

**History 125 – DLC (3 credits)
Introduction to World History
Dr. Nathan Michalewicz**

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| E-mail: nmichale@gmu.edu Office Hours: by appointment | Class time: Asynchronous Classroom: Blackboard |
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Course Overview:

In this course, we will investigate the changes in the human experience that created the world of today. Beginning around 1200 with the political and economic transformation of the Eurasian landmass under the Mongol Empire and extending to the end of the 20th century, we will trace the key processes that produced the world we live in today. During this period, Europe, Asia, Africa, and the Americas became entangled into a global system in which technological, political, religious, and ideological developments had far-reaching impacts and implications. We will investigate the transformations related to these developments using both primary and secondary documents. By the end of the class, students will have improved their critical thinking skills and the ability to apply them to global changes as well as written evidence.

Learning Objectives:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to understand the political, social, economic, and cultural dimensions of world history.
- Students will gain a better understanding of world history and world cultures as well as complex global processes and systems.
- Students will improve their critical thinking skills and the ability to apply them to global processes and written evidence.
- Students will demonstrate improved skills at crafting written arguments based on information from historical sources.

The Mason Core

George Mason University’s Mason Core is designed to complement work in a student’s chosen area of study. These classes serve as a means of discovery for students, providing a foundation for learning, connecting to potential new areas of interest, and building tools for success in whatever field a student pursues. Learning outcomes are guided by the qualities every student should develop as they move toward graduating with a George Mason degree.

Through this Mason Core course and others, students will become:

Critical and Creative Scholars

Students who have a love of and capacity for learning. Their understanding of fundamental principles in a variety of disciplines, and their mastery of quantitative and communication tools,

enables them to think creatively and productively. They are inquisitive, open-minded, capable, informed, and able to integrate diverse bodies of knowledge and perspectives.

Self-Reflective Learners

Students who develop the capacity to think well. They can identify and articulate individual beliefs, strengths and weaknesses, critically reflect on these beliefs and integrate this understanding into their daily living.

Ethical, Inquiry-Based Citizens

Students who are tolerant and understanding. They can conceptualize and communicate about problems of local, national and global significance, using research and evaluative perspectives to contribute to the common good.

Thinkers and Problem-Solvers

Students who are able to discover and understand natural, physical, and social phenomena; who can articulate their application to real world challenges; and who approach problem-solving from various vantage points. They can demonstrate capability for inquiry, reason, and imagination and see connections in historical, literary and artistic fields.

Required Materials:

This course is online and asynchronous. You will need access to a computer and internet to log on to Blackboard and complete all assignments. Students, however, will not have to purchase any textbooks or other materials for this class. All the content will be provided through links to Youtube videos, podcasts, readings, or other audio-visual content uploaded to Blackboard or links to external readings that are provided in each unit's content folder. For more specifics on the readings, click on the unit in the left ribbon of the courses Blackboard site.

Assignments:

This class is organized into seven (7) units organized into two-week increments. Each unit will consist of a series of audio/visual/textual content to watch/listen/read. For each unit, you will participate in a forum discussion, take a quiz, and write an essay that engages with the content from that unit. You will also have the possibility of completing an extra credit assignment for each unit. Below is a brief overview of the assignments. For more information, see the handout provided in the Course Introduction section on Blackboard.

8 Discussion Threads (30%)

Students will be separated into discussion groups (groups A-I). Each student will write a discussion post for each unit and an introductory post at the beginning of the class for a total of 8 discussion threads. These discussion posts will describe what you will find interesting, surprising, odd, or confusing about the readings and audio-visual material for the unit. They are due the Wednesday before the Quizzes and Essays are due. For more on due dates see the class schedule. Combined, the discussion assignments will comprise 30% of the total grade.

7 Quizzes (30%)

Each unit will have a 20-question quiz due the last day of the unit (a Saturday) by 11:59 pm.

7 Essays (30%)

Each student will write an essay (500-word minimum) responding to one (1) (and only 1) of multiple essay prompts. The essay should make an argument and use material from the readings and audio-visual content to support your argument.

Final Essay (10%)

Each student will write a final essay (1000-word minimum) responding to one (1) (and only 1) of multiple essay prompts. This essay will ask you to engage with the material across all the units. Make sure to make an argument and use information from the readings and audio-visual content to support your argument.

