

Cedar Crest College
Department of History, Law, and Politics
Spring 2010

History 108. European Civilization: Ideas and Experiences
(An E-Companion Course)

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Course Synopsis

This course is an introduction to the history of European civilization from the 18th century (the ancien régime) to the present. As it is necessary to survey the experience of Europeans, and those they encountered elsewhere on the globe, over three hundred years, this course is selective rather than all inclusive in its subject matter. Our primary attention is directed to the ideas, values, and beliefs that shaped crucial moments in this expanse of historical time. These guiding ideas are articulated in the texts we will read. To provide the historical context, we will use one of the best of “Western Civ” textbooks, although we will read it selectively to keep the work load for this course within reasonable bounds. My lectures will complement the textbook and place particular emphasis on those events or experiences that proved most crucial in shaping the ideas and beliefs we are considering. Class discussion will provide every student with the opportunity to express her own reaction to the works we are reading and to respond to other students’ ideas.



So, Whose Bright Idea Was It to Take this Course?
(The Execution of Lady Jane Grey, by the French Romantic Painter Paul Delaroche, 1833, in the National Gallery, London)
<<http://www.wga.hu/art/d/delaroche/5delaroc.jpg>>

Learning Objectives

1. an appreciation of the written text as the medium through which ideas and beliefs are transmitted, values are articulated, and the ethos or spirit of a part of the human past is represented;
2. an understanding of how the finite historical experience of human beings, in a given period of time, can be retrieved through written words, though artistic representation, and through places, objects, and artifacts;
3. an improved sense of the chronology and geography of crucial chapters in the Western past;
4. an appreciation of what history is (and isn't), what historians do, how they think and how they explain what they have thought about and the conclusions they have reached, and why the past, however distant, always remains "alive";
5. an enhanced ability to read and think critically, to express one's thoughts in an effective manner, and to consider the opinions of others, particularly when the latter may be "different" from one's own.

Assessment

The requirements for this course include regular class attendance, completion of the reading assignments, participation in class discussion, two hour-long tests during the semester, and a final examination. The dates for the hour tests are indicated below, and we will discuss in advance of the tests what you will be responsible for and how you can best prepare. Grades for the course will be calculated as follows: each hour test—20 percent; the final exam—35 percent; attendance (**but see below**), participation, interest, and overall contribution—25 percent. Note that the final category is a subjective one and will be based on my assessment of each student's contribution both to her own learning success and to that of the class as a whole.

Attendance will be monitored in this course. 5 or more unexcused/unexplained absences will reduce your course grade by one-half a letter grade (e.g., a "B" will drop to a "B-"). 10 such absences will reduce the course grade by a full letter grade (a "B" will drop to a "C"). More than 10 unexcused/unexplained absences will earn you an "F" for the semester.

According to College policy, your obligations for this course include attendance at the final exam, on the day and time scheduled by the Registrar's Office. Do not make travel arrangements until the final exam schedule is published. If you must make plans early, schedule your travel after the last final exam day.

Tests in the course will be proctored, although the Honor Philosophy remains in effect (**see below**). Texts, notes, crib sheets, and all other printed, written, or electronic aids to recall and recognition are prohibited when tests are being taken. All electronic devices, for communication, imaging, or other purposes, are similarly prohibited, including cellular phones. Any student using any of the preceding aids while taking a test in this course will receive a failing grade for the semester—not merely for the test at hand, but for the semester.

Weather Emergencies and Class Cancellations

No student is expected to risk her safety in order to attend class. If the College is in session despite inclement weather, but in your judgment it would be a genuine hazard to try to get to the campus, don't take the risk. Please leave a phone message or send me an e-mail explaining your circumstances at the earliest opportunity.

Vice-versa, if the College is in session but I will not be able to get to campus for class, please use the following procedure to save yourself an unnecessary trip. Call the College number, access my campus extension, and listen to the recorded message. If I have to cancel class, I will leave that message no later than 8 AM on the day in question. If I will be meeting class, you will hear the standard message instead.

Texts

The basic text is Donald Kagan, Steven Ozment, and Frank M. Turner, The Western Heritage, Volume 2 (from 1648), Prentice Hall, tenth edition (2010), ISBN 013173346X.

Specific reading assignments in The Western Heritage are listed on the accompanying handout.

