

## **HISTORY OF CIVILIZATION BEFORE 1500**

HIST 2301-002 – Spring 2012

**Instructor:** Dr. Kimberly Breuer

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**Office Hours:** MW 11:15-11:45; 2-2:30 and F 11-12

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course surveys significant developments prior to 1500 in world history. It explores the achievements and experiences of great civilizations, emphasizing major historical figures and epochs, important ideas and religions, and factors of continuity and change. Particular emphasis is given to the development of the world's religions and the cultural exchanges and encounters of the world's peoples. The course provides a foundation for understanding our heritage and shared values, and introduces students to the historical forces that have shaped today's world.

**CLASS PREREQUISITES:** No special requirements or prerequisites

### **REQUIRED MATERIALS:**

- Stearns, *World History in Brief*, Volume 1, 7th edition packaged with MyHistoryLab
- Dunnell, *Chiggis Khan* (paperback and e-text)
- Foltz, *Religions of the Silk Roads*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition (paperback)

NOTE: Links to purchase the Stearns e-text/MHL/Dunnell will be available in the Blackboard module for this course. Paperback copies of Stearns packaged with a MHL access and Dunnell can be purchased from the bookstore. If you buy used, you will still have to purchase the MyHistoryLab access code. The e-text/MHL format is the least expensive option.

**CLASS FORMAT:** This is primarily a blended course, which means that we have class lectures, some materials which you cover online in our Blackboard course module, and we also spend time in class for group work, discussions, films and other media. I prefer a lively classroom where students feel free to ask questions and express their ideas and opinions. However, I ask that students maintain proper classroom etiquette. See my "Guide to University and Classroom Etiquette" in the course module. Students should come to class fully prepared.

**STUDENT LEARNING OUTCOMES** (Course Objectives): Upon completion of this course, students will be able to:

- identify key events, peoples, individuals, terms, periodizations and chronology of the history of the world before 1500.
- demonstrate awareness of the basic geography of the world.
- develop analytical skills by scrutinizing primary source documents
- develop critical thinking skills by discussing the living nature of history, critiquing different interpretations of the same events and explaining how the manipulation of the past can provide insights into later periods.
- synthesize diverse historical information on broad themes of world history before 1500 and present this information in coherent, well-articulated and well-substantiated discussions, essays and other written work

## **ASSIGNMENTS, ASSESSMENTS AND GRADING**

Your grade for this course will be based upon 500 quality points. Your semester grade is based upon testing (40%); individual projects (30%); group projects (25%) and participation (5%)

**Grade Scale:** A = 500-450; B = 400-449; C = 350-399; D = 300-349; F = 299 and below

NOTE: Students have one week from the posting of an assignment/exam/discussion grade (which will be announced via a class announcement) to challenge the grade or bring up any concerns. All grades are considered final after this period passes and will not be revisited.

### **TESTING (40%)**

**Unit Quizzes:** There are 3 short answer/multiple choice quizzes, one for each unit in the course. Quizzes cover assigned readings, lectures and other course materials and are meant to help assess how well you are learning the course content materials, or the basic “facts.” Quizzes are timed and open book/notes. Worth up to 50 points each (each quiz is worth 10% of your semester grade).

**Final Comprehensive Essay:** An open book 3-4 page analytical essay on a broad topic assigned by the instructor. This essay is the final exam for the course. Worth up to 50 points (10% of semester grade)

### **INDIVIDUAL PROJECTS (30%)**

**Document Project:** There is one document project where students will choose a topic and analyze primary materials on that topic. See the Document Project for further details. The project is worth up to 75 points (15% of the semester grade).

**Geography Project:** There is one geography project where students will map and discuss attributes of their chosen topic. Worth up to 75 points (15% of the semester grade).

### **GROUP WORK (25%)**

**Is This A Good Website?** In this assignment, students will work in a group to determine if a website is a suitable source to use for research. There is a group and individual portion of the assignment. The project is worth a total of up to 25 points (or 5% of the semester grade).

**Group Project:** There is one group project (some of the group work will be done in class) where students investigate and produce a written report and make a classroom presentation on an assigned topic. See the Group Project Assignment for further details. Worth up to 100 points (20% of the semester grade).

