

HR 100A
IDEAS THAT SHAPED THE WEST:
Empire
COURSE SYLLABUS

Prof. William Abbott
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Tuesday – 1:00 – 1:50, 4:30 – 5:30

Wednesday – 9:30 – 12:00, 2:00 – 2:50

Friday – 1:00 – 1:50

Prof. Kathryn Nantz
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Tuesday – 1:00 – 2:30

Thursday – 1:00 – 2:30

Friday – 1:00 – 2:00

Class meetings: TU/F 9:30 – 11: 10, CNS 104

I. INTRODUCTION – Welcome to “Ideas that Shaped the West”, your first semester Honors course. Our course this semester will explore a variety of ideas from around the world that helped to shape the intellectual tradition and historical outcomes in the western world. In order to organize this massive undertaking, we are using the theme of “empire”; we’ll begin with a definition of the term and then think about how economic, social, religious, technological, political, and other factors help to explain why empires rise and fall. How did ideas affect globalization and empire? How were globalization and empire affected by these ideas?

We would like to invite you to join us in this enterprise...We’ll spend the semester thinking about ideas, what makes them “great” or “important”, and then how they shaped the development of western society. It is important that you understand two things: First, we are in this together, we hope we can work together to uncover some interesting ways of understanding the world, not just the “west” but the interplay of “east” and “west” that determined the development of ideas that helped to shape the western world. The exchange of ideas is really important to the development of a society, not just science and technology but also the philosophical, intellectual and spiritual ideas that provide meaning to life within a particular society.

II. COURSE OBJECTIVES

- Introduce students to a variety of ideas that have helped to define western world.
- Emphasize that ideas that shaped the west are the product of an interplay between cultures all around the globe.
- Reveal the notion that good scholarship is about generating interesting questions that lead to other new and interesting questions.
- Work on reading, research, presentation, and writing skills.

III. READINGS

To purchase:

- Kishlansky, Geary and O'Brien. (2005) *A Brief History of Western Civilization*, 4th edition. Pearson Publishing Company. (ISBN # 0-321-19675-9)
- Fustfeld. (2002) *The Age of the Economist*, 9th edition. Addison Wesley. (ISBN # 0-321-08812-3)
- Lal. (1998) *Unintended Consequences: The Impact of Factor Endowments, Culture, and Politics on Long-Run Economic Performance*. MIT Press. (ISBN # 0-262-62154-1)
- Clavell. *Tai Pan*. Bantam Doubleday Dell. (ISBN # 0-440-18462-2)

Handouts

We will hand out copies of many different readings, from ancient writers to current magazine articles. If you miss class it is your responsibility to obtain any handouts you need.

IV. COUSE ASSIGNMENTS

- CLASS PARTICIPATION** – This grade will account for your participation in class discussions and activities on a daily basis. There will be a variety of group work, discussions, and other assignments designed to immerse you in course material. On Tuesdays, we meet as a large group; on Fridays, we will divide into two groups, one will meet with Prof. Abbott and the other with Prof. Nantz. We expect that you will all feel comfortable joining in on discussions of course material. = **15%**
- BRAINSTORMERS** – These short papers are designed to help you think hard about course material. Here we are less interested in your attention to the details of spelling and grammar, and more interested in your ability to develop some good thinking skills. (4-5 assignments) = **20%**
- OUTLINES/ORAL PRESENTATIONS** – In addition to improving your speaking skills, these longer and more “public” assignments will help you to develop your ideas and will provide you with opportunities to get some help from your classmates. You will be asked to work with a group to design a 30 minute presentation, discussion, and/or activity that helps to clarify the important points of the readings for that day. A grading rubric will be distributed to better articulate our expectations for these panels. (2 assignments) = **20%**
- POLISHED WORK** – These assignments will give you the opportunity to shine. You will be using ideas you developed in your shorter assignments to create some new knowledge or better understandings of the nature of ideas. Now we will be looking for careful attention to detail, to form, grammar, spelling, to organization

and structure. The assignments will be distributed well in advance of their due-dates, so you should have plenty of time to consider and prepare them.
(2 assignments) Paper 1 = **20%** and paper 2 = **25%**.

Your final grade will be determined based on our assessment of your work in the course. There will be no final exam in a traditional sense, though there will be a final paper. (See D above.) Weights on each assignment are listed above. Plagiarism will not be tolerated on any assignment and will be dealt with as defined in the University's Student Handbook.

