

Course Portfolio for History 120: World History

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I. Background

Although survey courses generate the largest number of credit-hours in history, they are among the most challenging courses for us to teach, because of both class size and student composition. These classes are taught as large lecture courses, for the most part without accompanying discussion sections, with enrollments ranging from 100 to 150 students (the enrollment limit is determined by classroom size). The university's general education requirements specify that students must take one course in historical studies, and most of them choose one of the courses from our two-semester U.S. history survey, our two-semester western civilization survey, or our one-semester world history course. The students who take these classes are mostly freshmen and sophomores, and during the fall semester a large proportion of them are completely new to university life. Few of the students are history majors. In fact, many of them come from outside the College of Arts and Sciences, and the survey class in history is one of the few courses in the humanities that they will take during their college years. Most of them enter the classroom believing that history is merely the memorization of names and dates, and they are either scared of taking history because they can't memorize things easily, or they believe it is boring and irrelevant to their lives.

I teach three history courses at the survey level: Western Civilization to 1715, the History of Christianity, and a one-semester World History course. These three classes offer particular challenges in that they cover very long periods of time, present material that is usually unfamiliar to the students, and in the case of World History, describe cultures that are completely unknown to them. As I have thought about my own teaching and the audience for these survey classes over the last several years, my approach to these courses has changed radically. Increasingly I have moved away from presentation of data and focused instead on critical thinking skills. I want to help the students make explicit comparisons and contrasts between developments that occur in different historical contexts and see larger patterns in the disparate events that are usually thought of as "history." These skills will be of more use to the students in the long run than the ability to recite names and dates. I hope they come to realize that knowledge of the past adds depth and richness to their appreciation of culture, whether their own or that of others, and gives them a key to understanding the world in which they live.

In my survey courses I am still experimenting with how best to achieve these larger goals, and each semester I find myself trying new approaches to develop the students' interest in history and their ability to learn—and to think about what they have learned. Despite the differences in content between the survey courses I teach, my general goals of teaching students to see historical development and improving their critical thinking skills are common to all my survey courses. For this reason I can apply what I learn from teaching one survey course to the other two courses. As a result, my teaching at the survey course continues to evolve each semester. This course portfolio presents a snapshot of my World History course as I taught it during the spring of 2000. There were eighty students enrolled in the course (History 120). An additional seventeen students took the course for honors credit (History 120H).

II. Course Design

A. Course Format

Unlike our other survey courses, the World History course was designed so that students would attend two large class lectures and one smaller discussion section each week. The discussion sections are run by a graduate teaching assistant. Honors students attend the lectures and meet in their own discussion section, which is led by the faculty member responsible for the course; they are also expected to do extra work in order to earn honors credit. Normally the instructor him/herself leads the honors discussion section, but because of my administrative responsibilities during the spring (I am graduate chair), one of my colleagues took responsibility for the honors discussion during this past semester.

B. Syllabus

I have come to see the course syllabus as an essential planning document for myself and as a road map for my students. Although the result is a very long syllabus, I believe the advantages of having class goals, objectives, policies, and expectations laid out in writing at the very beginning of the class outweighs any “intimidation factor” caused by the length. In order to counter-act the intimidation factor, I try to create a friendly tone by using first and second person and, if I have time, to select appropriate images, incorporating graphics into the syllabus.

The syllabus begins with a brief description of the course, then lists the specific objectives I hope the students will achieve by the end of the semester (see Appendix A). Because I know some students are scared off by the prospect of using computers or may have difficulty gaining access to a computer, I make my requirements for computer use clear in the syllabus and remind students that if they are uncomfortable about them, they should drop the class. My methods of assessment and therefore my grading policies are fairly complicated, so I spell them out in the syllabus in as much detail as possible, so that the students have them in writing. For more on the assessment of student learning, see part IV below.

Teaching all of human history in fifteen weeks is a daunting task. To make the class more manageable, I focus on the development and spread of, and the interaction between, what I call the four “core civilizations” of the Eurasian continent. No matter how I organize the course, however, there is a tremendous amount of material that is completely new to the students. We learn by relating new material to what we already know, but most of my students have no framework or schema to which they can attach new information about non-western history. I therefore try to provide them with such a schema through a number of attachments to the syllabus. The first of these “aids to learning” is a list of people, events and terms they should learn over the semester. These are the terms that I use for short-answer identifications on each exam. By giving them to the students at the beginning of the semester (rather than, say, in a study guide handed out a week before an exam), I hope to clue the students in to things they should be listening for and that are relatively more important for the course.

The second “aid” consists of three easy quizzes given early in the semester. For the first quiz, I require students to memorize and reproduce a “historical periods chart,” included with the syllabus, that divides the five thousand years of recorded human history into three smaller periods, each with their own subdivisions. The other two quizzes are map quizzes in which students identify locations drawn from a list included in the syllabus. If students study for these quizzes, they receive close to full credit; they also acquire both a chronological and a geographical framework that will help them organize material presented over the course of the semester.

Finally, because the two chief elements of this course are comparison over time and comparison and contrast between civilizations, I include three matrices that I encourage the students to fill out over the course of the semester. My goal is to help

students see that learning consists not of rote memorization of lecture notes but of being able to describe general trends and to make comparisons across time and place.

C. Texts/Assigned Readings

At the time I selected texts for the course, there was only one textbook on the market suitable for a one-semester world history class. I do not like the text because it focuses on the modern period, whereas I spend two thirds of the course covering the period to 1700. It also gives too many details and neglects the broader themes I try to emphasize in my lectures, which makes the text somewhat confusing for my students. To help them gain more from the text, I put together a study guide for the text comprised of terms and study questions. I made this available via the class web site, and several students did at least visit (and I assume print out) the sections of the study guide, but I don't know if they used it or if they found it helpful.

Students were also required to purchase a historical map atlas, which they used to prepare for the two map quizzes. I expected the students to do this on their own, since geographical knowledge is in a sense a prerequisite for learning world history.

The final two texts were both used for discussion in recitation sections. One of them, *Personalities and Problems*, is comprised of short essays comparing figures from two different civilizations who were roughly contemporary and who dealt with the same type of issues (e.g. Plato and Confucius on human nature). Each essay is short, easy to read, and deals with questions of enduring significance. They are ideal for introducing students to the relevance of history. During the last few weeks of the course students read and discussed *Things Fall Apart*, a novel by Nigerian author Chinua Achebe that describes both traditional African culture and the impact of Western imperialism. The novel adds to the course in two ways. First, I do not have much time to discuss traditional Africa in lecture (it falls outside the "core civilizations" of Eurasia around which I structure the course), but I want students to have a better understanding of tribal culture, which they can gain from the first part of the novel. Second, one of the themes of the last part of the course is the impact of Western expansion on the rest of the world, which is dramatically and very memorably depicted in the novel.

III. Course Presentation

A. Lectures

For the last several semesters I have used PowerPoint presentations for my survey course lectures, but I was unable to use PowerPoint in this class because the room to which I was assigned did not have the necessary computer equipment. I was reduced to projecting an outline of the day's lecture topic on an overhead—an unsatisfactory solution, since students in the back of the room had a hard time seeing the overhead. To compensate for this, I made the lecture outlines available on the class web site for students to print out, but few of them took advantage of this availability.

Most of the class period was spent lecturing, but I did stop occasionally to ask students if they had questions, and I usually had one or two of them ask for clarification. In order to give the students some practice in the skills needed for essay writing, I occasionally introduced "practice essays" on material covered in lecture towards the end of the class period. Most of these essay questions asked the students to compare and contrast developments in different regions. They required students not only to be able to describe what was happening in each region, which tested their retention of lecture material, but also to see similarities and differences, which tested their creative and analytical abilities. After putting the essay on the overhead projector, I divided the room roughly in half, assigned a different part of the essay question to each half of the room, and then gave the students a few minutes to discuss the answer to that partial question with the person sitting next to them. I then walked around the room to elicit answers to

the questions I had posed, and had the TA write down their answers on the blackboard. This is the first time I have used this technique in a large lecture class, and while I need more practice at doing it well, I think it does stimulate students to think about what they have just heard during the lecture portion of the class.

B. Discussion Sections

Discussions were based on a short assigned reading each week. To help students prepare for discussion, I posted a list of three or four questions based on the reading on the Web on Mondays. Students were required to hand in the answers to these “writing assignments” during their discussion section at the end of the week for grading by the TA (see Appendix C). The TA was free to shape each week’s discussion according to class size and mix of personalities in each of the four sections he led. I was fortunate enough to have an experienced and very capable TA who needed very little input or guidance from me in preparing for or leading the discussion, but we regularly discussed how sections were going, and I sat in on one of his classes so I could give him more specific feedback on his performance.

