

HIST106
World History to 1500
Course Outline

I. Rationale

This class surveys world history from the beginnings of organized societies to 1500 c.e. Students completing the course should get a basic sense of early global history from a holistic perspective, and be prepared to pursue classes at the 200-400 level or in graduate school. The class will cover significant developments on the six inhabited continents, mostly as chronological narrative. Some themes will present comparatively across eras and regions.

II. Course Learning Outcomes:

- A. Articulate that history is interpretive and that workable historical narratives can be constructed from published narratives, scholarly websites, primary written documents, oral history, film, art, music and archaeology.
- B. Articulate a sense of Historical Mindedness: that is, striving to understand earlier times and societies through their own values and assumptions, not those of the present.
- C. Identify and analyze from a global perspective the cultural, economic and political connections and differences of societies up to 1500.
- D. Identify and describe the tenets, geographic scope, and social significance of the major faith traditions, including but not limited to Judaism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Christianity and Islam.
- E. Identify and describe the relationship between the state and the individual among world societies before 1500.

III. Class Outline

- I. Deep history—500 B.C.E.
 - A. Introduction: what history is
 - B. The Agricultural Revolutions
 - C. Emergence of the First Societies
 - D. Rise of the State
 - E. Mesopotamia and Egypt

- II. 500 B.C.E.—500 C.E. The Classical Era
 - A. Greco-Persian Wars
 - B. Classical Greece
 - C. Alexander and the Hellenistic Era
 - D. Comparing Empires: Rome, China, India
 - E. South Asian Religion
 - F. Monotheism in the Middle East
 - G. Slavery and Society

- III. 500 C.E.—1500 C.E. The Age of Connections
 - A. The Americas
 - 1. Mesoamerica
 - 2. the Andes
 - 3. North America
 - B. Africa
 - 1. East Africa and Swahili Civilization
 - 2. Trade and Empire in West Africa

- C. Commercial Exchanges across Eurasia
- D. Commercial Exchanges across the Indian Ocean
- E. Reemergence of a Unified China

- 1. China and the Eurasian World Economy
- 2. China and Buddhism
- F. Korea, Vietnam, and Japan
- G. Eastern Christendom
 - 1. The Byzantine State
 - 2. the Byzantine Church
 - 3. Christian Divergence
- H. Western Christendom in the Wake of Roman Collapse
- I. The Birth of Islam
 - 1. An Arab Empire; Islam and India, Anatolia, West Africa, and Spain
- J. Social, political Life in Western Europe, 500–1300
- K. The Crusades
- L. The Mongol Empire
 - 1. China, Persia, Russia vs. the Mongols
 - 2. The Mongol Empire as a Eurasian Network
- M. The Plague: A Eurasian Pandemic
- N. Comparing China and Europe
- O. European State Building
 - 1. Nation/State Building
 - 2. The Renaissance
 - 3. First Maritime Explorations
- P. The Islamic World
- Q. The Americas