### **PARTICIPATION (5%)**

There will be opportunities for in-class small group work and discussions throughout the semester. I will also take random attendance throughout the semester. Both will be unannounced. Your participation grade will be based upon your attendance and the quality of your participation. Students are allowed up to three unexcused absences without penalty. After three unexcused absences, I will begin to deduct points from your participation grade. Also note that I WILL deduct participation points for students who text, surf the web or otherwise disrupt the class through inappropriate classroom behavior. I will give students a formal warning and a chance to change the offending behavior before I begin to deduct points. See “Class Rules” in the course module. Worth up to 25 points (5% of the semester grade).

**Full information on each of these assignments is available in the course module.**

**Calculating Your Grade:** I will not calculate interim class grades for students. To determine where you stand in the class at any given time use the following calculation: Divide the number of quality points you have earned by the total number of quality points available (note that Blackboard DOES NOT add the available, or “out of” points correctly) to that point and multiply by 100% to get your interim percentage semester grade. Final grades in this course are awarded upon simple addition of earned quality points according to the aforementioned scale.

**CLASS OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:** - Can be found in the online Course Module.

**GROUP ASSIGNMENTS:** - Students will be assigned to a learning community (group) on the first day of class.

**CLASS CALENDAR:** Can be found in the online Course Module

### **CLASS POLICIES AND INFORMATION**

**A Respectful Learning Environment:** It is the goal of the Department of History and the College of Liberal Arts to create and maintain a respectful learning environment. The official policy concerning communications within this course is stated below:

"When contacting your instructor via email, remember to construct your messages both respectfully and carefully (be as specific as possible with your questions). In this course, as with any other UTA course, your communication with students and faculty should be the utmost professional. When communicating with your peers and instructor, there will be NO discrimination on the basis of sex, race, color, national origin, sexual orientation, religion, ideology, political affiliation, veteran status, age, physical handicap, or marital status. Keep in mind that instructors reserve the right to manage a positive learning environment and thus will not tolerate inappropriate conduct in the course. All UTA students are responsible for behaving in a manner consistent with UTA's Standard Code of Conduct. Students violating these codes will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct."

**Participation Policy:** Regular, weekly participation is required. Participation in graded discussions comprises 20% of the semester grade.

**Drop Policy:** See your advisor for information.

**E-Mail Policy:** The University email address is the official means of communication with students. *I require all students to check their UTA email account frequently.*

**Americans with Disabilities Act:** The University of Texas at Arlington is on record as being committed to both the spirit and letter of federal equal opportunity legislation; reference Public Law 92-112 - The Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended. As a faculty member, I am required by law to provide "reasonable accommodation" to students with disabilities, so as not to discriminate on the basis of that disability. Student responsibility primarily rests with informing me of your needs at the beginning of the semester and in providing authorized documentation through designated administrative channels.

**Academic Dishonesty:** It is the philosophy of UTA that academic dishonesty is a completely unacceptable mode of conduct and will not be tolerated in any form. All persons involved in academic dishonesty will be disciplined in accordance with University regulations and procedures. Discipline may include suspension or expulsion from the University. I take scholastic dishonesty very seriously – if the

excerpt below is unclear, see me. I consider copying directly from the text or internet sites without proper citation as plagiarism. If in doubt, cite. I do not give credit for plagiarized assignments or cheating on exams and I will refer plagiarism to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs.

"Scholastic dishonesty includes but is not limited to cheating, plagiarism, collusion, the submission for credit of any work or materials that are attributable in whole or in part to another person, taking an examination for another person, any act designed to give unfair advantage to a student or the attempt to commit such acts." (Regents' Rules and Regulations, Part One, Chapter VI, Section 3, Subsection 3.2, Subdivision 3.22)

**Student Support Services Available:** The University of Texas at Arlington supports a variety of student success programs to help you connect with the University and achieve academic success. These programs include learning assistance, developmental education, advising and mentoring, admission and transition, and federally funded programs. Students requiring assistance academically, personally, or socially should contact the Office of Student Success Programs at 817-272-6107 for more information and appropriate referrals.

**BOTTOM LINE:** If you feel that you are falling behind, need help in writing or have any other difficulty with this course, please see/contact me right away and I will attempt to help you myself or direct you to available resources. Don't just flounder along, seek aid while there is still time to get a higher grade.