IV. Assessment

A. Assessment Design

I see my course as encouraging student learning on three levels. At the most general level, I expect students to learn names, dates, events and definitions. These are the “building blocks” of history, similar to vocabulary lists in a foreign language or multiplication tables in mathematics. At a deeper level, I want the students to understand the significance of events and developments in history, to see relationships between them, to identify their causes and consequence, to make comparisons and contrasts between them. Finally, I want the students to improve their critical reading and thinking skills, particularly in analyzing and evaluating the descriptions and explanations that historians have used in order to give meaning and significance to past events or to relate them to the present.

Although I would like students to be motivated by a desire to learn the material, I realize that in survey courses most students are more motivated by grades. I therefore tried to devise a system of assigning points that would motivate them to do the work required to learn. Students who turned in more than the minimum number of writing assignments could earn up to twelve points of extra credit. I don’t believe in grading on a curve but consider that if a student has done satisfactory work, he or she should receive the corresponding grade.

B. Assessment Components

1. Writing Assignments

The writing assignments were intended both to make sure students came to recitation section prepared to discuss the readings and to help students improve their writing skills. They worked well as motivators for student preparation but they were less successful for helping improve student writing. It took the TA several weeks at the beginning of the semester to work out a satisfactory and time-efficient way of grading the assignments. Although a few students did improve their writing skills over the course of the semester, most students remained at the about the same level of writing ability.

2. Exam Structure

The examinations combined objective multiple choice and chronological questions, short answer identifications drawn from the list included with the syllabus, and essay questions. Because the essay questions are intended to assess the students’ ability to make an argument, I gave them five or six essay questions to prepare a week before the

exam, along with explicit instructions on how to study for the exam (see Appendix C). Two of these essays were on the exam, and they had to write on one of them. Students thus knew exactly what material they would be expected to know for the exam and they had sufficient time to think through how to organize and present the information in their essays. See Appendix D for the final exam. Unlike the first two exams, there is little feedback given on the final exam. Students almost never pick up their final exams after the end of the semester, and there is a very short time between giving the final and having to turn in final grades, so I told the teaching assistant to write only those comments that would be useful to him when he was grading the exams.

C. Evaluation of Student Learning

1. Student self-evaluation

In addition to the final grades, I used two types of input from students to assess their learning. The first was a “knowledge survey” pre- and post-test that students took over the web, and the second was a group of questions on the student evaluation forms completed at the end of the semester. The knowledge survey consisted of twenty items drawn from my list of terms; students rated each term according to four categories: a) “never heard of it,” b) “heard of it but don’t know what it is;” c) “know what it is but can’t explain,” and d) “know and can explain its significance.” The survey was available during the first two weeks of the course and again during the last week of the course (“Dead Week”). Students received three points extra credit at the beginning of the semester and another three points at the end, and most of them took advantage of the opportunity to gain the extra credit. A comparison of the scores on the knowledge survey shows a significant increase in the percentage of students who answered either c) or d) at the end of the semester (see Appendix E). The ratings were somewhat lower for terms covered during the last part of the semester, presumably because the students had not yet begun to study for the final. Nevertheless, the students clearly felt that they had learned specific facts and information from the class.

This perception is reinforced by the student evaluation forms. The student evaluations asked students to rate various forms of learning on a scale of 1 (=strongly agree) to 5 (=strongly disagree). The mean response to the statement, “I learned factual information in this class” was 1.6. Students also felt they could “explain some concepts from this course to other interested people (mean = 1.7), which implies that they had gone beyond simple memorization to comprehension. In both of these cases, only two or three of the 54 students who completed the survey did not answer either “strongly agree” or “agree.” The mean responses compare favorably to the composite answers to these two questions according to the most recent composite data for all 100-level history courses (1.8 for factual information and 2.0 for ability to explain).

Subjective ratings of higher-order learning were not quite as high but still compared favorably overall with other 100-level history courses. Many students felt that they had “learned things in the course that they could apply to other courses, to life or work” (mean of 2.4, with 34 students answering either “strongly agree” or “agree”; departmental mean 2.5) and that they had “improved their ability to read or understand books or articles on a historical topic” (mean of 2.3, with 31 students answering either “strongly agree” or “agree”; departmental mean of 2.5). Subjective ratings on improvement in either writing skills (mean of 2.7) or oral communication (mean of 2.9) were more mixed. In both cases, not quite half the students felt they had improved (23 and 20 students respectively), a roughly comparable number felt neutral (18 and 19 respectively), and a smaller group (11 and 15 students respectively) felt they had not improved. In both cases, however, my students rated their learning higher than the departmental means of 2.9 for written and 3.3 for oral communication skills. More positively, a majority felt that they had “learned how to analyze controversies and examine the underlying assumptions in the field of history” (mean of 2.4, with 34 students answering either “strongly agree” or “agree”; departmental mean of 2.8). I

attribute the higher ratings for these levels of learning to the discussion sections and writing assignments, which gave the students much more opportunity to think about what they were learning from assigned readings and lecture than they would have had using our department's traditional three lectures/no discussion format.

2. Exam Performance and Final Grade Distribution

I have only taught this class once before (in the spring of 1997), and that class had only about half the enrollment of my course in the spring of 2000. Despite questions of comparability due to these two factors, I am listing the grade distribution for both courses. I have also listed the grade distribution for the honors section (120H) separately, so as not to "inflate" the grade distribution for the spring, 2000 class.

	120: Spring, 1997			120: Spring, 2000			120H: Spring, 2000		
	No.	%	Cum. %	No.	%	Cum. %	No.	%	Cum. %
A+	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	6	6
A	5	11	11	12	15	16	6	35	41
B+	1	2	13	5	6	22	2	12	53
B	12	27	40	16	20	42	3	18	71
C+	2	4	44	14	18	60	2	12	83
C	12	27	71	10	13	73	0	0	83
D+	0	0	71	1	1	74	0	0	83
D	1	2	73	4	5	79	0	0	83
F	6	13	85	7	9	88	2	12	95
W	6	13	99*	10	13	101*	1	6	101*
Total	45			80	100		17		

*does not total 100% due to rounding

Approximately the same percentage of students passed the class each time I taught it, but a somewhat higher number of students received better grades during the spring of 2000 than during 1997. This counters the common sense expectation that students in larger classes would not do as well grade-wise as those in smaller classes. The higher grades for spring, 2000, may be due to improvements in my own teaching, since I did revise my lectures significantly and changed my manner of presentation somewhat. However, I am more inclined to attribute the higher class average to the number of points students could earn through the quizzes, writing assignments, and extra credit (turning in more than the minimum number of writing assignments and taking the knowledge survey). Although I have not calculated the exact numbers, my impression is that about half of the students received final grades that were half a step higher (e.g. moving from a C+ to a B) than if their grade had been based only on their performance on exams. The extra points made the biggest difference for those students who were able to move their grades up from a C to a C+, and two students were able to pull up their grades from a D+ to a C on the basis of their writing assignments, quizzes and extra credit. Students did have to work in order to earn these points. Nevertheless, because I want to emphasize analysis and critical thinking, which is best measured through the essay exams, I plan to change the weighting of the various measures of assessment and introduce other types of assessment the next time I teach this course.

D. Student Evaluation of the Course

The students in this course gave me the highest ratings both on course satisfaction (mean of 2.2, compared to departmental mean of 2.6, on a scale of 1=excellent and 5=poor) and on instructor satisfaction (mean of 2.0, compared to mean of 2.4) that I have ever received from a survey level course. Almost half of the students gave me an overall rating of excellent. I am of course very pleased that they were so happy with a course that I spent so much time and effort on, but I don't mention these figures merely to brag. I draw two important conclusions from them. First, experimentation in teaching does not necessarily lead to negative student evaluations, and even negative ratings can lead eventually to positive ones, if they result in further changes to teaching. Over the last several semesters I have experimented with many aspects of the survey course and have received some fairly negative ratings from students. Each semester I have learned from both my failures and my successes, taken account of student feedback, and adjusted my teaching further. The positive ratings I received from the students this semester gives me reason to think that I have finally "gotten it (almost) right." There are still things I plan to change the next time I teach the course, but I feel like I'm on the right track.

