

History 140: Early Civilizations Course Syllabus

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Course Web Site: <http://eccwhp.org>

Course Description

This course is a survey of the political, economic, social, and cultural development of World Civilizations from the origins of these complex cultures in the Neolithic era to the emergence of the West in the fifteenth century. Topics include the early civilizations of the Near East, Egypt, India, China, the Americas, Greece, and Rome.

Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of History of Early Civilizations, students will be able to develop and persuasively argue a historical thesis in a written assignment that identifies and explains major social, economic, political and/or cultural historical themes or patterns in the history of Early Civilizations and apply appropriate historical methods to analyze and use primary and/or secondary sources as evidence to support the thesis.

Course Objectives

1. Assess the significance of agriculture in the development of complex cultures and identify the major characteristics of early agricultural societies.
2. Analyze the impact of geographical features in the formation and evolution of early civilizations of the Near East, Egypt, South Asia, China, and the Americas.
3. Compare and contrast the political, religious, economic, and social institutions of early civilizations of the Near East, Egypt, South Asia, China, and the Americas.
4. Assess the role of Nomadic societies in the development of early agricultural civilizations.

5. Discuss the major characteristics of the Classical Era and identify what distinguishes it from earlier historical periods.
6. Identify and analyze the ways Classical civilizations of the Near East, South Asia, China, and the Mediterranean maintained or transformed earlier institutions and traditions.
7. Examine the various ways in which cultural encounters occurred and identify significant cross-cultural exchanges that took place during the Classical Era.
8. Compare the major legacies of Classical civilizations in the Near East, South Asia, China, and the Mediterranean.
9. Identify the major characteristics of the Post-Classical era and discuss what distinguishes it from earlier historical periods.
10. Assess the contributions of earlier civilizations to the development of the Post-Classical societies of Medieval Europe, the Byzantine Empire, and the Islamic Empire.
11. Analyze the political, economic, social, and cultural evolution of South Asian and Chinese civilizations in the Post-Classical era.
12. Evaluate the spread of South Asian culture throughout the Indian Ocean Basin and the spread of Chinese culture in East Asia.
13. Explain and analyze the origins, basic beliefs, and diffusions of the world's major religious traditions: Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity, and Islam.
14. Identify and assess the major legacies of Post-Classical civilizations in the Near East, Africa, South Asia, China, and Europe.

Required Books/Materials

The following books and materials are required for this course.

James C. Scott. *Against the Grain: A Deep History of the Earliest States*. Yale University Press, 2017. (Available at the El Camino College Bookstore - this book must be purchased)

Eugene Berger, George L. Israel, Charlotte Miller, Brian Parkinson, Andrew Reeves and Nadejda Williams. *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*. University of Georgia. (This book does not need to be purchased – it is available in Canvas)

All other required readings are available online in Canvas)

Computer/Internet Access

Students must access the Internet to download lecture notes. If you do not have Internet access, be sure to use one of the many computer labs accessible at El Camino College. For example, computers can be accessed at the Library Media Technology Center (LMTC) located at the East Lower Level of Schauerman Library. Call (310) 660-6715 for hours of operation. What software and hardware will you need for this course? You must have at a minimum:

- Internet access
- An Internet Explorer
- PDF File Reader

Assessment Measures

Student achievement in History 140 will be assessed in four ways:

1. *Essay Examinations (50% of the grade)*: Writing an effective college level in-class essay examination requires that students have knowledge of the subject matter and that students have the ability to organize the knowledge into a coherent set of arguments. An effective essay has a clear introduction, a solid body of evidence and argumentation and a firm conclusion based on what was written. Unlike take-home essay examinations, an in-class essay examination must also contend with time. To ensure that you are exposed to wide range of assessment measures, students enrolled in History 135 will complete two essay exams in which major social, economic, political and cultural patterns will be reconstructed through the analysis and evaluation of historical sources.
2. *Collaborative Examinations (20% of the grade)*: Students will complete in-class examinations in which historical periods, themes and ideas will be analyzed and evaluated to determine the accuracy of their presentation. These examinations will also require historical problem solving.

3. *Seminars (20% of the grade)*: Creating a community of learners through academic and social involvement in the classroom encourages students to be active participants in the learning process and promotes their persistence in the pursuit of their educational goals, whether it be completing a certificate program, attaining an Associate of Arts/Science degree, or transferring to a four-year institution. To emphasize this aspect of your academic training, students will collaboratively address a variety of historical questions by analyzing primary and secondary sources in a seminar setting.

