

Virginia Western Community College

HIS 101

History of Western Civilization I

Prerequisites

None

Course Description

Examines the development of western civilization from ancient times to the present. The first semester ends with the seventeenth century; the second semester continues through modern times. Course may be taken out of sequence.

This course introduces western civilization history from the dawn of civilization to the beginnings of the modern era. Topics include: Ancient Sumerian beginnings, Greco-Roman civilizations, the Dark Ages, Christian, Islamic and Byzantine cultures, the Middle Ages, the Black Death and the Renaissance. Students will analyze significant political, socioeconomic, and cultural developments in pre-modern western civilization.

Students will be introduced to useful skills for historical analysis and interpretation. Students will strengthen skills in interdisciplinary studies and global awareness.

Semester Credits: 3

Lecture Hours: 3

Required Materials

1. Textbook
2. Internet access
3. Blackboard

Textbook:

Coffin, Judith and Stacey, Robert. Western Civilizations: Their History and Their Culture, Brief Edition. New York: Norton and Company, 2005. ISBN: 0-393-92558-7

Other Required Materials:

None

Course Outcomes

At the completion of this course, the student should be able to:

- Recognize the origins of western civilization from their roots in Egypt, Mesopotamia, the Fertile Crescent and Near East and evaluate the importance of the early foundations on later development.
- Compare and contrast the political and social systems, economics, and religion of the various Greek city-states and evaluate their impact on western civilization.
- Examine the social, political, economic, religious, and military institutions of the Roman Republic and Roman Empire and evaluate their impact on western civilization.
- Display comprehensive knowledge of the development of the early Christian church and explain its influence on western civilization.
- Trace the development of Islam and explain its influence on western civilization.
- Examine the relationship between the basic social, political, economic, military, and religious institutions of early medieval Europe and determine their impact on western civilization.
- Evaluate the influence of the Renaissance, Protestant Reformation, and Counter Reformation on western civilization.
- Analyze the impact of the Age of Exploration on western civilization.
- Analyze the impact of the discovery of the Americas on western civilization.

Topical Description

1	The Development of early western civilization: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Palestine, India and China.
2	The legacy of Greece: Minoan and Mycenaean civilizations, the heroic period, the classical period (rise of the polis, growth of democracy, and cultural achievements), Hellenistic diffusion (Alexander the Great, economic scope, cultural developments, and scientific developments of the Hellenistic world).
3	The influence of Rome: Expansion, the Republic (social, economic and political developments), the Empire Pax Romana, Christianity, and decline.
4	Christianity: growth of the early church, attitudes toward classical culture, monasticism and influence on Germanic people.
5	Islamic World: development of the faith, expansion, consolidation, and decentralization.
6	Europe in the Middle Ages: the empire of Charlemagne, feudalism, revival and reform in the Christian church, the crusades, economic revival, creative outbursts, Black Death, evolution of warfare, political, social and economic evolution.
7	The Renaissance: origins, Italian cultural, social, economic, and political developments, and northern European developments.
8	The Reformation: conditions of the Catholic Church, Protestantism (Luther, Calvin, other Protestant movements), spread of Protestant ideas, the Counter Reformation, and religious wars.
9	Exploration and discovery: origins, European contacts with Africa (economic effects and slavery) and Asia (early imperialism and social and political developments).
10	European contacts with the Americas: effects of disease, early imperialism, cultural effects, and social, economic and political developments.

Notes to Instructors