Second, there is research evidence that students tend to give higher ratings to classes in which they get higher grades. It may well be that my students liked the class because they felt they could improve their grades beyond what they received on their exams. I should note here that the students did not feel that the class was easy. When asked "compared to other courses, how much effort do you consider is required to succeed in this course?" 75% of them responded either "much more" or "somewhat more." Almost half of the students (21 of 55 respondents) reported that they spent 7-9 hours per week on the class (including class attendance)—an amount I consider the minimum for success. However, Peer Review surveys at UN-L have shown that only about 20% of our students spend that much time on course preparation. My students were clearly motivated to put time and effort into the course, and I believe that those who did so saw their grades improve. The extra sense of control over their grades, and particularly the satisfaction of being able to pull their grades up, may have given them a more positive attitude towards both me and the course as a whole.

V. Reflections

Overall, I was happy with how the course went over the course of the semester, but there are a number of changes I would like to make the next time I teach it. For starters, I would like to gather more information about the effectiveness of the extra handouts I prepare to help student learning. To give one concrete example, I do not know if the students used the matrices I included with the syllabus, and if they did, whether they found them helpful. It may be that I need to teach them how to take the raw information provided in texts and lectures and shape it so that it makes sense to them and they can remember it.

As mentioned above, I plan to modify the grading scale somewhat to give the exams more weight. I still want to provide the students with an effective way of improving their grade/learning the material, though, and so I plan to introduce short, weekly web-based quizzes on the textbook as a form of mastery learning instead of using multiple-choice questions on the exams. I have done this in other survey courses with some success. I also intend to replace the writing assignments with some other method of motivating student participation in discussion. Both the TA and I concluded at the end of the semester that the perceived improvement in student skills did not justify the amount of time spent on grading the assignments. Moreover, it would simply not be feasible to require weekly writing assignments from a class with a higher enrollment. In my next survey course I plan to use a brief quiz on the assigned readings at the beginning of class, graded on a $\sqrt{+}$, $\sqrt{}$ or $\sqrt{-}$ basis. I will then break the students into assigned small groups to

discuss and produce written answers to questions on the readings. These answers will also be graded, with each group member getting the same grade. I hope the combination of a short, easily-graded quiz and small group discussion, combined with social pressure from other group members to contribute to their written work, will motivate students to prepare for the recitation sections.

Finally, I would like to increase my use of computer technology in another way by converting my lectures to PowerPoint slides. If I distribute the PowerPoint "lecture notes" via the web, I can require the students to read and bring them to class, where I hope to use a think-pair-share strategy to get the students to discuss the material presented rather than passively listening to me deliver a lecture.

Update to Course Portfolio for History 120, May, 2001

I taught History 120 during the spring semester, 2000-01. Like last year, this class was taught as both a regular course and an honors course. As my course portfolio describes, I was in general very pleased with how the course went, but there were several changes I wanted to make the next time I taught it. This update will describe those and discuss their effect on student learning. The recitation sections were led by a graduate teaching assistant, and I led the honors recitation. There were 81 students who took the final exam and completed all the other requirements of the course, and an additional twelve students enrolled in History 120H.

I. Changes to the Course

A. Texts and Web Quizzes

I have never liked the Stearns text that I have used in the past for this course, but in the past have had no alternatives because there were no other texts suited to a one-semester world history course. A year ago, however, one of the best of the two-semester textbooks, R.W. Bulliet, et. al., *The Earth and Its Peoples*, was published in abridged format, and so I adopted it for use this semester. The text emphasizes developments in technology and the impact that humans have had on the environment. These are two themes that I don't discuss at all in my course, but they provide a nice complement to what I do cover in the course. The book also discusses the important of trade, which has always been a major reason for cross-cultural contacts, one of the themes I do stress in my lectures. Finally, I believe the section of the book dealing with modern history is more appropriate for my class because it emphasizes broader developments rather than individual events, and students are therefore less likely to get lost in a maze of facts at the end of the semester, in effect losing sight of the forest because of all the trees.

To provide incentive for the students to read the text, I created a series of seven web quizzes that they took over the course of the semester. The quizzes had testbanks that were 4-5 times the number of questions they were asked on each quiz. Students could take the quiz once a day over the ten-day period that it was available on-line. They could use their texts to help them answer questions, but the quizzes themselves were time-limited (ten minutes to complete eight questions), so the students could not look up the answer to every question in the text before answering it without running out of time. My goal in having the students take the quiz was to make sure they had some familiarity with the material before we covered it in lecture and to help them learn to distinguish between more important and less important material in the text. The students could not take the test more than once a day, so they could not sit at the computer and re-take the quiz until they got the minimum number of questions right (I considered 6 out of 8 questions a passing grade). They received the highest score on the test, so there was no penalty in retaking the test. If they wished, students could print off their answers from quizzes they had already taken, so they would know the correct answer if and when they had a repeat question. The order of the answers always changed, though, so the students had to know the correct answer rather than the correct letter. I think any students who tried to learn the material that way actually put in more work than they would have if they had read the text, but in either case the students had to learn the correct answer. Each quiz was available on-line for ten days, and I made all of the quizzes available again during Dead Week so students who had not done well on them earlier in the semester would have a chance to retake them and pull up their grade. The quizzes were worth a total of 55 points (out of 800 possible) for the course (those who got a perfect score on all seven quizzes got one point of extra credit), which totalled 6.25% of their overall grade. I think this was enough to motivate students to read the text and take the quizzes until they had a score they were satisfied with, without distorting their overall course grade.

B. Use of PowerPoint and Thought Questions

Because I taught this semester in a “smart classroom,” I was able to convert all of my lectures to PowerPoint presentations. I also posted the contents of each presentation as a detailed outline on the Web. Students were told to print out the lecture notes and bring them to class. Making the notes available to the students ahead of time had several tremendous advantages. First, students listened to me as I went through the presentation rather than worrying about writing everything down. This cut down significantly on their anxiety level and gave them the time to try and understand what I was saying. As a result, I think they absorbed more of the information. When I lectured, I did not simply read the presentation off the screen but used its contents to remind myself of other points, bits of information or ideas the students needed to know. I would have liked to see the students take more notes on this material (very few of them did). The next time I teach the course, I will encourage them to write more of this material on their printed lecture notes.

Second, because the students had the correct information on the lecture notes, I noticed a significant improvement in the information they used in writing their short-answer identifications and essays. The problem of transmission, or not getting the correct information in their notes due to their poor level of note-taking, was almost completely eliminated. Instead of giving students two tasks when studying for an exam (trying to decipher poor notes—replete with half-formed thoughts, mistakes on dates and other facts, and incomplete definitions—as well as learn the information), students could focus on learning the information as I had presented it in class. The students did not learn how to take effective lecture notes in this class, but that was not one of my objectives in teaching this class; they focused on other study skills I will describe below.

Third, because I had the major factual information, definitions, etc. on the lecture notes, I didn’t need to worry as much about coverage and could use the 50 minutes of class time in another way, to help students learn how to manipulate the information I gave them. Having them take the web quizzes (and therefore read the text) also helped here. I incorporated into each lecture one or two thought questions that either dealt with the lecture material or more usually related it to information we had covered in a previous lecture. I put these thought questions at the top of each lecture so the students knew what they would be when they came to class, but we discussed these questions at the mid-point and (if we had time) at the end of the lecture. After finishing the first section of the lecture, I had the students take out 3x5 cards and talk about the thought question with the person sitting next to them. In line with the course’s focus on comparing and contrasting civilizations, most of these questions asked the students to compare and contrast the material I had just covered with similar or contrasting developments in other civilizations. The students had 5-10 minutes to discuss the question with their neighbor, while I walked around the room “eavesdropping” on their conversations and asking questions if a pair of students needed help. At the end of this time, I moved about the room and asked the students to help answer the question. The TA stood at the front of the room and wrote the students’ ideas on the whiteboard. Students became used to this practice very quickly, and I think it worked extremely well in giving them the practice in comparisons and contrasts that they needed to write a strong essay for their exams. There was a secondary effect in helping create a greater sense of camaraderie among the students, as they got to know the people sitting around them and had more exchanges with me.

