

USU 1320 Civilization: Humanities- Summer 2007

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Main 321J or 797-0870

Overview:

This “Humanities” course is being taught by a historian—not an anthropologist, classicist, political scientist, etc. Therefore, the focus of this course may differ from your expectations. Religion or ancient Egyptian civilization usually form the context of a USU 1320. Not so in this class. Being a 20th century Americanist, who interested in wars, consumerism and technology’s impact on war and society, I am not the traditional candidate to teach USU 1320. Nonetheless, we humans have experienced common activities, tragedies, triumphs and felt the same emotions of fear, hate, love, trust, greed, altruism; thus, even someone with different interests can find much from this brief survey of human history which can provide us with a better understanding of and sympathy for our predecessors. Studying history reminds us that the human experience is one of continuity, to a certain extent, amidst an endlessly changing world.

Textbook:

**A History of the World in 6 Glasses* by Tom Standage (Walker & Co.)

**Terrorism and 9/11: A Reader* Frederik Logevall (Houghton Mifflin) ISBN (pbk)
0-618-25535-4

*various class material will be on electronic reserve in USU library media collections

Course Description: This course, of course, is a survey. This means selectivity. Obviously, we cannot study all of human history in depth (even superficially). Still, there are common features of the human experience, including religion (and concern for the afterlife), technological innovations (whether to enhance military skill, ease the burdens of labor—such as erecting pyramids), trade (we all need or want commodities which improve the aesthetics of life—or even the taste of food), architecture and art (whether to glorify a ruler or offer thanks and reverence to the deities), and much more, which can enhance our ability to live in a interconnected, complex modern world. We can encounter features of the human experience-- from ancient times to the modern, globalized economy— which enlarge our sense of belonging to the human race. Furthermore, we not to know and appreciate the many important figures from a global perspective—an Egyptian ruler, a Confucian scholar, a British monk, a Muslim educator, a British imperial administrator, an American soldier or American missionary or merchant—to have a more well-rounded “human” understanding.

*Tentative Topic Class Schedule

First Week: Worlds Apart and Together

Second Week: Importance of Art and Religions

Third Week: Importance of Technology and Warfare

Fourth Week: Reasons for the rise and fall of great powers

Fifth Week: Trade and Education

Sixth Week: Milestones in human history

Seventh Week: Dynamic Leadership

Eighth Week: 2005 BCE vs. 2005CE?? Assessment of human experience

Requirements:

Attendance

Weekly quizzes or short papers on material covered in class (possible)

5 page (minimum) typed paper, utilizing the Standage book, to assess your understanding of the material covered in USU 1320 (due last day) (or can email if you need to leave before Friday)

Various in-class assignments (response to video clip in class; reading/writing assignment from electronic course reserve material, possible group presentations, etc.)

No final exam

A reading schedule, etc. will be provided the first day.