

MARY BALDWIN UNIVERSITY  
BALDWIN ONLINE/ ADULT PROGRAM  
HISTORY 101WAC

WESTERN CIVILIZATION TO 1648

Fall 2020

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**Please read this syllabus carefully. Almost all the information you need for the course, with the exception of the titles of the two papers and the essay questions on the final exam, is contained below. Most of the questions which I am asked may be answered by consulting this syllabus. If that is not the case, please feel free to email me. The last date for turning in assignments, including the final exam, is December 3, 2020. There can be no exceptions. The fall semester finishes just before the holiday season begins. Please plan and work accordingly. I cannot extend deadlines beyond the official MBU ones, as I am required to adhere to these too. I will not grant extensions (ETs) unless you have completed at least half of the journal assignments and the first paper.**

Required Reading You will need to purchase the following books;

A History of Western Society, Volume I, "From Antiquity to the Enlightenment", 11<sup>th</sup> edition, John McKay, Clare Crowston et al, editors, published by Bedford/ St. Martins.  
ISBN 978-1-4576-4222-7

Sources for Western Society, Volume I, "From Antiquity to the Enlightenment" 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, published by Bedford/ St. Martins.  
ISBN 978-1-4576-1519-1

Perpetua's Journey: Faith, Gender and Power in the Roman Empire. Jennifer Rea and Liz Clarke. Oxford University Press.  
ISBN 978-0-19-023871-1

**Please note that the secondary text, which is the first one listed, is in an 11<sup>th</sup> edition, whereas the primary text which is the companion book to it, is only in the 3<sup>rd</sup> edition. Secondary texts contain the narrative of events, or tell the story. Primary sources date from the time period in which they were recorded. You need both textbooks, and both are equally important. You may use an earlier version of the secondary text; either 9<sup>th</sup> or 10<sup>th</sup> editions will also work well. The 12<sup>th</sup> edition is the newest. E-book version is also acceptable.**

## Content and Course Goals

This course is a survey of the civilization of Europe from the classical antiquity to 1648, the end of the Thirty Years War. It aims to offer an overview of the earliest European history up to 1648 for the student who has had little or no previous classes in Western Civilization. It involves a **lot of reading**, both from the textbook (which contains many maps, contemporary art and paintings), and from the primary sources book which contains documents, such as letters and original writing from the time period we are studying. Some of the topics which are covered include;

1. Greek and Roman cultures
2. Transmission of cultures
3. Development and organization of Christianity
4. Medieval rulers and politics
5. Ordinary people of Western Civilization, including feudalism
6. Renaissance politics and culture
7. Reformation of the church
8. Scientific Revolution
9. Absolutism and Constitutionalism

## Course Requirements

### Journal

You will read through chapters 1 to 16 in Volume One, your main textbook. This is the secondary source text, and contains the narrative of events. As you read, you should keep a “journal” of your thoughts and reactions to what you read. The journal is **not a mini chapter summary, but the opportunity to comment on perhaps two or three aspects of the chapter which interested you the most and include your own thoughts on them.** This will take the form of a regular typewritten assignment, so not literally a journal, but I expect it to be between two paragraphs minimum and two typewritten pages as a maximum **per chapter**. You may focus on the events, developments or people which have interested you in that chapter, **why** they did and any modern day parallels which may occur to you. Please do not make statements without accompanying evidence, i.e. “I did not like the emperor Caligula” but you **may say**, “The emperor Caligula used wanton violence and his actions seemed not to be directed by any specific policy or program”. Please do not say, “I thought Charlemagne was interesting...” --- tell me **why** you thought this. **You may use the first person (“I”) in your journal because it is subjective writing, but it is not appropriate to use the first person (“I”) in your essays on the primary sources or the final examination. They need to be objective. Please use the same approach in the Discussion Threads.**

You will send me five journals at a time. The deadlines will be on the class Blackboard site. I will give you an **approximate grade level** on each batch of journals submitted. This gives you the opportunity to act on my comments and constructive criticism. It is possible to begin this assignment and get Cs on the journal entries, and by responding to suggestions and improving your writing, end with a B+, for example. There is no direct relationship between the approximate grade level and each chapter’s journal entry, so do not try to work out how much each of the 16 journal entries is worth. I try to give credit for

gradual improvements over time. **I reserve assigning your journal grade overall until I have received all journal entries.**

The journal assignment is worth 40% of your overall course grade.