As another means of encouraging students to read through the lecture notes beforehand and to come to class prepared to discuss the material, for the first part of the semester I asked them to write their own “thought questions” that we could discuss during class. I had mixed success with this practice. At the beginning of the semester, most of the questions were factual in nature (asking me to give more information on something I’d discussed, rather than dealing with deeper questions of analysis or

synthesis). This became less of a problem over the course of the semester as the students developed a better idea of what I meant by “thought question.” More problematic, though, was that I did not have time to look through the questions at the beginning of each lecture to pick out any that would be worth discussing. As a result, I dropped this idea after the middle of the semester. I think this has some strong possibilities for increasing both students’ preparedness for class and for involving them in discussions of questions that interest them, but for the technique to work well, the questions need to be turned in a lecture in advance so I have the chance to go through them. I may try this next time I teach the course.

The chief disadvantage to using PowerPoint presentations was the negative effect it had on attendance. Although attendance was about what I would expect through the first ten weeks of the semester, it fell off markedly after the second exam. I would estimate that over the last five weeks only about 50-65% of the class came to lectures. This was particularly problematic because by this time I felt students were trained enough in reading the lecture notes that I departed significantly from the lecture notes to give them additional information. The students who attended regularly benefited from this, while those who cut class had no way of knowing that I had covered more material than was given on the presentation notes. In many cases, the finales were a full letter grade below what that student had gotten on the earlier two exams, and I think much of this is due to the higher incidence of cutting class at the end of the semester.

II. Evaluation of Student Learning

A. Anecdotal Evidence

As when I taught the class before, I gave the students five essay questions to prepare a week before the mid-term exams, put two of these questions on the exam, and asked them to answer one of the essays. The students were thus being evaluated not primarily on their ability to recall information from lectures and text but on how well they could make an argument and support it. The essays were designed to test the students’ abilities to analyze and synthesize the material: none of them could be answered simply by regurgitating what was in their lecture notes. To prepare for the exams, the students had to go back through lecture notes and text and pull out the material that could be used to support their argument.

I was extremely pleased with student performance on their exams. My impression on reading through the essays is that the students did much better than the usual crop of survey students. As mentioned above, there were far fewer of the gross mistakes (the ones teachers both laugh and cry about) that result from the garbled notes students take in our lectures. Students also did much better at presenting specific information to back up the general assertions that comprise the bulk of many survey-level essays. The combination of making sure they had accurate information to start with in the lecture notes and giving them an opportunity to practice the skill of comparison and contrast in class helped them perform better on essay questions that were more complex than those I tended to give students five years ago, before becoming involved with the peer review project.

B. Final Grade Distribution

As I implied in my course portfolio, I was not satisfied with the way final grades were determined the last time I taught the class because it gave too much weight to what I considered minor assignments and not enough to the mid-term and final exams. I changed that this semester by increasing the number of points available for the course and cutting back on the possibility of earning extra credit points. The minor assignments came to about 19% of the final grade, while each mid-term exam was worth 25% and the final was 31% of the total. As a result, most of the students received final grades that matched their performance on the exams, and I believe the final grades are accurate indicators of the level of student learning in the course.

For the sake of comparison with previous years, I have included the final grade distribution for this semester's course.

	120: Spring, 1997			120: Spring, 2000			120H: Spring, 2000		
	No.	%	Cum. %	No.	%	Cum. %	No.	%	Cum. %
A+	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	6	6
A	5	11	11	12	15	16	6	35	41
B+	1	2	13	5	6	22	2	12	53
B	12	27	40	16	20	42	3	18	71
C+	2	4	44	14	18	60	2	12	83
C	12	27	71	10	13	73	0	0	83
D+	0	0	71	1	1	74	0	0	83
D	1	2	73	4	5	79	0	0	83
F	6	13	85	7	9	88	2	12	95
W	6	13	99*	10	13	101*	1	6	101*
Total	45			80	100		17		

*does not total 100% due to rounding

Final Grade	120: Spring 2001			120H: Spring 2001		
	No.	%	Cum%	No.	%	Cum %
A	7	7.2	7.2	4	33.3	33.3
B+	10	10.3	17.5	2	16.7	50.0
B	31	32.0	49.5	3	25.0	75.0
C+	13	13.4	62.9	1	8.3	83.3
C	16	16.5	79.4	2	16.7	100.0
D+	2	2.0	81.4			
D	2	2.0	83.4			
F	8	8.2	91.6			
W	8	8.2	*99.8			
TOTAL	97			12		

*does not total 100% due to rounding

As the table shows, there were fewer As this semester, but far more Bs. Because the bulk of the grade (81%) was derived from their exams, these grades are an accurate representation of student learning based on exam performance. I have also achieved what I think is realistically possible for a survey class. It is clearly possible for those students who worked at the class to get a B in the course, which reflects a satisfactory level of competency in analyzing and writing about historical information.

Appendices

Appendix A: Course Syllabus

History 120: World History

Spring, 1999-2000
Hamilton Hall 102
10:30 MW + recitation
e-mail: aburnett1@unl.edu

Professor Amy Burnett
Office: 626 Oldfather
Phone: 472-3239 or 472-2414
Office Hrs: 9:00-10:20 MWF
1:30-3:00 M & by apptmt.

Class website:

<http://courseinfo.unl.edu/courses/hist120>

Course Overview and Goals

This course is intended to give you a general overview of the various societies and cultures that have existed around the world from the emergence of complex civilizations ca. 3500 BC to the present. It will focus on the four major civilizations of Europe, the Middle East, China and the Indian subcontinent. Over the first five weeks, we will examine the development of political and economic structures, cultural values and major world religions in each of these areas. During the second five weeks, we will look at how the characteristic features of each of these civilizations spread to other parts of the globe. A major theme of the last part of the course will be the growing dominance of western culture throughout the world and the reaction of non-western peoples to that dominance. Because this course takes a comparative approach, we will look at the similarities and differences in fundamental values, internal developments, and spread of each of the major civilizations throughout the semester.

Course Objectives

At the end of this semester, you should be able to:

- ◆ define and explain the significance of the people, events and concepts listed on the "Terms You Should Know" handout included with the syllabus
- ◆ describe the dominant political structures, religious and cultural values for each of the four major civilizations (Europe, the Near East, the Indian subcontinent and China)
- ◆ describe how each of these core cultures has influenced surrounding areas politically and culturally
- ◆ describe the spread and influence of European/Western culture through-out the globe and the various reactions to westernization by non-western peoples
- ◆ draw comparisons and contrasts between the essential structures and internal development of the four major civilizations

Texts

Peter N. Stearns, *World History in Brief: Patterns of Change and Continuity*, third ed.

Gerald Danzer, *World History: An Atlas and Study Guide*

Ken Wolf, *Personalities & Problems*, second ed., vol. I

Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*

Computer Requirements

1. **Computer Use:** This class will make extensive use of the Web and requires you to have easy access to a computer (either PC or Mac) with the latest version of an internet browser (i.e. either Netscape 4.0 or Internet Explorer 4.0). There are computers in the dorms, at Love Library, at the Nebraska Union and at other computer labs on campus. These are often busy, especially during late afternoon, and if you rely on them exclusively, you should make sure you have time in your daily schedule to use the lab at one of the less popular times. You do not need prior computer experience or knowledge of the Web for this class. I will help you become comfortable with using the Web at the beginning of the semester, and I will be available throughout the semester to help you with any computer-related problems you might encounter. If, however, you are uncomfortable with using computers, are unwilling to learn how to use the Web, or have problems getting to the campus computer labs at a time when there are free computers due to scheduling problems with classes, job, or family situation, **you should drop this class.**
2. **E-mail account:** You will need an e-mail account for this class. As a UN-L student, you can get one for free: simply go to the Computer Shop in the 501 Building (across the street and south of Memorial Stadium) and fill out a form. You can also get a free e-mail account (although you have to put up with the advertising) through some commercial websites, (e.g. hotmail.com). **Please make sure that I have your e-mail address by the end of the first week of class.** Once you have your e-mail account, be sure to check your e-mail at least once a week for announcements, etc.
3. **Accessing the class Website:** The class website is password protected, which means that only those registered for this course have access to it. When you go to the class website, you will see a box asking you for your username and your password. Your "username" is a unique number assigned to students by the university. I will post these numbers for all students enrolled in the course when I receive them from the administration. Your password is your student ID (in most cases, your social security number). You can change your password to something else if you wish: click on the "Student Tools" button on the left side of the class website, then on the "Change Your Information" icon that will appear on the right. Scroll to the very bottom of the screen and type in a new password of your own choosing in the boxes that ask for it, so that no one else can get into the website using your name.
4. **Printing Documents from the Web:** You will need access to a reliable printer for this class. Discussion writing assignments, lecture outlines and study guides for the class will be available only through the class website. These handouts will be much more useful to you if you can print them out easily.

