Description.

“Premodern World” is a lower-division, lecture course that provides an overview of global development from roughly 30,000 BCE to 1500 CE. By the end of the semester, students should be able to: 1) define “civilization” and explain theories about the rise and fall of civilizations; 2) compare political, cultural, and socio-economic aspects of premodern societies across Eurasia, Africa, and the Americas; and 3) identify cross-cultural encounters that have had a lasting impact on global history. This team-taught, entry-level course aims to teach historical thinking as well as historical content, to impart a basic grasp of the premodern past as well as to stimulate the development of large-scale frameworks for historical analysis. Although this course has no prerequisites and assumes no prior knowledge of the subject, students are presumed to be capable of critical reflection upon both lectures and readings.

Professor and TA information.

Prof. A. Frazier
akfrazier@mail.utexas.edu
Office: GAR 2.148
Hrs: M 8-9, Th 1-2 & by appt.

Prof. C. Talbot
ctalbot@mail.utexas.edu
Office: GAR 3.106
Hrs: M 1:30-3:30 & by appt.

TA: Dharitri Bhattacharjee
bhattad@mail.utexas.edu
Office: BUR 302
Hrs: W 9-11 am

Readings. Available for purchase (p) at the Co-op or for download from Blackboard (bb):
- Strayer, *Ways of the World, A Brief Global History with Sources* volume I (p)
- Thomas R. Martin, *Herodotus and Sima Qian* (p)
- sections of Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (bb)
- sections of Marco Polo, *Travels*, tr. R. Latham (bb)
- sections of Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta* (bb)
- P. A. McAnany & T. G. Negron, "Bellicose Rulers and Climatological Peril" in *Questioning Collapse*, ed. P. A. McAnany & Norman Yoffee (bb)
- Asoka's Rock Edict XIII (bb)
- Column of Marcus Aurelius (bb)

Requirements. Students are expected:
- to attend all lectures
- to prepare all reading assignments thoughtfully by beginning of the week
- to complete at least four of the six reading worksheets and submit them in class
- to participate regularly and responsibly in worksheet-based discussions
- to complete at least four of the six textbook quizzes
- to complete the three non-cumulative exams
Grading procedure. The three non-cumulative exams will consist of essay questions, and will together comprise 60% of the course grade. Six short, factual, multiple-choice quizzes based on the assigned textbook readings will be administered – four of these will count toward the course grade. A series of six reading worksheets will accompany our non-textbook sources; four will count towards the course grade. The various aspects of student performance are weighted:

- exam 1 (Sept. 23) = 20%
- exam 2 (Oct. 21) = 20%
- exam 3 (Dec. 2) = 20%
- 4 quizzes = 20% (cannot be made up)
- 4 reading worksheets = 20% (must be turned in during class)

We will NOT be using pluses and minuses for the course grade this semester.

Attendance policy.
Quizzes and reading worksheets cannot be made up. Make-up exams will be administered only with the consent of the professors and at their convenience.

Religious holy days sometimes conflict with class and examination schedules. It is the policy of UT-Austin that you must notify each of your instructors at least fourteen days prior to the classes scheduled on dates you will be absent to observe a religious holy day.

Policy on special accommodations. At the beginning of the semester, students who need special accommodations should notify the instructor by presenting a letter prepared by the Services for Students with Disabilities (SDD) Office. To ensure that the most appropriate accommodations can be provided, students should contact the SSD Office at 471-6259 or 471-4641 TTY.

Read more at: http://www.utexas.edu/diversity/ddce/ssd/

Academic integrity. Students who violate University rules on scholastic dishonesty are subject to disciplinary penalties, including the possibility of failure in the course and/or dismissal from the University. Since such dishonesty harms the individual, all students, and the integrity of the University, policies on scholastic dishonesty will be strictly enforced.

Read details at: http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/scholdis.php

Blackboard and laptop/messaging device policy. We will use the course web site on Blackboard to post assignments and make announcements relating to the course – check the site regularly (at least weekly) for new information. It is your responsibility to maintain a functioning email account linked to Blackboard.

Read university policy at: http://www.utexas.edu/its/policies/emailnotify/html

All students have the right to learn in a supportive environment: don’t let your use of a laptop or mobile device distract others. All laptops and mobile messaging devices must be turned off
and stored away during quizzes and examinations. Their use, WITHOUT ANY SOUND, is acceptable during lectures or class discussions for note-taking or instructor-directed web-surfing.

To record audio or visuals of lectures you must have a written consent from both professors.

**Keep in touch!** If you are having difficulty with the course or must be absent for a period due to personal issues, stop by during office hours or be in touch by email. Don’t wait until weeks have passed and it’s too late to catch up. The professors and TA for this course sincerely want you to succeed.