4. *Oral History Project (10% of the grade)*. This assignment will grant students the opportunity to implement concepts mastered in the learning community through the methodology of oral history to learn about who they are. For this assignment, students will interview individuals who can speak specifically to their lives, culture and community. Potential interviewees include family and community members. To provide foundations for this project, students will also explore scholarly monographs, articles and websites. Through the completion of this project, students will gain knowledge of library resources and oral history research methods and themselves.

No Make-up Exams/Activities

Under no circumstances except for a documented medical reason will make-up exams/activities be administered.

Student Grade Record

The course grade will be based on two essay exams, one process paper, and three objective exams. All assessment measures are graded on the 100% scale.

90-100%	A	4.0	70-79%	C	2.0	59% and below
80-89%	B	3.0	60-69%	D	1.0	

Attendance

“Students are expected to attend their classes regularly. Students who miss the first class meeting or who are not in regular attendance during the add period for the class may be dropped by the instructor. Students whose absences from a class exceed 10 percent of the scheduled class meeting time may be dropped by the instructor. However, students are responsible for dropping a class within the deadlines published in the class schedule. Students who stop attending but

do not drop may receive a failing grade. Students may view their registration status on MyECC.”
– 2018-19 El Camino College Catalog (p. 20)

Rules of Conduct

The instructor will not tolerate disruptive behavior in class. Disruptive behavior includes, but is not limited to the following: coming to class unprepared, arriving late to class, striking up a conversation with your neighbor during class, taking naps during class, failing to take notes during class, leaving class early, not coming to class and forgetting to turn off cell phones and pagers before coming into class. Dishonesty, plagiarism and cheating will result in immediate dismissal from this course. Please drop this course immediately if you cannot follow the rules of conduct cited above.

How to Succeed in this Course

What makes a successful college student? Successful college students accept personal responsibility, are self-motivated and have mastered time-management. This course will call upon students to adopt and apply these principles by requiring them to:

1. Study consistently throughout the semester
2. Stay on top of reading assignments.
3. Take detailed notes.
4. Review their notes regularly.
5. Have assignments ready in advance
6. Work on writing skills.
7. Attend class regularly.
8. Visit the instructor during office hours.

American with Disabilities Act

The Special Resources Center (SRC) coordinates all academic accommodations for students with documented disabilities at El Camino College. If you have or think you might have a disability that impacts your educational experience in this class, contact SRC to determine your eligibility for accommodations.

SRC is located in the Southeast Wing of the Student Services Center. Their phone number is (310) 660-3295.

If you have already registered with SRC, please submit your accommodation requests as soon as possible. This needs to be done each semester. If you have any questions or concerns about your accommodations, please make an appointment with a SRC Counselor.

Complete this process in a timely manner to allow adequate time to provide accommodations. Also, please inform the instructor if you need course adaptations or accommodation in the classroom because of a disability, if you have emergency medical information to share with your instructor, or if you need special arrangements in case the building must be evacuated.

Proposed Themes and Readings

The instructor reserves the right to alter or deviate from the proposed themes and reading schedule. Students will be notified in advance should changes be made. The most current schedule will always be available on the instructor's web page. *Assignment and examination due dates are recorded on the course website.*

Topic 1: Decoding the Discipline

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *Decoding the Discipline*
- Article Analysis: Alun Munslow, *Deconstructing History* and “Family and Community History through Oral History.” Ingrid Winther Scobie. *The Public Historian*, Vol. 1, No. 4 (Summer, 1979)
- Primary Source Analysis: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto*
- Seminar 1: *What is Oral History?*

Topic 2: The Chronometric Revolution

Required Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *The Chronometric Revolution*
- Primary Source Analysis: Charles Darwin, *On the Origin of Species* and Creation Stories: Samoan, Hebrew and Mexica
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Introduction – A Narrative Tatters
- Seminar 2: *Creation Stories*

Topic 3: Cognition, Language and a Cultural Species

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *Cognition and Language Creates a Cultural Species*
- Primary Source Analysis: *Lapita Pottery and the Cave Altamira*

- Article Analysis: “Neanderthal Extinction and Modern Human Behaviour: The Role of Climate Change and Clothing.” Ian Gilligan, *World Archaeology*, Vol. 39, No. 4, (Dec., 2007)
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 1 – The Domestication of Fire, Plants, Animals and Us
- Seminar 3: *Pottery, Genomes and Language – Tracing Human Extensification into Polynesia*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 1- Prehistory pages 1-11