Grading Policies

1. **Exams:** Students will be required to take three examinations over the course of the semester: two in-class mid-terms and a final exam. Each in-class exam will cover material from the previous 1/3 of the course and will be a mixture of objective questions and chronologies, essays and short-answer identifications. The final will be comprehensive but will concentrate on material covered during the last five weeks of the semester. The lectures and readings are designed to be complementary, not repetition of the same material, so you will need to study both your lecture notes and the reading assignments before each exam.
2. **Make-ups:** All examinations will be given on the date noted unless announced previously in class. Students are expected to take exams at the scheduled time.

Make-ups will be permitted only in case of serious illness, injury or at the discretion of the instructor and will require written documentation justifying the reason for absence.

3. **Discussion Section Quizzes:** There will be three quizzes scheduled for your discussions. During the second week's discussion section you will take a quiz, worth 21 points, in which you will reproduce the "Historical Periods" chart included in the syllabus. For the second and third quizzes, each worth 12 points, you will identify geographical features, regions and cities on a blank map. You will be given a list of places you are expected to know for each map quiz.
4. **Discussion Sections and Writing Assignments:** Discussion sections will meet each week on Friday. Although these sections will be devoted primarily to the assigned reading, you will also have the chance to ask the teaching assistant any questions you may have about the week's lectures. Each Monday I will post a writing assignment related to Friday's discussion assignment in the "Assignments" section of the class website. You are to answer the questions in writing and hand them in to the T.A. at the end of your discussion section on Friday. Each assignment will be graded according to the following system: 6 (excellent), 5 (good), 4 (acceptable) and 1 (unacceptable) and returned the following week. Writing assignments that are not handed in at the end of the discussion section **will lose one point**. At the end of the semester these grades will be totaled and added to your grade for the class. Any points you earn over the 13% (65 points) allotted to discussion/writing assignments will be extra credit. In other words, you must hand in at least eleven of the assignments so that you don't lose any available points, and you can get up to 13 points of extra credit if you do an "excellent" job on all of the writing assignments. **All students are required to turn in writing assignments for the final two discussions devoted to the Achebe book. You will lose 6 points if you do not turn in both of these assignments!**
5. **Survey of Knowledge:** During the first two weeks of class and again during Dead Week (the last week of class), I will have a "survey of knowledge" available for you to take via the Web quiz site. The survey is similar to a student evaluation form and cannot be graded. Its purpose is to give me an idea how much you know about world history at the beginning of the course and to see how much you have learned at the end of the course. It should also help you prepare for the final exam by reminding you of what you have learned and what you need to "brush up on." Students who take the survey **both** at the beginning **and** at the end of the semester will receive 6 points extra credit. Students who take the survey only once will receive 3 points extra credit.
6. **Extra Credit:** You will be able to earn extra credit points by taking the survey of knowledge at the beginning and at the end of the semester, as well as by turning in more than the eleven writing assignments that are required. In all cases, however, extra credit will be capped at 15 points, and no one will be able to improve their grade by more than a half-grade (e.g. from a C+ to a B) through extra credit points.
7. **Grades:** Final grades will be based on a total of 500 points over the semester. Your final grade will be calculated as follows:

First in-class exam	120 points	24%
Second in-class	120 points	24%
Discussion writing assignments and participation	65 points	13%
Historical Periods quiz	21 points	4.2%
2 map quizzes (at 12 pts. each)	24 points	4.8%
Final exam	150 points	30%
TOTAL	500 points	

Grading will be according to the following scale on the basis of the total 500 points: A+=97-100%; A=90-96%; B+=87-89%; B=80-86%; C+=77-79%; C=70-76%; D+=67-69%; D=60-66%; F=59% or below. You can calculate your grade in the class at any time by determining what percentage of available points you have earned thus far. If you are taking the class Pass/No pass, you must have a 70% or higher (at least 350 total points) in order to pass the class.

Course Expectations

My Expectations of You

1. **Attendance:** Attendance at all lectures and discussions is necessary if you are to learn the material in this course. You are responsible for all material covered in lecture and discussion, even if you are unable to attend class for some reason. We will be taking attendance throughout the semester on an arbitrary basis for the lectures and regularly for the discussion sections and will use it to help determine borderline grades (see "Brownie Points" above).
2. **Keeping up with course-work:** It is generally expected that students do from two to three hours of work outside of class for each hour they spend in class, depending on how much background knowledge they have of the subject. That means that in order to do well in this class, you should spend six to nine hours each week studying (doing readings, reviewing notes, taking quizzes, preparing for exams, etc.) for this class. You will get out of this class what you put into it, and your grade will reflect that effort. If you do not intend to devote the necessary time and energy to this class, I ask you to drop the class at the beginning of the semester.
3. **Classroom courtesy:** You should arrive in the classroom before the start of class and stay in class until the end of the hour unless you have my permission to leave early. All newspapers, magazines and books must be put away when I begin lecturing. Please turn off all pagers and cell phones as well. These are basic rules of courtesy to other students and to me, and I expect you to observe them.
4. **Academic dishonesty** will not be tolerated under any circumstances and may result in your failing the course. Academic dishonesty includes (but is not limited to) the following:
 - a. plagiarism, or submitting exams, papers or other work as one's own which has been prepared by another or copied from the work of another

- b. assisting a fellow student in cheating
- c. changing a grade or marking on an examination or in the instructor's grade book

Please see the full statement regarding academic dishonesty in the "Student Code of Conduct" printed in the UN-L Student Handbook.

Your Expectations of Me

1. **Availability:** I will come to class a few minutes early and stay a few minutes after class each day, so that if you have quick questions about the lectures you can talk with me then. I will also be available during my regularly scheduled office hours if you want to stop by to ask questions or just to talk. In addition to my scheduled office hours, I am usually be in my office on Mon., Wed. and Fri. afternoons between 1-3, although I can't guarantee this because I often have meetings scheduled during this time. If you'd like to stop by on these afternoons, check with me before-hand to make sure I'll be in. I will happily arrange to meet with you at another time if these times don't work out. I check my e-mail regularly, so you can contact me that way. I am less consistent about checking my voice mail, but you can leave a message on my office phone if you call and I am not in. If all else fails, you can call the history department office and ask to leave a message in my mailbox.
2. **Promptness:** The Teaching Assistant and I will do everything in our power to return all exams, quizzes and assignments within ten days of when they are handed in.
3. **Feedback:** One important means of learning is discovering where you have made mistakes or where you need improvement. The T.A. and I will provide written comments on your written work and I will talk about assignments in class so that you will know how to improve your performance in the course. I will also ask for anonymous feedback from you over the course of the semester so that I can improve my teaching and do what I can to help you learn the material.
4. **Helpfulness:** I care about history, about this course, and about my students, and I want you to master the material, meet the objectives I have set forth for the course, and grow as thinking human beings. To that end, I will do everything I can to help you learn, but I do not automatically know when you have questions or are struggling with the material. Please come and see me if you are having problems of any kind with this course.

Lecture Schedule and Assignments

Week/Date	Lecture Topics	Readings and Assignments
1. Jan. 10	Course Introduction	Danzer, pp. 7-18
Jan. 12	Topic 1: Overview: The Four Classical Civilizations	Stearns, Chap. 1 Knowledge Survey Available through Jan. 21
Jan. 14	Explanation of Class Website	ALL DISCUSSIONS MEET IN 141 MORRILL AT 10:30
2. Jan. 17	Martin Luther King Jr. Day	No Class
Jan. 19	Topic 2: The Ancient Near East	Danzer, pp. 45-56
Jan. 21	Discussion: Hammurabi and Moses	Wolf, Chap. 1 Historical Periods Quiz
3. Jan. 24	Topic 3: Ancient China	Stearns, Chap. 2
Jan. 26	Topic 4: Confucianism	Danzer, pp. 57-70
Jan. 28	Discussion: Confucius and Plato	Wolf, Chap. 3
4. Jan. 31	Topic 5: Ancient India	Stearns, Chap. 3
Feb. 2	Topic 6: Indian Religions	
Feb. 4	Discussion: Zoroaster and Buddha	Wolf, Chap. 2 Map Quiz 1
5. Feb. 7	Topic 7: Classical Mediterranean Civilization	Stearns, Chaps. 4
Feb. 9	Topic 8: Western Religion	Stearns, Chap. 5
Feb. 11	Discussion: Asoka and Shi Huangdi	Wolf, Chap. 6
6. Feb. 14	Topic 9: Islam and the Islamic World	Stearns, Chap. 6-7
Feb. 16	First Mid-term Exam	Through Topic 8
Feb. 18	Discussion: Thucydides and Sima Qian	Wolf, Chap. 5

