**PREMODERN WORLD**

HIS 301f (#38985) // AHC 310 (#32050)

MWF 10 to 11 am

WAG 101

**Fall 2010**

**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 This team-taught, entry-level course aims to teach historical thinking as well as historical content, to impart a basic grasp of the premodern past as well as to stimulate the development of large-scale frameworks for historical analysis.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: T 3-5pm & by apptmt.

Prof. C. Talbot
ctalbot@mail.utexas.edu
Office: GAR 3.106
Hrs: M 11-12 & F 1:30-3:30

Hadi Hosainy, TA
hadi.hoss@gmail.com
Office: Burdine 310
Hrs. W 2-4 pm

**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)
- Sima Qian, *The First Emperor*, tr. R. Dawson (p)
- Marco Polo, *Travels*, tr. R. Latham (p)
- Ross Dunn, *The Adventures of Ibn Battuta* (p)
- excerpt from Jared Diamond, *Collapse* (bb)
- excerpt from Ammianus Marcellinus, *Histories* (bb)
- excerpt from Epictetus, *Handbook* (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)

**Requirements.** Students are expected:

* to attend all lectures
* to prepare all reading assignments thoughtfully by beginning of the week
* to respond to at least six of eight reading worksheets and submit them before class through Blackboard (by 10pm on the required date)
*to participate regularly and responsibly in worksheet-based discussions
*to complete at least six of the eight short factual quizzes
*to complete the three non-cumulative exams

**Grading procedure.** The three non-cumulative exams will consist of both short answer and essay questions, and will together comprise 60% of the course grade. Eight short, factual, multiple-choice quizzes based on the assigned textbook readings will be administered on Mondays – six of these will count toward the course grade. A series of eight reading worksheets will accompany our non-textbook sources; six will count towards the course grade. Attendance and participation is another component of your final grade. The various aspects of student performance are weighted:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>exam 1 (Sept. 24)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>exam 2 (Oct. 22)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>exam 3 (Dec. 8)</td>
<td>20% (during final exam period)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 quizzes</td>
<td>15% (cannot be made up)</td>
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<tr>
<td>6 reading worksheets</td>
<td>20% (must be turned in before class)</td>
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<tr>
<td>attendance &amp; participation</td>
<td>5%</td>
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We will NOT be using pluses and minuses for the course grade this semester.

**Attendance policy.** You are counted present only if you are in class for the entire period. Emergencies will of course be accommodated, but departures immediately following a quiz reflect poorly upon you.

You are allowed two absences no questions asked. After that, unexcused absences will adversely affect your grade. Excused absences require a note to the professors ahead of time insofar as possible. For unexpected absences due to illness or accident, notify us of your situation as soon as possible and document it immediately upon your return.

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.

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**Schedule of Class Meetings & Readings**

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

**Wk 1.** INTRODUCTION

W 25 Aug Introduction to Course

F 27 Aug Maps & Mapping

reading: Strayer, *Ways*, Ch1. “First Peoples, To 10,000 BCE.”

**Wk 2.** AGRICULTURE & ITS IMPACTS

M 30 Aug **quiz 1** (on Strayer ch. 2); Paleolithic Art

W 1 Sept. Agricultural Transitions

F 3 Sept. Food Production & the Fertile Crescent

Wk 3. THE FIRST CIVILIZATIONS
M 6 Sept. Labor Day Holiday
W 8 Sept. The Urban Revolution in Mesopotamia
F 10 Sept. Other River Valley Civilizations
reading: begin *Epic of Gilgamesh*;

Wk 4. VARYING TRAJECTORIES OF DEVELOPMENT
M 13 Sept. quiz 2 (Strayer ch. 3 & 7); Ruling, Writing, and *Gilgamesh*
reading worksheet 1 due 10 pm, Tues. Sept. 14
W 15 Sept. discussion: Defining Civilization with Gilgamesh
F 17 Sept. Mesoamerica & the Classical Maya
reading: finish *Epic of Gilgamesh*;

Wk 5. SUMMING UP: GLOBAL PATTERNS IN EARLY HISTORY
M 20 Sept. Sub-Saharan Africa & the Bantu Migrations
reading worksheet 2 due 10 pm, Tues. Sept. 21
W 22 Sept. discussion: Considering Civilizational Collapse
F 24 Sept. EXAM 1
reading: Jared 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).