### Primary Source Papers

These are two papers, based on **a specific approach** which I will explain in the guidelines for the papers.

One paper is based on Perpetua's Journey. I will provide Guidelines on what is expected in this paper.

The second paper is based on several primary documents in one of the chapters of your *Sources* book. (You will have some choice in the chapter on which you write. All of the primary sources for the second paper should be taken from the same chapter in the *Sources* book so they have a common theme). The second paper will be a comparison of at least three documents from the same chapter in the *Sources* book.

More detailed instructions about how to write these papers will be posted on the class Canvas site. The papers should be between four and six pages long, double spaced. I will assign the chapters from which you may choose **one** on which to write. You will choose which documents within that particular chapter. Each of the papers is worth 20% of your overall course grade.  $2 \times 20 = 40\%$

### Discussion Board Questions

I will post Discussion Board questions on the Blackboard site and ask that you make contributions to the five discussion question threads. You will use the same approach to the Discussion Thread as you will with the journals. (See instructions for journals) 10%

### Final Exam

This is a prepared exam, done under the Honor System, open book. You will receive a list of questions, and choose two. One list – Section A -- will be general questions, covering the whole breadth of our course. In preparing your answer, you will need to draw on examples which meet the topic of a theme, and write across time periods. For example, you may choose to write on “Trade and Economics” in society generally from the earliest times to 1648. The second list – Section B -- will contain more specific questions, on topics such as the Roman Republic, early medieval kings, or fourteenth century crises, such as the plague. You will choose one of those and write on it in a more focused way. **The final exam, then, is two prepared essay questions, to be answered in your own words, and submitted to me as your last assignment.**

As this is your last assignment, students sometimes rush it. This is not a recommended approach, so please leave enough time to do this well. Each final exam questions should be **a minimum of three pages long, double spaced.**

Your final exam is worth 10% of your overall grade. Final exams will be graded without comments.

### Grading Policy

Grades are based on accurate and comprehensive presentation of historical material, good writing, attention to analysis and, in the case of the papers and final exam, answering the question. I try to include helpful, constructive criticism on each piece of work returned, as well as a grade, so that students may learn from the process and incorporate suggestions into their next assignment. Final exams are graded without comments.

### Communication

You should communicate with me via email unless you have an urgent or quick question, in which case you may call me at the number above. I usually check my email once or twice a day, so it may be the next day when I return your email. I do not check my email on Sundays, and not always on Saturday. Again, you may call me at home with a quick question, between the hours of 9 am and 9 pm. Please do not call on Sunday. If you need to leave a voicemail message, please remember to include your contact number. I try to return all calls as soon as possible.

### Turning in Assignments

Assignments should be submitted on the class Canvas site. If you have problems with the site, please contact Information Technology services at MBU. When I grade work, I will try to include constructive comments and criticism as well. The final exam will be graded **without comments**. It will be assigned a grade which will be added in to your other grades. Always keep a copy of each assignment until your course grade has been posted.

**Please submit assignments on Canvas as you complete them and observe the Module structure. Work logically, and chronologically, through the assignments. If you fall behind with the due dates, please email me. Always keep a copy of all class assignments until after the final grade has been recorded.**

### Due Dates and a Schedule of Assignments

I understand that many Baldwin Online/ Adult Program students are juggling work and home responsibilities as well as taking courses. If you are not able to meet a deadline, please communicate with me.