7. Feb. 21	Topic 10: Africa	Stearns, Chap. 8
Feb. 23	Topic 11: Medieval China	Stearns, Chap. 9
Feb. 25	Discussion: Irene and Wu Zhao	Wolf, Chap. 7
8. Feb. 28	Topic 12: Southeast Asia and Japan	Danzer, pp. 71-80
March 1	Topic 13: Medieval Europe	Stearns, Chaps. 10, 11
March 3	Discussion: Mansa Musa & Louis IX	Wolf, Chap. 10
9. March 6	Topic 14: The Americas	Stearns, Chap. 12
March 8	Topic 15: The Mongol Empire	Stearns, Chap. 13
March 10	Discussion: Genghis Khan	Wolf, chap. 8 Map Quiz 2
March 12-19	SPRING BREAK	
10. Mar. 20	Topic 13 (cont.)	Danzer, pp. 81-90
March 22	Second Midterm Exam	Through Topic 15
March 24	Discussion: Marco Polo and Ibn Battuta	Wolf, Chap. 9
11. March 27	Topic 16: Early Modern Europe	Stearns, Chap. 14
March 29	Topic 17: Europe and the New World	Stearns, Chap. 15, 20 Danzer, pp. 91-100
March 31	Discussion: Prince Henry and Zheng He	Wolf, Chap. 11
12. April 3	Topic 18: Europe and the Old World	Stearns, Chaps. 17-18, Ch. 24, pp. 472-480
April 5	Topic 19: The Industrial Revolution	Stearns, Chap. 19
April 7	Discussion: Elizabeth and Akbar	Wolf, Chaps. 13
13. April 10	Topic 20: The Age of Revolutions	Stearns, Chap. 20, 23
April 12	Topic 21: Europe in the Later 19 th Century	Danzer, pp. 101-112
April 14	Discussion: <i>Things Fall Apart</i> , Part I	Achebe, pp. 1-125

14. April 17	Topic 22: Imperialism and Colonialism	Stearns, Chaps. 21-22
April 19	Topic 23: The West in the 20 th Century	Stearns, Chaps. 25-26
April 21	Discussion: <i>Things Fall Apart</i> , Part II	Achebe, pp. 129-209
15. April 24	Topic 24: East Asia in the 20 th Century	Stearns, Chap. 28-29
April 26	Topic 25: The End of Colonialism	Stearns, Chaps. 30, 32
April 28	Discussion: What does it all mean?	
Mon., May 1	10:00 a.m. -12:00 noon	Final Exam

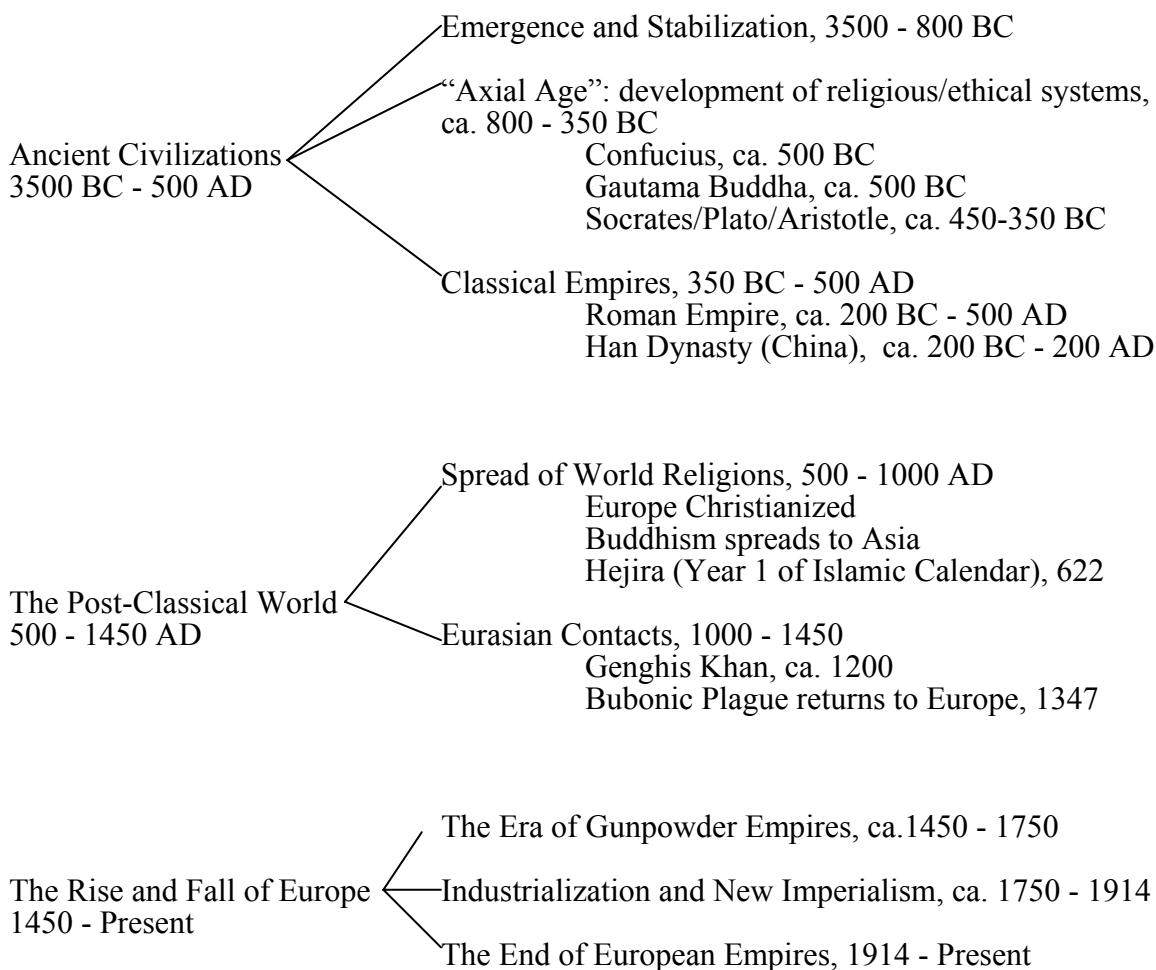
Appendix B: Learning Aid Handouts

History 120: World History

Historical Periods

Spring Semester, 1999-2000

Dr. A. Burnett



History 120: World History

Information for Map Quizzes

Spring Semester, 1999-2000

Dr. A. Burnett

Each of the two map quizzes will be worth 12 points. **Quiz #1** will consist entirely of places drawn from the list below. If you have problems finding any of them in your atlas, a dictionary will give you the general location so you can locate it on a map.

Nile River
Indus River
Mesopotamia
Shang China
Great Wall of China
Bay of Bengal
Athens
Constantinople
Persian Gulf
Mecca

Tigris River
Ganges River
Ancient Egypt
Yellow River (Hwang Ho)
Himalayan Mountains
South China Sea
Rome
Chang'an
Black Sea
Baghdad

Euphrates River
Deccan Plateau
Indus Civilization
Yangtze River
Arabian Sea
Mediterranean Sea
Red Sea
the Great Silk Road
Sinai Peninsula

For **Quiz #2** you will be required to locate geographical features, regions and cities drawn from the following list.

