



# Western Civilization Online Course Syllabus

## Western Civilization 1003: From Prehistory to 1650

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**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** Western Civilization 1003 is an online survey course in western development from the pre-historic period to 1650. Emphasis is on the cultural, scientific, religious, and political contributions of the ancient, medieval, and early modern civilizations to 1650.

**RESOURCES: Text:** Mortimer Chambers, et al, *The Western Experience*, Volume I, 8th Edition. **Course Documents:** Available at the online course web site: <http://webct.nwacc.net/webct/public/home.pl>. **Other Online Resources:** As assigned. **Library Resources:** If they are available to you.

Emphasis will be placed on course documents, discussion, and online research. The text is an important reference tool to supplement material covered in class and as a starting point for research projects. However, you will not be expected to read it from cover to cover or to outline, underline, or otherwise memorize it. You will be building your knowledge of history, seeking enlightenment, and developing insights from multiple resources through reading, reflection, and group interaction.

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Because this is an online course, there will be considerable reading and writing. You will be expected to read all course documents, to take an active part in weekly online discussions, to conduct online research, to complete three web activities, and to take two regular examinations and one comprehensive final examination at the designated times.

### COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. To explore the major themes and trends of Western Civilization, to discover how individuals have exercised leadership and served as agents of constructive change, to learn from the successes and failures of others, and to appreciate the contributions made by previous generations.
2. To understand the approach to history defined by Will and Ariel Durant in **The Lessons of History** (1968): "Obviously historiography [writing history] cannot be a science. It can only be an industry, an art, and a philosophy. – an industry by ferreting out the facts, an art by establishing a meaningful order in the chaos of materials, a philosophy by seeking perspective and enlightenment."
3. To develop a working knowledge of the processes required to understand the past and to engage in the discovery, analysis, interpretation, and communication of historical evidence (the various aspects of the historian's craft).
4. To develop the critical thinking skills and lifelong learning skills needed to meet the challenges of the 21st century, especially the ability to separate fiction, fantasy, and falsehood from substantiated truth.
5. To share ideas, insights, and discoveries with others using effective communication skills.

### POLICIES

**Participation Policy:** You will be expected to participate actively in all online classroom activities, to be courteous and respectful to others, and to be supportive of one other. Learning is a partnership between you, your fellow classmates, and your instructor. You can do your part by giving the course your serious attention and exhibiting the college-level traits of curiosity, serious-mindedness, and appreciation for learning.

**Essay and Exam Policy:** All web activities and examinations must be completed by the designated dates. If you miss a deadline, your grade will be lowered by one letter grade for each day past the deadline.

**Grievance Procedure:** The Social Science Department follows the NWACC Student Handbook regarding proper steps to be taken should a grievance occur between fellow students, or the student and instructor. The first step in any grievance is to bring the complaint to the attention of the instructor. If the issue is not satisfactorily resolved, the student (and/or instructor) then contacts the instructor's "Lead Faculty."

## **STUDENT EVALUATION**

1. There will be two regular examinations (100-pts ea.) covering course documents, class discussions, and assigned readings. Examinations will be of the essay variety and open book. They will be graded on the basis of content (80%), presentation (10%), and mechanics (10%). The final examination (120-pts) will be comprehensive.
2. In addition, you will be expected to complete three web activities (100-pts ea.) using a variety of Internet resources.
3. Finally, it will be possible for students to earn 380-pts for participation in class discussions and activities. Points will be awarded for significant contributions to the group's learning experience (e.g., a question, an observation, or a comment that stimulates a worthwhile discussion, illustrates a point with examples, or suggests a new perspective on an issue; a synopsis of a resource which increases the group's knowledge of the topic under consideration; an account of a research experience which contributes to the group's understanding of the historiographical process of discovery, analysis, interpretation, and communication).
4. Final grades will be based on the following scale: A=1000-900, B=890-800, C=790-700, D=690-600, F=Below 600