**It is important that you have all assignments including the final exam turned in by December 3<sup>rd</sup> 2020 at 11:59 pm. If you need an ET, then you must have requested it before that date, and communicated with your advisor.**

**Journal Deadlines (there are other assignments in addition to journals, so read all the way through)**

You should be reading a minimum of one chapter per week from the main textbook, and two chapters in some weeks. **In order to get started and provide some feedback, I require that you participate in Financial Aid requirements, which necessitate that instructors are able to document that a student has made a good faith start on the course. I am required to report to the MBU Baldwin Online/ Adult Program when a student has not made a good faith start on the course.**

*For all due dates except the Final Exam the assignment must be posted to the Canvas site by 9 am. The Canvas class site groups these assignments in to Modules, as they are also grouped here on the syllabus.*

### **Module 1: The Ancient World; People, Lifestyles and Persecution**

September 4 Participate in First Discussion Thread, on Canvas site.  
September 24 First set of Journals due (Ch. 1-5)  
September 30 First Primary Source paper due (on Perpetua's Journey)

### **Module 2: Early Europe and Medieval Era; Power of the State and the Church**

October 7 Participate in Second Discussion Thread  
October 15 Participate in Third Discussion Thread  
October 22 Submit the next five journal entries (Ch. 6-10)

### **Module 3: Later Middle Ages and Renaissance; Protest, Change and Exploration**

November 2 Second Primary Source paper due  
November 9 Participate in Fourth Discussion Thread  
November 23 Submit last group of journal entries (Ch. 11- 16)

### **Module 4: Patterns and Themes in the first half of Western Civilization**

November 30 Participate in Fifth Discussion Thread  
December 3 Submit Final Exam (two prepared essays, open book) by 11:59 pm

### **Primary Source Papers**

Guidelines and/ or the title will be supplied. Please consult the class Canvas site for more instructions on what is expected of the papers.

The first primary source paper is due on **September 30th**. It will be based on the book, Perpetua's Journey which contains both a primary document (a journal kept by a North African Christian woman, Perpetua, in the early third century Common Era) **and** secondary/ background information. The book is enough to write the paper. You will follow my guidelines and write a paper answering the questions posed in the guidelines.

The second primary source paper is due on **November 2**. The second primary source paper will be based on the documents in your *Sources* book and will involve a comparison of the information in the documents with the information you get from the secondary source (the large format book, A History of

Western Society.) The second primary source paper will be based on any of Chapters 8 through 13 which you may choose from in the *Sources* book. You must refer to at least three documents from the same chapter in the *Sources* text within each paper. You will be asked to compare those sources with the information you get from the secondary source, A History of Western Society, Volume 1, which is the narrative textbook (the larger of the textbooks). I will include guidelines on how to write this paper and they will be posted on the class Canvas site.

### **Discussion Board Questions**

These will be posted and you will be able to respond. So long as you post at least one thoughtful response to each Discussion Board question, you will get credit. You will receive two points per Discussion Question in which you participate.

### **Final**

Your final will consist of two essay questions. I will post the final exam through the Canvas site later in the semester. If you are ready for the final exam before that, please let me know. You may look at the final ahead of time, choose two essay questions and prepare them. When you write, you may consult your textbook and any notes you may have taken during your reading, **but be aware that you must write using your own words and phrases** and abide by the Mary Baldwin University Honor Code. **Always keep a copy of all assignments until your course grade has been posted.** In accordance with History Department policies on campus, I grade, but do not offer any comments on final exams.

### ET Policy

If possible, you should avoid having to get an Extension or ET, if only because no-one wants to pay the fee so close to holiday time. If you find you need an ET, generally I am calm and understanding about it. I require that you have done at least half of the journals and at least one of the papers by December 3 to be considered for an ET. You will need to decide ahead of time if you want to apply for an ET. (That decision must be made by the same date as that on which students have to have submitted all work, which is December 3<sup>th</sup> 2020.) Getting an ET involves my permission, **and** communicating with your advisor. It is a two part process and both parts **must** be done. If you need to, then be ready to send me an email, contact your advisor to process the paperwork, and please understand that there is a fee.

KF/ Updated July 2020 for Fall Semester 2020