Mongolia
Ceylon (Sri Lanka)
Annam (Vietnam)
the Sudan
Paris
Yucatan Peninsula
Cape of Good Hope
Macao
Manchuria

Baghdad
Malay Peninsula
Japan
The Sahara Desert
Rhine River
Tenochtitlan (Mexico City)
Cape Horn
Bombay
Taiwan

Delhi
Korean Peninsula
Beijing
Timbuktu
Prussia
Incan Empire
Goa
Hong Kong
the Balkan Mountains

History 120: World History

People, Events, and Terms You Should Know at the End of the Semester

Spring Semester, 1999-2000

Dr. A. Burnett

Harappa	Fertile Crescent	Aryans
Bronze Age	Iron Age	Zoroastrianism
Moses	ethical monotheism	Torah
Qin Shi Huangdi	mandate of Heaven	Confucianism
Daoism	Han dynasty	Vedas
Asoka	brahmins	dharma
Karma	caste system	Siddhartha Guatama/Buddha
Mahayana Buddhism	Hinayana Buddhism	bodhisattva
Alexander the Great	Hellenistic era	Plato
Jesus Christ	Augustus Caesar	Constantine
Mohammed	Abbasid dynasty	Qur'an
five pillars of Islam	Sudanese kingdoms	Bantu migrations
Mansa Musa	Shintoism	shogunate
Olmecs	Toltecs	Aztecs
Mayans	Charlemagne	Crusades
Feudalism	Genghis Khan	Kublai Khan
Yuan dynasty	Il-Khanate	Black Death
Timur the Lame (Tamerlane)	Renaissance	Reformation
absolutism	Scientific Revolution	Enlightenment
Ottoman Empire	janissaries	Mughal Empire
Akbar	British East Indies Co.	Gunpowder empires
slave trade	industrialization	commercial
capitalism industrial capitalism		Ming dynasty Qing
(Manchu) dynasty		
closing of Japan	Tokugawa shogunate	French Revolution
Liberal	Conservative	caudillo
Napoleon	nationalism	socialism
imperialism	Sepoy Rebellion	Opium War
Taiping Rebellion	"the scramble for Africa"	World War I
World War II	Russian Revolution	Meiji Restoration
fascism	decolonization	Mohandas Gandhi
Kuomintang	Mao Zedung	Zionism

History 120: World History

Study Matrix: Four Major Civilizations

	Europe	Middle East		Indian Subcontinent	China
When/where civilization emerges					
Areas influenced by this civilization					
Original political structure					
Dominant form of political structure					
"Foundational" political figures and events (with dates)					
Religions that develop in this area					
Dominant religion					
Most important developments up to ca. 1500 AD (with dates)					
Other Comparisons					

Study Matrix: Impact of Westernization

	Americas	Africa	Middle East	Indian Subcontinent	China
Political/ social structures ca. 1700					
Chief political changes in 18 th -19 th c.					
Chief economic changes in 19 th c.					
Earliest contact with Europe					
Ideologies used to oppose western dominance					
Individuals/ groups who led anti- colonial movement (with dates)					
When/how independence from colonial power attained					
Other Comparisons					

Study Matrix: World Religions

	Christianity	Islam	Hinduism	Buddhism	Confucianism
Source of religious knowledge/ authority					
Founder (with date)					
Where developed					
Where became established					
Who are religious leaders?					
Relation to political authorities					
Major divisions within each group/ when established					
Other Comparisons					

Appendix C: Study Guide for First Exam

History 120: World History

Study Guide for the First Exam

Spring, 1999-2000

Prof. Amy Burnett

The first exam will be given in class on **Wednesday Feb. 16**. The exam will cover material from lectures, readings and discussions **through Topic 9** (Islam and the Islamic World). Use your study guide handouts for the Stearns book, the discussion questions for the chapters in Wolf, the historical periods chart, the list of terms and the study matrices you have filled out that were included with your syllabus, and the lecture outlines and your notes from class to study for the exam. Please bring a **blue book** and **two blue or black ballpoint pens** to class with you for the exam. I will not accept exams written on notebook paper and will deduct 10 points for exams that are not written in blue or black ink (not felt-tip) or that have pages torn out of the blue books.

The exam will have three parts. **Part I** will be a section of multiple choice and chronological questions worth 20 points. The purpose of this section is to make sure you have mastered basic factual information and have a sense of historical development (both order of events in each civilization and simultaneous developments in different civilizations). For the chronological questions, you will be given a list of names, events or governments and asked to give the letter in the proper chronological order, from the earliest to the latest. Each chronological question will be restricted to one of the civilizations we have studied—in other words, I will not include developments from both Indian and Chinese history in the same question. This type of question would look like the example below (using events from American history):

- a. the Civil War
- b. the Declaration of Independence
- c. Presidency of Richard Nixon

Part II will be short-answer identification of terms taken from the lectures and readings. You will be given a list of six terms and asked to identify and give the significance of four of them. The terms will be drawn from the list included in the syllabus (only those terms that we have covered in either lectures or assigned reading). Part II will be worth 20 points. You should not take more than ten minutes to answer these four identifications.

When you write your short-answer identification, be sure to identify who or what the person or thing is, when and where he/she lived or happened or was written or talked about, and especially why the person, place or concept is important. Your identifications should be as short and clear as possible while still giving the necessary information: you should be able to answer the who/what, when and where in one sentence, and describe the significance in another sentence or two. Do not assume that you don't need to state the obvious (for instance, that Zoroaster was Persian), because if you don't tell me, I won't know that you know it. On the other hand, don't waste your time giving all sorts of details that are unnecessary (like "Zoroaster abandoned his family to become a wandering preacher"). Here is an example of the sort of information you need to give for a short-answer identification:

Hammurabi: the king of Babylon who ruled southern Mesopotamia ca. 1800 BC. He is best known for the law code that bears his name. The Hammurabic Code tells us about early Mesopotamian society, such as social and class structures, family relations, and punishment of criminals.

Notice that the first sentence answers who/what, when and where. In general, I will accept approximate dates (like "lived ca. 1800" rather than "ruled from 1792-1750 BC"). In most cases, for the first exam it is sufficient to note the century in which a person lived or an event happened. The bulk of the answer is devoted to why the person or event (such as Hammurabi) is important, and it is the most important part of the identification. When you are explaining the significance of the term, remember the context within which that term was discussed in the lectures or text. In the example above, the essay moves from Hammurabi himself to Mesopotamian culture as a whole.

For **Part III** you will be required to write an essay worth 80 points. You will be given two questions from the list at the end of this study guide and asked to write on one of them. You will not be allowed to bring notes, outlines or any other aids into class with you. Your essay will be graded not only on your knowledge of factual material, but also on how well it demonstrates your reasoning ability, i.e. how well you can see general patterns, make comparisons, provide supporting evidence and draw conclusions.

It may help you to think of your essay as a short paper that you are required to write within a certain amount of time. The essay should begin with a **thesis statement** that corresponds to the topic of the essay question. In the **body** of the essay you will demonstrate or support your thesis statement. In other words, I am not asking you to tell me everything you know about a subject but rather to organize what you know into an argument that you can support with specific evidence. The body should therefore include details, specific facts and examples to support the general statements you make. For instance, do not simply assert that Buddhism and Hinduism share some of the same beliefs; give me an example of what beliefs they share. The essay should close with a short **conclusion** that summarizes the main points that you have just made in the body of the essay.

Before you start to write your essay, read the essay topics or questions carefully and decide which one you feel most comfortable answering. Make sure you understand the question and can answer all of its parts. Take a few minutes to make a brief outline inside the front cover of your bluebook or on the exam question sheet. List the main points you want to make in the essay, then arrange the more detailed information you will use to support each point under each heading. Once you have the information organized in outline form, you can follow it as you write the essay.

Please Note: If students do poorly on writing essay questions, even when they have studied the material thoroughly, it is usually for one of two reasons. The first reason is that they have not answered the question that was asked. This generally happens either when they have misunderstood the question or have forgotten to answer part of it. For instance, a question might ask about the development of a movement or an idea from event A to event B. If you tell me everything there is to know about A but don't say anything about B, the result might be a detailed, well-written essay, but it will not give a complete answer to the question and it will therefore receive a lower grade than another essay with less information about A but which does discuss B. The second reason students do poorly is that they do not take account of the time they need to take the test. You need to make sure you have allotted enough time to answer every part of the essay. Keep an eye on your watch as you're writing the exam.

The essays on the exam will be drawn from the list below:

1. Discuss the importance of geography on the political, social and cultural development of early civilization. What geographical features did these civilizations have in common? How did geographical differences influence the shape of each civilization, accounting for both similarities and differences in their development? **Note:** you will need to use the historical atlas to answer this question.
2. Compare and contrast the development of civilization in the ancient Near East and in China. What similarities do you see between the two areas? How did civilization in the two areas differ? To what extent was each civilization influenced by its geographical setting?
3. Compare and contrast Confucianism and Buddhism. When and where did each religious/ideological system develop? What beliefs do the two systems have in common, and how do they differ?
4. Compare and contrast Hinduism and Buddhism. When and how did the two religious systems originate, and what is the relationship between them? What beliefs do the two religions have in common, and how do they differ?
5. Compare and contrast political developments in India with those in the Mediterranean from the earliest civilizations up to the fifth century AD. What similarities do you see in the political structures of these two areas? How were the political developments in each unique to the area?
6. Discuss the development of Christianity and rabbinic Judaism from Israelite religion. What continuities do you see between the earlier and the later religions? In what ways do the newer religions differ from their common roots? What are the major similarities and differences between Christianity and rabbinic Judaism?
7. Compare and contrast the origin and spread of Christianity and Islam. Where, when and with whom did each religion originate? What was the “religious environment” in which each religion began? Who were the early converts to each religion, and how did each become a major cultural force? Where did each religion become dominant, and what effect did it have on culture in those areas?

