

# World Civilizations I

Vanguard University of Southern California

**Class**

Semester: Spring 2017

Room: Smith 101

Time: MWF, 8-8:50am

**Instructor**

Kevin Walker, Ph.D.

Office Hours: MW, 11-12:50, or by appointment

Email: kevin.walker@vanguard.edu

**Course Description**

We are the sum of our past. Our language and ideas, our thoughts and values, our worst customs and noblest traditions are mostly handed down to us from our ancestors. The present moment did not create itself; it took centuries to develop into what it is. If we are ignorant of the past, it can enslave us and make us mere products of our culture, leaving us to drift into the future with no meaningful basis for our lives, and rendering our freedom an illusion. But if we do know the past, it becomes our greatest treasure and a precious inheritance – the accumulated wisdom of thoughts and deeds that can set us free from the assumptions of our time, and point us in the direction of the good, the true and the beautiful as they are understood in themselves, thus educating us in a way that is worthy of a human being. More importantly, a remembered past can make us better people, showing us the path to living lives of virtue, and the end that we are meant for. This course is a study in the stories and teachings that have shaped the civilization we live in, for better or for worse. We will examine them in order of appearance, from the earliest views of creation and law to the dawn of modernism and science – a development that also marks the intellectual and moral growth of an educated person. Reading people from the past in their own words can give us a panoramic view of our nature through the ages; the texts allow us to look with fresh eyes on ourselves, our hidden assumptions, and the significance of our own lives in human story.

**Required Text**

Students are required to own the following text.

*Western Heritage: A Reader*. Edited by the Hillsdale College History Faculty. Hillsdale College Press, 2014.

**Course Requirements and Grading**

- **Participation (20%).** Come to class every day with the readings done and be prepared to contribute to the discussion. Inability to answer the reading questions will result in the loss of a point. Not having the books will result in the loss of *all* participation points. Per VU's attendance policy, students with more than 8 unexplained absences will receive an F.
- Open laptops or texting on phones will be considered an absence.
- **Essay (15%).** This is a 5-6 page essay on a topic from class. There will be a prompt.
- **Midterm Exam I (15%).** An exam on the materials from the first third of the course.
- **Midterm Exam II (25%).** An exam on the materials from the second third of the course.
- **Final Exam (25%).** An exam on the materials from major points from the whole course. If you need to take the exam at a different time, you may take it with one of the professor's earlier classes.

## Academic Integrity

Plagiarism, or the use of someone else's text without quotes and proper citation, is considered a violation of the university's standards of academic integrity and will be grounds for serious disciplinary action. A first offense will be an F on the assignment; a second offence will be an F in the class and a referral to the Dean.

## Disabilities

The Office of Disability and Learning Services provides reasonable accommodations for students who need assistance with learning, and for students with disabilities. Reasonable accommodations are established through an interactive process between you, your professor(s) and Disability and Learning Services. If you have a temporary or permanent disability that requires accommodations (this can include but not limited to; attention-related, learning, mental health, vision, hearing, physical or other health conditions), please contact The Office of Disability and Learning Services at 714-619-6550 or [disabilityservices@vanguard.edu](mailto:disabilityservices@vanguard.edu).

## Course Outline

Students are required to read the following readings for each day of class. Discussion of each reading may vary depending on the lecture. All readings are from *Western Heritage: A Reader*, unless specified.

### I. The Ancient World

#### Week 1 – Mesopotamia

##### January 9

Preface (pp. ix-xii)

##### January 11

Introduction (pp. 3-8)

##### January 12

Code of Hammurabi; The Hebrews: Creation; The Hebrews: Covenant and Law (pp. 19-28)

#### Week 2 – Greek Cities

##### January 16

Martin Luther King Day

##### January 18

Introduction (pp. 61-66)

##### January 20

Thucydides, Pericles Funeral Oration (pp. 71-78)

#### Week 3 – Greek Wisdom

##### January 23

Plato, *Crito* (pp. 79-92)

##### January 25

Plato, *The Republic* (pp. 93-106)

##### January 27

Plato, *The Republic* (pp. 106-110)

#### Week 4 – Hellenism

##### January 30

Introduction; Maccabees I (pp. 151-162)

##### February 1

Epicurus, Letter to Menoeceus (pp. 167-170)

##### February 3

Epictetus, *The Discourses* (pp. 171-173)

## II. Rome

### Week 5 – The Roman Republic

#### February 6

Introduction; Polybius, *Histories* (pp. 177-190)

#### February 8

Plutarch, *Marcus Cato* (pp. 191-213)

#### February 10

Marcus Tullius Cicero, *On Duties* (pp. 215-234)

### Week 6 – Rise of the Roman Empire

#### February 13

Introduction (pp. 241-245)

#### February 15

Augustus, *Res Gestae Divi Augusti* (pp. 247-254)

#### February 17

Exam

### Week 7 – Decline of the Empire

#### February 20

President's Day – No Class

#### February 22

Suetonius, *Nero* (pp. 259-266)

#### February 24

Marcus Aurelius Antoninus, *Meditations* (pp. 267-273)

## III. The Christian World

### Week 8 – The Early Church

#### February 27

Introduction (pp. 285-289)

#### March 1

Gospel of Matthew; Gospel of John; Acts of the Apostles (pp. 291-314)

#### March 3

Galatians; Tertullian, *Prescription Against Heretics*; Clement of Alexandria, *On Philosophy* (pp. 315-324)

### Week 9 – The Church and the Empire

#### March 6

The Martyrdom of Perpetua (pp. 327-337)

#### March 8

Eusebius Pamphilus, *Life of Constantine*; *In Praise of the Emperor Constantine*; The Nicene Creed (pp. 339-359)

#### March 10

Augustine, *City of God* (pp. 361-369)

### Week 10 – The Early Middle Ages

#### March 20

Introduction; The Benedictine Rule (pp. 375-388)

#### March 22

Bede, *The Ecclesiastical History of the English People* (pp. 389-408)

#### March 24

Einhard, *Life of Charlemagne* (pp. 409-426)

### Week 11 – The High Middle Ages

#### March 27

Introduction (pp. 435-438)

#### March 29

The Investiture Controversy; *Magna Charta* (pp. 439-452; 469-475)

#### March 31

Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles* (pp. 481-490)

## IV. Modernity

### Week 12 – The Renaissance

#### April 3

Introduction; Petrus Paulus Vergerius, *The New Education*; Pico Mirandola; Giovanni Pico, *Oration on the Dignity of Man* (pp. 509-514; 541-547)

#### April 5

Niccolo Machiavelli, *The Prince* (pp. 549-557)

#### April 7

Exam

### Week 13 – The Reformation

#### April 10

Introduction; Martin Luther, Address to the Christian Nobility; *On Christian Liberty* (pp. 569-594)

#### April 12

The Council of Trent, Canon and Decrees; The Schleithem Confession (621-635)

#### April 14

Good Friday – No Class

### Week 14 – The Scientific Revolution

#### April 17

Introduction; Nicolaus Copernicus, *The Revolution of the Heavenly Spheres* (pp. 639-653)

#### April 19

Galileo Galilei, *The Starry Messenger*; Letter to the Grand Duchess (pp. 647-676)

#### April 21

Francis Bacon, *Aphorisms*; Sir Isaac Newton, *Principia* (pp. 677-691)

## V. Conclusion

### Week 15 – Debates and Discussion

#### April 24

Debate on Law, Justice and Happiness

#### April 26

Debate on Faith, Reason, and Science

#### April 28

Debate on Education, Virtue and the Soul

Final Exam – Wednesday, May 3, 8-10am
---------------------------------------