****************************************************

**Schedule of Class Meetings & Readings**

**PART I -- Taking A Global View: Civilization & Its Consequences**

**WK 1. INTRODUCTION**
- W 24 Aug  Introduction to Course
- F 26 Aug  Paleolithic Art
  
  **reading:** Strayer, *Ways*, Ch1. “First Peoples, To 10,000 BCE.”

**WK 2. AGRICULTURE & ITS IMPACTS**
- M 29 Aug  The Foraging Lifestyle
- W 31 Aug  Transitions to Agriculture
- F  2 Sept.  The Urban Revolution in Mesopotamia
  
  
  *Epic of Gilgamesh*—begin reading

**WK 3. THE FIRST CIVILIZATIONS**
- M  5 Sept.  Labor Day Holiday
- W  7 Sept.  Ruling, Writing, and *Gilgamesh*
- F  9 Sept.  Indus Valley Civilization // **quiz 1: Strayer chs2-3**
  
  **reading:** *Epic of Gilgamesh*—finish reading
WK 4. VARYING TRAJECTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

M 12 Sept. discussion: Defining Civilization with Gilgamesh // worksheet 1
W 14 Sept. Mesoamerica & the Classical Maya
F 16 Sept. Decline of Classic Maya Civilization
reading: J. Diamond, "Prologue" (pp. 1-23) & "The Maya Collapses" (pp. 157-77) in Collapse: How Societies Choose to Fail or Succeed (bb); P. A. McAnany & T. G. Negron, "Bellicose Rulers and Climatological Peril" in Questioning Collapse, ed. P. A. McAnany & Norman Yoffee (bb).

WK 5. SUMMING UP: GLOBAL PATTERNS IN EARLY HISTORY

M 19 Sept. discussion: Considering Civilizational Collapse // worksheet 2
W 21 Sept. Sub-Saharan Africa & the Bantu Migrations
F 23 Sept. EXAM 1

PART II -- Comparative History: Classical Cultures, 500 BCE to 500 CE

WK 6. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE AXIAL AGE

M 26 Sept. Moses, Socrates, Jesus
W 28 Sept. Buddha and Confucius
F 30 Sept. Axial Age Religions // quiz 2: Strayer chs4-5

WK 7. CLASSICAL HISTORIANS OF GREECE & CHINA

M 3 Oct. Classical Greece & Herodotus
W 5 Oct. Qin-Han Empires & Sima Qian
F 7 Oct. discussion: Comparing Historians // worksheet 3
reading: Thomas R. Martin, Herodotus & Sima Qian

WK 8. COMMEMORATING CONQUEST IN INDIA & ROME

M 10 Oct. Asoka’s Empire and Message of Dharma
W 12 Oct. Column of Marcus Aurelius: Reading Representation
F 14 Oct. discussion: Comparing Imperial Monuments // worksheet 4  
Asoka's Rock Edict XIII; Marcus Aurelius’ Column

WK 9. SUMMING UP CLASSICAL EMPIRES AND CULTURES  
M 17 Oct. Comparing Empires: Han & Roman // quiz 3 Strayer ch6  
W 19 Oct. Comparing Religions in Late Antiquity  
F 21 Oct. EXAM 2

**PART III -- Cross-Cultural History: Spread of Civilizations, 500-1500**

WK 10. EXPANDING ECONOMIC & CULTURAL SPHERES  
M 24 Oct. Silk, Sea, & Sand Roads: Overview  
W 26 Oct. Expansion of European Culture: View from England  
F 28 Oct. Expansion of Chinese Culture: View from Japan // quiz 4: Strayer chs8-9  

WK 11. VARIETY OF CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS  
M 31 Oct. Expansion of Islamic Culture: View from Spain  
W 2 Nov. Perspectives on the Crusades // quiz 5: Strayer ch10-11  
F 4 Nov. Introduction to *Travels* & Rihla  
Marco Polo, *Travels*, Prologue" (pp. 33-45);  

WK 12. TRAVEL IN THE MONGOL WORLD: MARCO POLO  
M 7 Nov. The Mongol Conquests  
W 9 Nov. Marco Polo and the Pax Mongolica  
F 11 Nov. discussion: Marco Polo and the Traveler's Gaze // worksheet 5  
Marco Polo, *Travels*, "Kubilai Khan" (pp. 113-62).
WK 13. TRAVEL IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD: IBN BATTUTA

M 14 Nov. Islam in the Eastern World
W 16 Nov. Cultures in Contact in Africa
F 18 Nov. discussion: Ibn Battuta and the Dar al-Islam // worksheet 6

WK 14. THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY

M 21 Nov. Plagues in Europe // quiz 6: Strayer chs12-13
W 23 Nov. Ottoman World (video)
F 25 Nov. Thanksgiving Holiday

WK 15. SUMMING UP: CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS, 500-1500

M 28 Nov. Italian Perspectives on the World
W 30 Nov. Maritime Revolution
F 2 Dec. EXAM 3