The other required readings are:

Jean-Jacques Rousseau, The Social Contract, Penguin paperback, ISBN0140442014

Mary Wollstonecraft Shelley, Frankenstein, Penguin paperback, ISBN 0141439475

Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels, The Communist Manifesto, Penguin paperback, ISBN 0140447571

Erich Maria Remarque, All Quiet on the Western Front, Ballantine paperback, ISBN 0449213943

Arthur Koestler, Darkness at Noon, Scribner paperback, ISBN 1416540267

The E-Companion Site

By enrolling in the course, you have also enrolled in the E-Companion section. The E-Companion site is accessed at <http://cedarcrestonline.net>. To log on, enter your Student Identification Number and your personal password. If this does not bring you to your personal E-Companion page, contact the Registrar's Office at once so that the problem can be corrected. You must use your Cedar Crest GroupWise address for enrollment in the E-Companion site. Outlines for each week's classes are available at the E-Companion site. You may find it convenient to print these notes in advance of class, if for no other reason that it will save us valuable class time. I will provide further instructions for accessing the E-Companion site for this course at our first class meeting.

Schedule of Class Sessions

Outlines for each week's classes are available online at the **E-Companion site** that accompanies this course. Students should access and print these outlines in advance of class, to save us valuable class time.

I. The Ancien Régime (Read The Western Heritage, chaps. 15-17; you're not responsible for chaps. 13-14)

- 20.01 Introduction/Class Organization
- 22.01 The 18th Century Background: Demographics and Economics
- 25.01 The 18th Century Background: Society and Government
- 27.01 The European State System: Diplomacy, Empire, and War
- 29.01 Enlightened Thought (I)
- 01.02 Enlightened Thought (II); **Discussion of The Social Contract**
- 03.02 The American Revolution
- 05.02 The Conflict of Values: Pleasure and High Purpose
- 08.02 Test 1**

II. The French Revolution and Napoleon (Read The Western Heritage, chaps. 18-20)

- 10.02 The Crisis of the French Monarchy
- 12.02 The French Revolution (I)
- 15.02 The French Revolution (II)
- 17.02 Napoleon (PBS video, 2000), Part 1
- 19.02 Napoleon, Part 2
- 22.02 Napoleon, Part 4
- 24.02 The Romantic Movement; **Discussion of Frankenstein**
- 26.02 Conservatism, Liberalism, Nationalism, Democracy, 1815-1848

III. The Age of Industry (Read The Western Heritage, chaps. 21, 23, 24)

- 01.03 The Pre-Industrial Economy and the Pressures for Change
- 03.03 Video: The Ascent of Man, episode 8, “The Drive for Power”
- 05.03 Triumphs by the Middle Class

Spring Break

- 15.03 Challenges by the Working Class
- 17.03 Socialism and Communism; **Discussion of The Communist Manifesto**
- 19.03 Science, Technology, and the Ideology of Progress

22.03 Test 2

IV. The Age of the World Wars (Read The Western Heritage, chaps. 22, 25-28)

- 24.03 The European State System: Old Empires and New National States, 1850-1871
- 26.03 Alliances, Diplomacy, and War, 1871-1914
- 29.03 Video: The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century, episode 1, “Explosion”
- 31.03 Video: The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century, episode 2, “Stalemate”

Easter Break

- 06.04 Video: The Great War and the Shaping of the 20th Century, episode 4, “Slaughter”

- 07.04 The Aftermath of the Slaughter; **Discussion of All Quiet on the Western Front**
- 09.04 The Revolutions in Russia and the Soviet Dictatorship
- 12.04 The Rise of Fascism in Italy
- 14.04 Video: The Nazis—A Warning from History, episode 1, “Helped into Power”
- 16.04 Video: The Nazis—A Warning from History, episode 2, “Chaos and Consent”
- 19.04 World War II, the Holocaust, and the (Near) Destruction of European Civilization

V. To the Twenty-First Century (Read The Western Heritage, chap. 29; relax, no chap.30 for us)

- 21.04 The Postwar World, the Cold War, and the Nuclear Age
- 23.04 “The West”—Prosperity and Its Discontents
- 26.04 “The East”—Dictatorship and Its Failures
- 28.04 The War of Ideas; **Discussion of Darkness at Noon**
- 30.04 The Eastern European Revolutions, the Collapse of Soviet Communism, and the “New World Order”
- 03.05 September 11, 2001: “Through Gates of Fire”
- 05.05 (**Friday Schedule**); Review Class

Final Examination

Honor Philosophy: This course is conducted in accord with the College Honor Philosophy, as detailed in the Student’s Guide for 2009-10. Any work that you submit in this course must be original, including answers and essays on tests and exams. Violation of this standard constitutes plagiarism and will be deemed grounds for a failing grade for the semester.

Classroom Protocol: Students have the right to a learning environment free of interruptions and distractions and inconsiderate or uncivil behavior, and characterized by mutual respect in all classroom exchanges. In particular, the use of electronic devices—cell phones, tape recorders, laptops, anything you can come up with—is prohibited while class is in session.

Documented Learning Disability: Please refer to the Student’s Guide for 2009-10 for the resources the College makes available to assist students. If special accommodations are needed in class, you should discuss these with me in the first two weeks of the semester. I will be happy to cooperate in ensuring the best possible arrangements for a positive learning experience in this course.