 (Christian Worlds) (Ch 9)
- 415-416, 424-428, 434-437 (Early Islam) (Ch 10)
- 515-522 (Later Islamic Civilizations: The Ottomans and the Songhay) (Ch 12)

Activity Checklist:

- Active Reading Quiz (Due Thurs)
- Keyword #3 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion Forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), and 2 responses (Due Sat)
Project Deadline:
You must have visited your museum by Sunday of this week. Under the Forum "Museum Project" please post an informal narrative summary (3-4 paragraphs) of your museum trip. Detailed instructions are at the top of the Forum.

WEEK FOUR
Transformation and Commerce in the Early Modern World

Reading Checklist (64 pp)
• 323-325 (Intro to China's Golden Age) (Ch8)
• 346-348 (China's Impact on the Eurasian World Economy) (Ch8)
• 328-329 ("Zooming in: Gunpowder") (Ch 8)
• 428-434; 437-446 (Accelerating Change in Western Europe) (Chapter 10)
• 499-500 (Perspective on Columbus)
• 510-515 (European Comparisons: State Building and Voyaging)
• 547-551: (Part 4 Big Picture: Debating the Character of an Era)
• 561-562, 565-567, 571-572, 587-588 (Colonialism in N Am)
• 611-632 (Chapter 14: Economic Transformations: Silver, Fur and Slaves

Activity Checklist:
• Active Reading Quiz (Due Weds)
• Watch Instructor Video: How to Prepare for Your Exam
• NO Discussion Forum this week
• NO Keyword this week
• Midterm Exam

Project Deadline: MIDTERM EXAMS ARE DUE BY SUNDAY 9 PM EST

WEEK FIVE
Revolution and the Atlantic World

Reading Checklist (46 pp)
• 531-534 (Preview of Modernity: Chance and Contingency)
• 536-537 (Islam and Renaissance Europe) (Ch 12)
• 664-677 (Modern Science, and Why Europe?) (Ch 15)
• 869-695 (Part Five 'Big Picture': What is Eurocentrism?)
• 697-714 (Atlantic Revolutions in Comparison (Ch 16)
• 719-723 (Nations and Nationalism) (Ch 16)
• 728 (Revolutions: Pro and Con) (Ch 16)

Activity Checklist:
• Active Reading Quiz (Due Thurs)
• Keyword #4 (Due Thurs)
• Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sat)
**WEEK SIX**

**Industrialization and its Critics, 1800-1920**

**Reading Checklist:** (30 pp) (Ch 17)
- 737-756 (Explaining the Industrial Revolution)
- 760-764 (Industrialization in the US and Russia)
- 766-770 (Industrialization in Latin America)
- 773-774 (History and Horse Races)

**Activity Checklist:**
- Active Reading Quiz (Due Thurs)
- Keyword # 5 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sun)
- Progress Journaling # 2: Luddites

**Project Deadline:** None

**WEEK SEVEN**

**European Colonial Empire, 1750-1950**

**Reading Checklist:** (32 pp) (Ch 18)
- Some sort of cool intro is needed.
- 793-798 New European Conquest: Africa, Asia, Pacific
- 799-801 What Made These Empires Different?
- 802-808 Colonial Labor Practices
- 820-823 Identity and Agency
- 833-835; 838-839 (China and Opium Wars)
- 844-849 (The Ottoman Empire)
- 850-1 (Zooming: 1896 Battle of Adowa)
- 859-861 (Japan and the World)

**Activity Checklist:**
- Reading quiz (Due Thurs)
- Have them do something interesting with primary sources with week. Have them read/watch stuff about critical theory – those videos! Make this an engaging week.
- Keyword # 6 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sun)

**Project Deadlines:**
Museum projects must be posted by Friday at 9 PM. You must watch and comment on 2 of your peers' slideshows by Sunday at 9 PM.
WEEK EIGHT
World Wars and the Contemporary International Order

Reading Checklist: (49pp) (Ch 20)
- 873-879 (Part 6 The Big Picture: A New Period in World History)
- 902-903 (Zooming In: Etty Hillesum, Witness to the Holocaust)
- 912-913 (Zooming In: Hiroshima)
- 881-920 Collapse at the Center

Activity Checklist:
- Keyword # 7 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sat)
- Last Progress Journalising: Respond to the story of Etty Hillesum: What was her experience of the Nazi phenomenon? How might you assess her interior response to the Nazis? Was it a triumph of the human spirit or an evasion of responsibility to resist evil more directly? What lessons do you feel this story holds for you personally, and for the way you understand history? OR respond to Hiroshima: human cost of war? Victimhood and legitimization of violence. Short and long term effects.

Project Deadline: None

WEEK NINE
Communism and Capitalism: The Global Cold War

Reading Checklist: (48 pp) (Ch 21, Ch 23)
- 954-955 Zooming In: The Cuban Revolution
- 929-938: Communism in Russia and China
- 941-942 Communist Feminism
- 943-947: Communism and Industrial Development
- 947-959: The Global Cold War and Nuclear Standoff
- 965 To Judge or Not to Judge
- 1023-1030; 1033-1036 American Empire and the World Economy
- 1052-1060 Environmentalism (Zooming In: Rachel Carson)

Activity Checklist:
- Reading quiz (Due Thurs)
- Keyword # 8 (Due Thurs)
- Discussion forum: 2 posts (Due Fri), 2 responses (Due Sat)
- Watch "Reviewing with the Professor" video posted on LATTE

Project Deadline: None

WEEK TEN
Decolonization and the Global South

Reading Checklist: (28 pp) (Ch 22)
- 988-989 (Zooming In: Abdul Ghaffar Khan, Muslim Pacifist)
1046-1047 (Zooming In: Fulla)
975-982 Explaining the End of Empire
983-992 Comparing Freedom Struggles: India and South Africa
993-996 Post-Colonial Politics
1001-1002 Post-Colonial Economics
1005-1010: Islam and Post-Colonialism
1036-1040 Feminism in the West and the Global South
1043-1045 Fundamentalism and Alternatives in Islam
1061-1062 Pondering the Past

Activity Checklist:
- NO Keyword this Week
- NO Discussion Forum this week
- Watch Instructor Video: Review and Guidelines for Final
- Final exam
- Complete Course Evaluation

Project Deadlines: FINAL EXAM DUE SUNDAY at 9 PM.

Congratulations! You have successfully completed the course!

Thank you for choosing to learn about World History this summer. I hope you have enjoyed this foray into the deep past, and gained some new insights into the complex ways that this deep past has shaped, and continues to shape, our present. After all, history is still happening every day, and we are all a part of it. As we have seen, history provides valuable context for many different disciplines and industries, so even if you never take another history class again, I hope you keep some of this course with you in your future endeavors. Best of luck to you all!