

**Course Objectives/Course Outline
Spokane Community College**

Course Title: Historical Roots of Contemporary Issues
Prefix and Course Number: HIST 105

Course Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this course, a student should be able to:

- Employ historical perspective and intercultural approaches to examine historical causes of contemporary global issues from six central themes: A. Humans and the Environment, B. Our Shrinking World, C. Roots of Inequality, D. Diverse Ways of Thinking, E. Roots of Contemporary Conflicts, and F. Citizen Rights and Responsibilities
- Recognize that the study of history is both analytical and interpretive and requires the synthesis of information from various sources in various forms
- Identify and analyze how international economic, social, cultural, environmental, and political issues have created or contributed to the global community
- Effectively and responsibly identify, analyze, evaluate, employ, and document information from varied sources
- Ethically use context, evidence, and reason in the synthesis of historical documents, analytical writing, speaking, and comparative thinking
- Identify and define personal core values, cultural assumptions and biases in relation to those held by other individuals, cultures, and societies
- Recognize how events and patterns in the past and present affect human societies and world ecologies

Course Outline:

A. HUMANS AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Possible Issue: Global Water Crisis

- 1) Ancient cultures and the environment
- 2) Anasazi culture and water usage
- 3) Industrial Revolution and civilization's dependence on water
- 4) Aswan Dam and Three Gorges Dam
- 5) Cambodia's Angkor Wat and private water raiding
- 6) Issues surrounding dam removal
- 7) Discussion of Global footprint

Possible Issue: Energy, Politics, and Landscapes

- 1) Industrial Revolution
- 2) Imperial ideologies and the Great Divergence
- 3) Oil and Mexico
- 4) The Middle East, politics, and carbon fuels
- 5) Alternative energies and politics

B. OUR SHRINKING WORLD

Possible Issue: Disease and Encounters with the Larger World

- 1) Roman Empire Pandemic
- 2) The Bubonic Plague(s)
- 3) The Columbian Exchange
- 4) Influenza 1918
- 5) Ebola
- 6) Infectious Disease Today

Possible Issue: Empire and Globalization

- 1) American Exchange
- 2) Spanish silver and the beginnings of the global economy
- 3) Islands and empire in the Pacific
- 4) Sugar and slavery in the Atlantic World
- 5) The "new" imperialism and the rise of liberal capitalism
- 6) The Great Depression and reactionary politics
- 7) Global economic institutions and poverty
- 8) The globalization of culture

C. ROOTS OF INEQUALITY

Possible Issue: Gender Inequality

- 1) Gender and patriarchy
- 2) Historical understandings of gender, male and female roles, rights and access to power, and expectations across cultures
- 3) Reproduction and inheritance, and the impacts on inequality
- 4) How are ideas about gender transmitted across generations?
- 5) What roles do laws play in perpetuating or decreasing gender inequalities?
- 6) Impacts of imperialism and globalization on gender, dress, and expected behavior (feminine or masculine)
- 7) Gender and industrialization throughout the world
- 8) Globalization, economics, and gender
- 9) Gender roles today: how have they changed?
- 10) Should gender values be subject to cultural or religious differences, or should they be considered to be universal?

Possible Issue: Slavery

- 1) Slavery in Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, China, India
- 2) Slavery in the Americas and Africa
- 3) Slave Trade
- 4) Slavery in the United States
- 5) Forms of Slavery in the World Today

Possible Issue: Race and Racism

- 1) The idea of race and its origins
- 2) Lineage and belonging in New Spain
- 3) Caribbean slavery and colonialism
- 4) The rise of scientific racism

- 5) Race and nationalism
- 6) Eugenics and the Holocaust
- 7) Decolonization
- 8) New racisms

D. DIVERSE WAYS OF THINKING

Possible Issue: Clashing Civilizations?

- 1) Samuel Huntington's, *Clash of Civilizations*
- 2) What is "The West?" (Ex. Greek War of Independence as a factor in creating the concept of "Western civilization")
- 3) Rise of Islam
- 4) Crusades
- 5) Orientalism-depictions, attitudes, effects
- 6) U.S. Foreign policy and the Middle East

Possible Issue: Economic Ideologies

- 1) Overview of socialism and capitalism
- 2) Capitalism's origins and predecessors in the pre-modern world.
- 3) Capitalistic activities between 1600 and 1900
- 4) Capitalism and Atlantic slavery
- 5) Capitalists in the 19th century
- 6) The relationship between weather, racism, and free trade (*Late Victorian Holocausts*)
- 7) Historical critiques of capitalism and wealth accumulation, with focus on Marx, Engels, Lenin, Great Depression, FDR, New Deal, and Nazi Germany
- 8) Developments in capitalism and socialism from 1945 to 1975
- 9) Overlaps in capitalism and socialism
- 10) Reagan's New Federalism/Shenzhen Special Economic Zone
- 11) Neoliberal capitalism
- 12) Capitalism and socialism being applied towards the same end?

E. ROOTS OF CONTEMPORARY CONFLICTS

Possible Issue: Arab-Israeli Conflict

- 1) Historical Palestine and Jewish Diaspora
- 2) Jewish Settlement in Palestine early 20th Century
- 3) Creation of the State of Israel
- 4) Rise of Arab and Israeli Political Groups
- 5) Series of Intifadas
- 6) Camp David Accords
- 7) Two-State Solution (?)
- 8) The War on Terror and the Arab-Israeli Conflict

Possible Issue: Conflict in post-Colonial Darfur and the Problem of Genocide

- 1) Darfur

- 2) What is genocide?
- 3) Arabic and Muslim Expansion in Africa and the Sultanate of Darfur
- 4) The Legacy of British Imperialism in the region
- 5) Independence and Conflict in Sudan
- 6) De-colonization
- 7) Pan-Arabism
- 8) The Cold War
- 9) From Coup d'Etat to 'Genocide'?