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

Wk 6. RELIGION AND PHILOSOPHY IN THE AXIAL AGE
M 27 Sept. quiz 3 (Strayer ch. 5); Buddha and Confucius
W 29 Sept. Moses, Socrates, Jesus
reading worksheet 3 due 10 pm, Thurs. Sept. 30
F 1 Oct. discussion: Axial Age Religions
Epictetus, selection from *Handbook* (bb)
Wk 7. POLITICS OF EMPIRE IN ASIA
M 4 Oct. quiz 4 (Strayer ch. 4); First Emperor & His Han Successors
W 6 Oct. Asoka’s Empire and Message of Dharma
reading worksheet 4 due 10 pm, Thurs. Oct. 7
F 8 Oct. discussion: The Chinese Imperial Tradition Begins

Wk. 8. POLITICS OF EMPIRE IN THE WEST
M 11 Oct. quiz 5 (Strayer ch. 6); Rome & Its Imperial Predecessors
W 13 Oct. Fall of the Roman Empire
reading worksheet 5 due 10 pm, Thurs. Oct. 14
F 15 Oct. discussion: Barbarians at the Gates
reading: Strayer, Ways, Ch6. “Eurasian Social Hierarchies, 500 BCE-500 CE;” Ammianus Marcellinus selection (bb)

Wk 9. SUMMING UP CLASSICAL EMPIRES AND CULTURES
M 18 Oct. Comparing Empires: Han & Roman
W 20 Oct. Comparing Religions in Late Antiquity
F 22 Oct. EXAM 2

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

Wk 10. EXPANDING ECONOMIC & CULTURAL SPHERES
W 27 Oct. Sinification of Central & East Asia

Wk 11. SPREAD OF ISLAM & CHRISTIANITY
M 1 Nov. quiz 6 (Strayer ch. 10 & 11); Islamic Spain
W 3 Nov. Perspectives on the Crusades
reading worksheet 6 due 10 pm Thurs. Nov. 4
F  5 Nov.  **discussion:** Marco Polo and the Literature of Travel  
**reading:** Strayer, *Ways,* Ch10. “Worlds of European Christendom, 500-1300;”  
Marco Polo, *Travels,* “Prologue” (pp. 33-45)

**Wk 12. TRAVEL IN THE MONGOL WORLD: MARCO POLO**
M 8 Nov.  **quiz 7** (Strayer ch. 12); Genghis Khan & the Mongol Empire  
W 10 Nov.  Marco Polo and the Pax Mongolica  
 **reading worksheet 7** due 10 pm, Thurs. Nov. 11  
F 12 Nov.  **discussion:** Marco Polo and Trade Diasporas  
**reading:** Strayer, *Ways,* Ch12. “Pastoral Peoples ... Mongol Moment, 1200-1500.”  
Marco Polo, *Travels,* "Kubilai Khan" (pp. 113-62)

**Wk 13. TRAVEL IN THE ISLAMIC WORLD: IBN BATTUTA**
M 15 Nov.  Islam in the Eastern World  
W 17 Nov.  Cultures in Contact in Africa  
 **reading worksheet 8** due 10 pm, Thurs. Nov. 18  
F 19 Nov.  **discussion:** Ibn Battuta and the Traveller’s Gaze  

**Wk 14. THE FIFTEENTH CENTURY**
M 22 Nov.  **quiz 8** (Strayer ch. 13); Renaissance in Europe  
W 24 Nov.  Rise of the Ottoman Empire  
F 26 Nov.  Thanksgiving Holiday  

**Wk 15. SUMMING UP: CROSS-CULTURAL ENCOUNTERS, 500-1500**
M 29 Nov.  Global Connections  
W 1 Dec.  Review worksheet & discussion  
F 3 Dec.  NO CLASS MEETING, Professors hold extra office hours

**EXAM 3** on Wed. December 8, 2:00-5:00 pm