Topic 4: Cultivation and its Consequences

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *Cultivation and its Consequences*
- Primary Source Analysis: *Çatalhöyük Field Report*
- Article Analysis: "Biological Changes in Human Populations with Agriculture." Clark Spencer Larsen. *Annual Review of Anthropology*, Vol. 24 (1995)
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 2 – Landscaping the World: The Complex Domus and Chapter 3 – Zoonoses: A Perfect Epidemiological Storm
- Seminar 3: *The Archeology of Food*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 1- Prehistory pages 12-20

Topic 5: The Early State and the Sources of Social Power

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *The Early State and the Sources of Social Power*
- Primary Source Analysis: Hammurabi, *Law Code*
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 4 – The Agro-Ecology of the State
- Seminar 4: *Institutionalized Hierarchies*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 2- Early Middle Eastern and Northeast African Civilizations (pages 21-60), Chapter 3- Ancient and Early Medieval India(pages 62-73) and Chapter 4 – China and East Asia to the Ming Dynasty (pages 111-121)

Topic 6: A New Technology*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning: *A New Technology*
- Article Analysis: “On the Maya Collapse.” Robert S. Santley, Thomas W. Killion and Mark T. Lycett. *Journal of Anthropological Research*, Vol. 42, No. 2 (1986)
- Seminar 7: *Deciphering the Maya Glyphs*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 10- The Americas (pages 426--463)

Topic 7: The Persistence of Gods*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning: *The Persistence of Gods*
- Article Analysis: “Religion: What Is It?” Stewart Elliott Guthrie. *Journal for the Scientific Study of Religion* (1996)
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 5 – Populations Control: Bondage and War
- Seminar 6: *The Etiology of Flood Stories*

Topic 8: The Axial Revolution*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning: *The Axial Revolution*
- Primary Source Analysis: Confucius, *Analects*, Buddha, *Sermon at Benares*, Thucydides, *The Funeral Oration*
- Article Analysis: “The Axial Period: What Was It and What Does It Signify?” Antony Black. *The Review of Politics* (2008)
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 6 – The Fragility of the State: Collapse as Disassembly
- Seminar 8: *The Challenge of Exegesis*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 3- Ancient and Early Medieval India (pages 81-110), Chapter 4 – China and East Asia to the Ming Dynasty (pages 130-169) and Chapter 5 – The Greek World from the Bronze Age to the Roman Conquest (pages 171-215)

Topic 9: Monotheistic Faith and Political Universalism

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- eLearning Presentation: *Monotheistic and Political Universalism*
- Primary Source Analysis: *New Testament* (selections) and *Qur'an* (selections)
- Seminar 9: *A Just War?*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 6 – The Roman World from 753B.C.E. to 500 C.E. (pages 217-264), Chapter 7 – Western Europe and Byzantium 500-1000 C.E. (pages 266-295) and Chapter 8 – Islam to the Mamluks (pages 296-334)

Topic 10: The Silk Road*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning: *The Silk Road*
- Primary Source Analysis: Confucius, *The Secret History of the Mongols*
- Chapter Analysis: James Scott, *Against the Grain*, Chapter 7 – The Golden Age of the Barbarians
- Seminar 10: *The Politics of Trade*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 11- Central Asia (pages 398-424)

Topic 11: The Struggle between Reason and Revelation*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning: *The Consequence of Monotheism*
- Primary Source Analysis: Ibn Rushd, *On the Harmony of Religions and Philosophy* and Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Contra Gentiles*
- Film Screening: *The Name of the Rose*
- Seminar 11: *The Fear of Knowledge*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 12- Western Europe and Byzantium (pages 426-463)

Topic 12: A World System*Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:*

- eLearning Presentation: *A World System*
- Primary Source Analysis: Gomes Eannes de Azurara, *The Chronicle of the Conquest of Guine* and James Cook, *Journal*

- Seminar 12: *Intrusion into Polynesia*

Optional Reading:

- Textbook: *World History: Cultures, States, and Societies to 1500*, Chapter 9 - African History to 1500 (pages 336-366), Chapter 10 – The Americas (pages 368-396), and Chapter 12- Western Europe and Byzantium 1000-1500 (pages 465--478)