COURSE OUTLINE

(HO = handout)

(BG = background)

PART I

Week #1 September 9 **What is Empire??**

Friday

Themes: Intro to empire, what makes empire, how do we define it?

Reading: Ferguson’s “Introduction” (HO)

Week #2 September 13 **Globalization and its Discontents**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Alternative economic systems, capitalism vs. socialism. Inequality in the distribution of global resources – Rich vs. poor on a global scale.

Reading: Lal’s *Empire* – ch. 1 (HO), Ferguson’s “Introduction”, China case study materials (HO), *Tai Pan*, chapters 1 and 2.

Film: *Frontline*: “Is Wal-Mart Good for America?” and “China in the Red”

Week #3 September 20 – **The Ancient World**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Markets, price ceilings and floors. History as something we learn from.

Reading: Lal (*Unintended*), chapters 1 and 2, Herodotus and Prof. Abbott’s summaries (HO), Kishlansky (BG) p. 28-61, 88-107.

Week #4 September 27 – **The Middle Ages: Spirituality vs. materialism**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Role of money, money vs. barter economies, RC Church, Bubonic plague, individual responsibility vs. salvation by faith alone

Readings: Lal (*Unintended*), chapter 5, “The Economic Organization of a POW Camp” (HO), Sass – chapter 4 (HO), Horrox/Luther/etc. (HO), Kishlansky (BG) p. 112-126, 152-213, 260-278.

Week #5 October 4 – **Culture Clash and Overseas Expansion**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: PPF, trade theory, comparative vs. absolute advantage, social impact of learning about other cultures and ways of life

Readings: Fusfeld, chapters 1 and 2, primary source material (HO), Kishlansky (BG), p. 218-248.

Film: “A Respectable Trade”

Week #6 October 11 – **Progress and the age of science (2 weeks)**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Scientific revolution, enlightenment, creating a better world, Galileo,/ Copernicus/Newton, role of technology

Reading: Fusfeld, chapters 3 and 4, Condorcet/Galileo/etc. (HO), Sass, chapter 9 (HO), Kishlansky (BG), p. 340-344.

Week #7 October 18

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Slavery, applications of scientific principles – acceptance vs. experimentation

Reading: Kishlansky (BG), p. 344-386.

Role-playing exercise: For/against slavery – roundtable discussion with students in groups representing different positions – Church, Quakers, enlightenment thinkers, government ministers, slave narrative, merchants, etc.

POLISHED PAPER #1 DUE – Tuesday, October 25 at the start of class.

PART II

At this point in the course, we will assess our progress, gather your feedback, and distribute a more detailed set of readings. The following outline will give you an idea of our topics for the second half of the semester.

Week #8 October 25 – **Constitutionalism and the growth of nationalism**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Revolutions around the globe, social/political forces leading to revolutionary tendencies, nationalism

Reading: Lal (*Unintended*) chapter 6, primary sources (HO), Kishlansky (BG), p. 324-336, 402-417.

Week #9 November 1 – **Industrial revolution**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Industrial organization, economies of scale, role of capital in development, monopolization, role of private property in encouraging innovation

Reading: *Tai Pan*, primary sources (HO).

Week #10 November 8 – **Clashing Economic Theories**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: The age of the “isms”, Marx and his critique of capitalism,

Reading: “The Communist Manifesto”, Fusfeld on Marx.

Week #11 November 15 – **19th and 20th Century Empires**

Tuesday

Friday

Themes: Emergence of British empire,

Readings: *Tai Pan*, Ferguson, primary sources.

Film: “Gandhi”

Week #12 November 22 – **Depression, War, and Prosperity**

Tuesday

Friday – *THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY*

Themes: The Great Depression, WWII and the postwar world, the cold war.

Readings: Lal (*Unintended*), chapters 9 and 10.

Week #13 November 29 – **Modern Economic Theory and the Great Age of Change**

Tuesday

Friday

Film: “Bend it like Beckham”

Week #14 December 6 – **Globalization and its Social Fallout**

Tuesday

Friday

Week #15 December 13 **LAST DAY OF CLASS**

FINAL EXAM: *Second polished work due – December 16 by 5:00 p.m.*