History 140: Early Civilizations

Course Syllabus - Fall 2013

Instructor: Mr. Jason R. Suárez

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Office Hours: T 6:30am-7:30am | W 5:00-6:00pm | TH 6:30-7:30am & 5:00-6:00pm

Online Office Hours: M 8:00-9:00pm  

Skype Online Office Hours: M 8:00-9:00pm

Course Web Site: http://suarezol.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.

All other required readings are available online on the instructor’s website.

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
- A PC with Windows and a Pentium processor or a Macintosh with at least System 9.0
- A recent version of a web browser such as Microsoft Explorer or Firefox
- An Internet Service Provider
- An Email Address
- Microsoft Word version 2003 or earlier
- 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 140 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. *Objective Examinations (25% 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 test a student's course knowledge base and a student's ability to read critically.

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. Resource Page (5% of the grade): Students will be introduced to research methodology by constructing a resource page that will cite scholarly monographs, articles and websites for a selected topic within the scope of this course. Through the completion of this assignment, students will gain knowledge of library resources and research methods.

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.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade Range</th>
<th>Letter Grade</th>
<th>Points</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>90-100%</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>4.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>80-89%</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-79%</td>
<td>C</td>
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<tr>
<td>60-69%</td>
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<tr>
<td>59% and below</td>
<td>F</td>
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Should I be enrolled in this Course?

History 140 is a college level history course. Consequently, it requires that students possess sound reading and writing skills. Students who are carrying an excessive load of classes this semester, who are working an excessive number of hours, or who have not completed the recommended preparation eligibility of English 1A, are asked to carefully consider if they should be enrolled in this course.

Attendance

Attendance is mandatory in this class! Be sure to look at El Camino College’s online course offerings if you do not enjoy being in a classroom setting. Students are responsible for signing the attendance roster. If a student is unable to attend class, it is his/her responsibility to notify the instructor through an e-mail message. Take a moment to familiarize yourself with the following statement on attendance taken from the El Camino College Catalog: *Regular attendance is expected of every student. A student may be dropped from the class when the number of hours absent exceeds the number of units assigned to the course.* Please drop this course immediately if you cannot commit to three hours of class time a week and the required time necessary to prepare for this course outside of the classroom. If a student stops attending class, then it is their responsibility to drop the course. Failure to do so will result in an F issued for the course grade.
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

El Camino College is committed to providing educational accommodations for students with disabilities upon the timely request by the student to the instructor. A student with a disability, who would like to request an academic accommodation, is responsible for identifying herself/himself to the instructor and to the Special Resources Center. To make arrangements for academic accommodations, contact the Special Resources Center.

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.

Course Introduction

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Course syllabus and History 140 Website

The Past As We Know It?

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 1: The Past As We Know It (located on website)
- Primary Source Analysis: Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, *The Communist Manifesto* (located on website)
- Seminar: Plows, Poems and Music (locate d on website)

In the Beginning

Required Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 2: In the Beginning (located on website)

The Quantum Leap

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 3: The Quantum Leap (located on website)
- Spencer Wells: Building a Family Tree (online viewing)
- Primary Source Analysis: Reflective Thinking (located on website)
The Seeds of Life

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 4: *The Seeds of Life* (located on website)
- Primary Source Analysis: *Halaf Culture* (located on website)

The Rise of Archaic States

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Primary Source Analysis: *Hammurabi’s Law Code* (located on website)
- Seminar: *Etiology of Flood Stories* (located on website)

A New Technology

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 6: *A New Technology* (located on website)
- PBS: *Cracking the Maya Code* (in-class viewing)
- Seminar: *Deciphering Maya Writing* (located on website)

The Genesis of Asia

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 7: *The Genesis of Asia* (located on website)
• Primary Source Analysis: Analects of Confucius (located on website)

Theorists and Practitioners

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

• McNeill and McNeill, The Human Web, Chapter 3: Webs and Civilizations in the Old World, pp. 68-81
• Suárez, Quantum Leaps, Chapter 8: Covenants, Theorists and Practitioners (located on website)
• Primary Source Analysis: The Funeral Oration - Thucydides (located on website)

The Consequence of Monotheism

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

• McNeill and McNeill, The Human Web, Chapter 4: The Growth of Webs in the Old World and America, pp. 82-108
• Suárez, Quantum Leaps, Chapter 9: The Consequence of Monotheism (located on website)
• Primary Source Analysis: On the Harmony of Religions and Philosophy - Ibn Rushd (located on website)

Chasing Aristotle

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

• Suárez, Quantum Leaps, Chapter 10: Chasing Aristotle (located on website)
• Primary Source Analysis: Summa Theologica - Thomas Aquinas (located on website)
• Seminar: The Name of the Rose (located on website)

A World System

Required Assignments/Reading/Viewing:

- Suárez, *Quantum Leaps*, Chapter 11: *Bridging Old Worlds and New Worlds* (located on website)

- Primary Source Analysis: *Catalan Atlas* and *The Chronicle of the Conquest of Guine* - Gomes Eannes de Azurara (located on website)