Extra Credit (each worth up to 2.5 points on final grade)

Each unit will provide the opportunity for extra credit worth up to 2.5 total points added to your final grade (graded out of 25 points). You will read an academic article (provided by me and attached to the extra credit assignment in Blackboard), and you will write a review (500-word minimum) on the article. I have provided more information on this extra-credit assignment and writing reviews in the Course Introduction section on Blackboard. *I will only accept extra credit for the unit after you have completed and turned in all other assignments for the unit.*

Calculating Grade

8 Discussion assignments (30%)

7 Quizzes (30%)

7 Essays (30%)

1 Final Essay (10%)

To calculate your grade, use the following equation:

(Your discussion grade average x 3) + (Your quiz grade average x 3) + (your essay grade average x 3) + (Final Essay grade) + (total points (out of 25) from each extra credit assignment) / 1000 = your grade.

N.B., your grade will come out as a decimal point. To convert the decimal to a percentage, move the decimal point to the right two spaces (ex. .88 is 88%, or your grade = 88).

Factoring Grade

93.50 – 100 = A (N.B., an A+ is not listed here because it makes no impact on GPA calculations)

89.50 – 93.49 = A-

86.50 – 89.49 = B+

82.50 – 86.49 = B

79.50 – 82.49 = B-

76.50 – 79.49 = C+

72.50 – 76.49 = C

69.50 – 72.49 = C-

59.50 – 69.49 = D

< 59.49 = F

Late Work:

Other than extra credit and discussion forums, I will accept late work unpenalized, but I will not accept it after the following unit's due date. For example, I will NOT accept assignments from unit 1 after the due dates for unit 2. I would highly recommend you not turn in assignments late because it decreases the amount of time available to begin work on the next unit. You will find that two weeks moves fast. Falling behind will make it difficult to complete the rest of the assignments. I will not accept discussion posts after the due date because it defeats the point of the discussion, preventing you from engaging with your discussion group. Similarly, I will not accept extra credit work after the due date.

Netiquette

Although this course is 100% online, remember to comport yourself in the same manner you would in a face-to-face class. You should treat myself and your colleagues with the dignity and respect they deserve. Moreover, since you will be engaging in discussions with your colleagues in your discussion group remember to follow the core rules of netiquette (<http://www.albion.com/netiquette/corerules.html>)

Academic Honesty and Plagiarism:

This class and all of your work as an undergraduate are governed by GMU's Honor Code: "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another source without giving that source credit. Writers give credit through the use of accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes; a simple listing of books, articles, and websites is not sufficient. Plagiarism cannot be tolerated in an academic setting.

Many students get confused about what to cite. If you use someone else's words, place them in quotations, and cite them. After quoting someone else's words, cite them with a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical citation (in this class we prefer footnotes) referencing where those words can be found. If you paraphrase/summarize (borrow someone else's ideas but not quote the words directly), cite it with a footnote, endnote, or parenthetical citation (once again, in this class we prefer footnotes) referencing where those ideas can be found. If you are not sure if you should or should not cite a source, be safe, and cite it. The major exception is if the material is considered common knowledge or factual information that can be obtained from a variety of sources.

Cheating is acquiring help on your coursework without permission. Reading another student's essay before you write yours is cheating. Paying someone to write your paper for you or edit your paper is cheating. Anytime you turn in words that are not your own (other than when you quote/paraphrase them and cite them), it is cheating. For instance, if a friend or family member reads your paper to point out mistakes for you to correct, that is not cheating, but if a friend or family member edits your paper for you (reads it and makes corrections themselves), that is cheating. While having someone read your papers/assignments for typos and grammar is acceptable, remember that the assignments in this course are NOT collaborative. Your work should reflect YOUR honest efforts and not anyone else's.

You are expected to follow the GMU honor code, and any infractions will be dealt with according to GMU guidelines. If you have any questions about academic integrity, please contact me.

Consult the George Mason Honor Code for more information. <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>

Disabilities and Academic Accommodations

If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ODS) at <http://ods.gmu.edu/> or 703-993-2474. All accommodations must be arranged through ODS. Please give me any ODS forms as soon as you can so we can make the proper arrangements.