## COURSE OUTLINE

WEEK	DISCUSSION TOPICS/ACTIVITIES
Week One August 25-31	<p><b>COURSE INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p><b>1. Orientation</b>            Topic 1.1. How Would You Do? Why Students Fail Standardized Tests in History            Topic 1.2. Personal Course Objectives            Topic 1.3. Textbook Evaluation            Topic 1.4. Multiple Intelligences and the Study of History</p> <p><b>2. Introduction to Historical Research</b>            Activity 1. Using Primary Sources</p>
<b>Weeks Two-Six</b>	<b>A. THE ANCIENT WORLD (To 476 A.D.)</b>
Week Two September 1-7	<p><b>1. The Earliest Humans</b>            Text References: Ch. 1            Topic 2.1. The Foundations of Western Civilization            Topic 2.2. Hunting, Gathering, and Cave Painting            Topic 2.3. The Agricultural Revolution            Activity 2. Online Primary Sources</p>
Week Three September 8-14	<p><b>2. The Ancient Near East</b>            Text References: Ch. 1            Topic 3.1. Mesopotamia            Topic 3.2. Egypt            Topic 3.3. Hebrews: A New View of God and the Individual</p>
Week Four September 15-21	<p><b>3. Greek Civilization</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 2-3            Topic 4.1. The Greek Polis: Athens and Sparta            Topic 4.2. Greek Philosophy and Science: Thales, Socrates, Plato, and Aristotle            Topic 4.3. The Hellenistic Age: Cultural Diffusion</p>
Week Five September 22-28	<p><b>4. Roman Civilization</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 4            Topic 5.1. The Roman Republic            Topic 5.2. The Roman Empire            Topic 5.3. How Did the Ancient World Measure Up?  <b>First Web Activity Due</b></p>
Week Six September 29- October 5	<p><b>5. Early Christianity</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 5            Topic 6.1. Origins: Jesus of Nazareth and Paul of Tarsus            Topic 6.2. Church Organization and the Formulation of Church Doctrine            Discussion of Web Activities  <b>Examination I</b></p>
<b>Weeks Seven-Eleven</b>	<b>B. THE MEDIEVAL WORLD (476-1300)</b>
Week Seven October 6-12	<p><b>1. Early Medieval Empires</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 6-7            Topic 7.1. The Byzantine Empire            Topic 7.2. Islamic Civilization            Topic 7.3. The Carolingian Empire</p>
Week Eight October 13-19	<p><b>2. Medieval Institutions</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 8            Topic 8.1. The Medieval Social Structure            Topic 8.2. Feudalism and Manorialism            Topic 8.3. The Medieval Church</p>
Week Nine October 20-26	<p><b>3. Medieval Culture</b>            Text Reference: Ch. 9            Topic 9.1. The Rise of Universities            Topic 9.2. Scholasticism</p>

WEEK	DISCUSSION TOPICS/ACTIVITIES
	Topic 9.3. The Growth of Heresies
Week Ten October 27- November 2	4. <b>Urban Growth and Consolidation</b> Text Reference: Ch. 10 Topic 10.1. Urban Growth Topic 10.2. The Rise of National Monarchies Topic 10.3. The Ascendancy of the Church <b>Second Web Activity Due</b>
Week Eleven November 3-9	5. <b>The Breakdown of Medieval Society</b> Text Reference: Ch. 11 Topic 11.1. The Fourteenth Century: Famine, Disease, and Warfare Topic 11.2. The Decline of the Papacy Discussion of Web Activities <b>Examination II</b>
<b>Weeks Twelve- Sixteen</b>	<b>C. THE EARLY MODERN WORLD (1500-1650)</b>
Week Twelve November 10-16	1. <b>The Renaissance</b> Text Reference: Ch. 12 Topic 13.1. The Italian Renaissance Topic 13.2. Renaissance Art Topic 13.3. The Northern Renaissance
Week Thirteen November 17-23	2. <b>The Protestant Reformation</b> Text References: Ch. 13 Topic 13.1. The Need for Reform Topic 13.2. Martin Luther and the Reformation in Germany Topic 13.3. Henry VIII and the Reformation in England
Week Fourteen November 24-30 Thanksgiving	3. <b>The Institutionalization of Protestantism</b> Text Reference: Ch. 14 Topic 13.1. John Calvin and the Reformation in Geneva Topic 13.2. The Puritans Topic 13.3. Radical Protestantism: The Quakers
Week Fifteen December 1-7	4. <b>The Transition from Medieval to Modern</b> Text Reference: Ch. 14 Topic 14.1. An Overview of the Transition Topic 14.2. The Weber Thesis Topic 14.3. The Relationship Between Protestantism, Capitalism, and Democracy <b>Third Web Activity</b>
Week Sixteen December 8-14	5. <b>The Age of Expansion</b> Text Reference: Ch. 15 Topic 16.1. Overseas Expansion Topic 16.2. Nation-Building and Warfare Discussion of Web Activities
<b>Final:</b> December 11-14	<b>Comprehensive Final Examination</b>