Appendix D: Final Exam

History 120: World History Final Examination

Spring semester, 1999-2000

Professor A. Burnett

General Instructions: Cross out the name on the blue book you were given, and write your own name on the front cover. Write all answers in your blue book, not on your exam paper. Write the exam using a ballpoint pen. If you want to change an answer, cross it out—**do not** rip pages out of the blue book. Exams written in something other than blue or black ink or with ripped out pages will lose 10 points. Read each question carefully before you answer it.

Part I: Multiple Choice/Chronology

In your blue book, write the letter of the response that best answers the question asked, or list the letters of the events/terms in the proper chronological order. (2 points each; 20 points total)

- Spain's rapid expansion in the Americas was due in large part to
 - competition between Protestant and Catholic missionaries
 - the fact that there were no developed native civilizations
 - the impact of imported disease on the native population
 - Spain's leadership in European banking and commerce
 - the popularity of Spanish rule
- List the letters in the proper chronological order:
 - the Han dynasty
 - the Ming dynasty
 - the Tang dynasty
- The Mughal Empire was centered in
 - the Andes
 - China
 - India
 - Mongolia
 - the Sudan
- List the letters in the proper chronological order:
 - the Abbasid dynasty
 - the Mongols
 - the Ottoman Empire
- Most governments in the Middle East are either
 - liberal democracies or Marxist states
 - Marxist states or tribal confederations
 - monarchies or ruled by strongmen
 - ruled by strongmen or liberal democracies

- e. tribal confederations or monarchies
6. List the letters in the proper chronological order:
 - a. the Enlightenment
 - b. the Renaissance
 - c. the Scientific Revolution
 7. The Sepoy Rebellion was caused by
 - a. Indian rejection of rule by Queen Victoria because she was a woman
 - b. Muslim protest against liberal British policies toward Hindus
 - c. nationalist protest against British import of cheap laborers called Sepoys
 - d. religious objections by Indian soldiers to the fats lubricating gun cartridges
 - e. an uprising of people loyal to the former Mughal emperor
 8. The European countries most important for exploration and expansion in the seventeenth century were
 - a. England and the Netherlands
 - b. Germany and England
 - c. Italy and France
 - d. Portugal and Spain
 - e. Spain and Italy
 9. All of the following were motives for imperialism except:
 - a. the belief that Europeans should “civilize” the rest of the world
 - b. competition for prestige among European states
 - c. desire to spread the benefits of liberal democracy
 - d. the need to secure raw materials and markets for manufactured goods
 - e. protection of routes to and from other colonies
 10. The Tokugawa shogunate in Japan
 - a. abolished feudalism and the office of emperor
 - b. drastically limited contact between Japan and the West
 - c. encouraged the transformation of samurai from warriors to merchants
 - d. ended internal warfare by instituting a policy of full religious toleration
 - e. vigorously promoted the spread of Christianity

Part II: Short Answer Identification

Identify fully but concisely, give approximate dates and explain the significance of six of the terms listed below. (5 points each; 30 points total). **Please start this section on the back of the first page in your blue book!**

Vedas

Zionism

Kuomintang

Opium War

caudillo

socialism

Asoka

French Revolution

Part III: Essay

In your blue book, write a substantial, detailed and well-constructed essay on one of the following essay questions. (50 points)

1. Discuss the impact that European civilization had on sub-Saharan Africa from the late fifteenth to the early twentieth century. What were the earliest significant contacts between Europe and Africa? How and why did the nature of European contacts change in the nineteenth century? What were the consequences of European contact for traditional African culture?
2. Define what is meant by the Industrial Revolution and discuss its significance for the West and more generally for the world. When and where did the Industrial Revolution begin? What effect did it have on Western society and economy? What were some of the consequences of Western industrialization for the rest of the world?

Part IV: Essay

In your blue book, write a substantial, detailed and well-constructed essay on one of the following essay questions. (50 points)

1. Discuss the importance of Confucianism for Chinese culture. When did Confucianism originate, and what are its basic principles? How did the position of Confucianism change over time in response to problems of political fragmentation and foreign invasions? What has been the fate of Confucianism in the twentieth century?
2. Compare and contrast the spread of Buddhism and Islam from their points of origin throughout the world. When and in what areas did each religion develop? How was each religion spread, and how did they shape political and cultural values where they were established?

Appendix E: Knowledge Survey Results

History 120 Knowledge Survey

Spring semester, 1999-2000
First two weeks: 77 responses
Dead Week: 64 responses

<u>When Taken:</u>	<u>First Two Weeks</u>	<u>Dead Week</u>
Question 1: ethical monotheism	%	%
never heard of it	26%	2%
heard of it but don't know what it was	17%	3%
know what it was but can't explain	32%	17%
know and can explain importance	25%	78%
Question 2: Zoroastrianism		
never heard of it	57%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it is	18%	6%
know what it is but can't explain	19%	44%
know and can explain importance	5%	50%
Question 3: Qin Shi Huangdi		
never heard of him	81%	2%
heard of him but don't know who he was	16%	14%
know what it was but can't explain	1%	41%
know and can explain importance	3%	77%
Question 4: karma		
never heard of it	6%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it is	16%	3%
know what it was but can't explain	53%	20%
know and can explain importance	25%	77%
Question 5: Alexander the Great		
never heard of him	0%	0%
heard of him but don't know who he was	22%	2%
know what it was but can't explain	53%	19%
know and can explain importance	25%	80%
Question 6: Constantine		
never heard of him	8%	0%
heard of him but don't know who he was	38%	0%
know what it was but can't explain	38%	14%
know and can explain importance	17%	86%
Question 7: Talmud		
never heard of it	68%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it was	17%	25%
know what it was but can't explain	10%	44%
know and can explain importance	5%	31%

Question 8: shogunate		
never heard of it	60%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it is	23%	5%
know what it was but can't explain	10%	17%
know and can explain importance	6%	78%
Question 9: Qu'ran		
never heard of it	70%	2%
heard of it but don't know what it was	8%	6%
know what it was but can't explain	8%	9%
know and can explain importance	14%	83%
Question 10: Genghis Khan		
never heard of him	10%	0%
heard of him but don't know who he was	25%	0%
know what it was but can't explain	49%	2%
know and can explain importance	16%	98%
Question 11: Mayans		
never heard of them	5%	0%
heard of them but don't know what they were	12%	2%
know what it was but can't explain	51%	38%
know and can explain importance	32%	61%
Question 12: janissaries		
never heard of them	82%	17%
heard of them but don't know what they were	16%	36%
know what it was but can't explain	3%	33%
know and can explain importance	0%	14%
Question 13: gunpowder empires		
never heard of them	43%	0%
heard of them but don't know what they are	30%	8%
know what it was but can't explain	21%	38%
know and can explain importance	6%	55%
Question 14: caudillo		
never heard of it	87%	25%
heard of it but don't know what it was	10%	30%
know what it was but can't explain	1%	34%
know and can explain importance	1%	11%
Question 15: Ming dynasty		
never heard of it	18%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it was	44%	5%
know what it was but can't explain	36%	38%
know and can explain importance	1%	58%

Question 16: nationalism		
never heard of it	0%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it is	13%	0%
know what it was but can't explain	44%	11%
know and can explain importance	43%	89%
Question 17: Sepoy Rebellion		
never heard of it	82%	5%
heard of it but don't know what it was	13%	23%
know what it was but can't explain	5%	23%
know and can explain importance	0%	48%
Question 18: Zionism		
never heard of it	23%	0%
heard of it but don't know what it was	52%	17%
know what it was but can't explain	17%	36%
know and can explain importance	8%	47%
Question 19: Chiang Kai-shek		
never heard of him	52%	12%
heard of him but don't know who he was	25%	31%
know who he was but can't explain	19%	22%
know and can explain importance	4%	34%
Question 20: Mohandas Gandhi		
never heard of him	8%	0%
heard of him but don't know who he was	17%	6%
know who he was but can't explain	40%	25%
know and can explain importance	35%	69%