

Instructor: Brent McDonnell

PhD candidate, Georgetown University Department of History

Email: brm47@georgetown.edu

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 2:00-3:00 PM EDT, and by appointment

Class and office hours: via Zoom



Intro to Early History: World I (HIST 007)

Summer Session 1: Mondays-Thursday, 3:15-5:15 PM EDT

Course Description: This course is designed to acquaint students with the expansive scope of human history from the appearance of the earliest civilizations to the dawn of the modern era, approximately 1500 C.E. It attempts to present this history in an integrative fashion. In other words, it will examine processes, trends, and other factors at the global level incorporated within the historical background of various regions and civilizations. It seeks to accomplish the above by emphasizing human encounters as well as material, cultural, and biological exchanges between different regions, cultures, and civilizations. In the process, we will examine a series of evolving relationships, those between human beings and their physical environment, between different religious and political systems, between different ethnic groups, and between men and women.

Course Goals: As a survey-level course, the primary concern of HIST 007 is to teach students about the broad contours of the world prior to the advent of what could be termed “globalization.” Rather than focus on recitations of dates and names, students should become

familiar with thematic content, understanding how societies transformed over time. A secondary goal of the course is to introduce history as an academic discipline, particularly through close readings of primary sources. Through these goals, students should become more articulate writers and speakers and develop an understanding of how to make arguments by drawing on specific textual and contextual evidence.

Course Organization and Policies: Per Georgetown's regulations concerning summer courses in 2020, this class will be taught entirely through virtual means. Both office hours and the class meetings will be held using Zoom sessions which can be found on the Zoom Conferencing tab on the course's Canvas page. I kindly request that you follow what has likely become familiar Zoom etiquette during class: mute your microphones when you are not talking, use the "raise hand" feature when you wish to talk, and do not have anything derogatory or offensive set up as your background. While I would encourage you to have your video cameras on during class sessions (except while we are watching films), you are allowed to just call in and use the audio. I do not intend to set up a password to access the Zoom sessions, but if I believe it becomes necessary to do so, I will inform you by email.

I will still hold class as scheduled, and it is my sincere hope that all of you are able to join the class sessions. We will meet for two hours, with a break of about 10 minutes around the midway point of each session. The majority of each class will be dedicated to lectures delivered by me, but most classes will also have some time (roughly 30 minutes) reserved for discussion of assigned readings. Further details on this can be found in the "Assignments and Grading" portion of the syllabus. I will record each Zoom session and then post it on the Canvas page, along with any PowerPoint slides used during class. This will give you the chance to look these materials over at your convenience.

Students who need specific academic accommodations should contact the Academic Resources Center (ARC) before the start of the summer session to allow that office time to review the documentation and to make recommendations for appropriate actions. If accommodations are recommended, you will be given notification from ARC to share with your professors/instructors. I am more than happy to provide for any accommodation recommended by the ARC.

I intend for the classroom to be an open and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of race, ethnicity, religion, national origin, gender identity /expression, or sexual orientation.

Academic Integrity: As signatories to the Georgetown Honor Pledge, students are required to adhere to the standards of academic integrity outlined therein. Plagiarism, or the attempt to present the work or thoughts of another as one's own, is a serious violation of the principle of academic integrity, and will be dealt with by the instructor and the Honor Council. It is the responsibility of the instructor to report any suspected cases of plagiarism to the Honor Council.

Assignments and Grading: Students are responsible for the following assignments in the course:

Attendance and Participation: Consistent attendance and informed participation are not only requirements in their own right, they are also essential to success in the course's other assignments. Students should pay close attention to the lectures and take notes. Regular, informed participation in the discussion of assigned readings will also enhance your grade. Students are expected to have completed the assigned readings for each class in preparation for these discussions.

I do, however, understand that this course will be taught online, and not everyone is living in the same time zone as Georgetown's main campus. I have outlined some of my contingency plans in the Course Policies section of the syllabus, found above. In addition, attendance and participation are worth a much smaller portion of the final grade than usual in a History course. I am willing to accommodate students for whom regular attendance in class would be difficult, whether that be because of technological issues or differences in time zones. If you believe this will be the case for you, please contact me by the end of the first week of class and we will set up some form of alternative assessment to count towards your participation.

Short Response Papers: In Weeks 1, 2, and 4 of the course, students are required to write a **one-page, double-spaced** (approximately 300 words) response to any of the sources assigned in that week. The papers will each be due by 6:30 PM EDT on Thursday – in other words, shortly after the last class of each week. More details on this assignment will be available in a handout posted on the course's Canvas page.

Midterm and Final Exams: The midterm and final exams will consist of short identifications and essay questions. More details about these two parts, as well as the administration of each exam, can also be found in a handout to be posted on the course's Canvas page.

The value of each assignment as a percentage of the final grade is broken down in the following manner:

Attendance/Participation: 10%

Response Papers: 30% (10% for each paper)

Midterm Exam: 25%

Final Exam: 35%

Readings: All assigned readings will be placed on the course's Canvas page. There are no books required for purchase in this course.

Course Schedule:

Week 1: The Earliest Civilizations

Monday, June 1: Introduction to the Course and the “Cradles of Civilization” – Mesopotamia, China, India, Egypt

Tuesday, June 2: The “Cradles of Civilization” continued

Wednesday, June 3: Bronze Age Collapse and Aftermath

Thursday, June 4: The Development of Religions in the Ancient World

First response paper is due by 6:30 PM EDT on Thursday, June 4.

Week 2: Classical Antiquity

Monday, June 8: Greek, Persia, and Hellenism

Tuesday, June 9: Rome

Wednesday, June 10: The Classical World in China and India

Thursday, June 11: Documentary: *Meet the Romans with Mary Beard* (UK, 2012, dir: Hugo MacGregor)

Second response paper is due by 6:30 PM EDT on Thursday, June 11.

Week 3: The End of the Classical World and the “Dark Ages”

Monday, June 15: “Barbarian” Migrations and the Collapse of Empires

Tuesday, June 16: The Origins and Spread of Islam

- The review sheet for the midterm exam will be distributed today

Wednesday, June 17: Cultural Diffusion in Asia and Midterm Review

Thursday, June 18: Midterm Exam

Week 4: The High and Late Medieval World

Monday, June 22: Clashes of Civilizations?

Tuesday, June 23: Flourishing in the High Middle Ages

Wednesday, June 24: The Crisis of the Late Middle Ages

Thursday, June 25: Film: *The Seventh Seal* (*Det sjunde inseglet*, Sweden, 1957, dir: Ingmar Bergman)

Third response paper is due by 6:30 PM EDT on Thursday, June 25.

Week 5: Encounters on the Eve of the Modern World

Monday, June 29: Early Ming China and Technological Innovations

Tuesday, June 30: Turkic Migrations and the Fall of Byzantium

- The review sheet for the final exam will be distributed today

Wednesday, July 1: The Beginnings of the “Age of Exploration” and Final Review

Thursday, July 2: Final Exam