Religious Holidays

If any assignments or due dates interfere with your personal religious observation, I will be happy to make accommodations. Remember, it is the responsibility of the student, within the first two weeks of the semester, to let me know the dates of major religious holidays on which the student will be absent or unavailable due to religious observances. Please, see the Mason University Life religious holiday calendar: <https://ulife.gmu.edu/religious-holiday-calendar/>

Student Resources:

- Keep Learning, Learning Services (<https://learningservices.gmu.edu/keeplearning/>)
- University Libraries (<https://library.gmu.edu>)
- Writing Center (<https://writingcenter.gmu.edu>)
- Counseling and Psychological Services (<https://caps.gmu.edu/>)

Student Privacy

Under FERPA laws, your federal education rights and privacy transferred to the student and not the parent after the student turns 18 or attends a postsecondary educational institution like GMU. Therefore, I can only interact with you about your education in this course and cannot respond to questions about your performance in this course with anyone else but you. For more information, see the FERPA statement from GMU (<https://registrar.gmu.edu/ferpa/>)

Communication

Communication between students and the professor is permitted through two avenues: 1) GMU e-mail 2) Blackboard. I cannot discuss your grades or any other information about your performance in this class through any other forum than those.

Class Schedule:

| Unit | Overview | Deadlines |
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| <p>Unit 1 Aug.24 – Sept.12</p> | <p>During this unit, we will evaluate what history is as a discipline and what it means to think historically. We will also evaluate the world that was created by Mongol expansion, conquest, and decline from 1200 to 1500. Of particular interest is the integration of the Eurasian world through Mongol expansion and the Indian Ocean trade networks.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Introduction discussion: Wed., Sept. 2, by 11:59 pm. • Discussion: Wed., Sept. 9, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Sept. 12, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat, Sept. 12, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Wed., Sept. 16, by 11:59 pm. |
| <p>Unit 2 Sept.13 – Sept.26</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate the causes and outcomes of European expansion and colonialism in the Americas and the Indian Ocean. We will pay particular interest to how the expansion of the Eurasian system to a truly global system impacted its dynamics as well as the extents and limits of European expansion into the rest of the world.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Sept. 23, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Sept. 26, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Sept. 26, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Wed., Sept. 30, by 11:59 pm. |
| <p>Unit 3 Sept.26 – Oct.10</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate the slave economy of the Atlantic world, the Enlightenment, and the various Atlantic revolutions in North America, France, Haiti, and Latin America. In particular, we will focus on how the slave economy and the Enlightenment produced the economic, social, and cultural contexts necessary for the Atlantic Revolutions to take place.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Oct. 7, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Oct. 10, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Oct. 10, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Wed., Oct. 14, by 11:59 pm. |

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| <p>Unit 4 Oct.11 – Oct.24</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate the causes, experience, and outcomes of the industrial revolution. We will pay particular interest to how industrialism transformed daily life and produced new political, economic, and social theories.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Oct. 21, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Oct. 24, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Oct. 24, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Wed., Oct. 28, by 11:59 pm. |
| <p>Unit 5 Oct.25 – Nov.7</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate the second stage of European expansion in the world and its devastating impact on Africa, India, and China.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Nov. 4, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Nov. 7, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Nov. 7, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Thur., Nov. 12, by 11:59 pm (Wed., Nov. 11, is Veterans' Day). |
| <p>Unit 6 Nov.8 – Nov.21</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate the causes, experiences, and outcomes of World War I and World War II. We will pay particular attention to the transformative political effects of World War I as well as the Russian and Chinese experiences during World War II.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Nov. 18, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Nov. 21, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Nov. 21, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Tue., Nov. 24, by 11:59 pm (Thanksgiving break begins Wednesday, Nov. 25). |
| <p>Unit 7 Nov.22 – Dec.5</p> | <p>During this unit, we will investigate how the Cold War and decolonization transformed the global system. We will pay particular attention to how Western and Soviet competition shaped the process and outcomes of decolonization.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Read/watch/listen to material in Content Folder on Blackboard. • Discussion: Wed., Dec. 2, by 11:59 pm. • Quiz: Sat., Dec. 5, by 11:59 pm. • Essay: Sat., Dec. 5, by 11:59 pm. • Extra Credit: Wed., Dec. 9, by 11:59 pm. |
| <p>Final Essay Dec.6 – Dec.12</p> | <p>Essay prompts will become available Dec. 4</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Final essay is due Dec. 12 by 11:59 pm. |

