

NOTE TO STUDENTS: THIS IS AN ABBREVIATED SYLLABUS; PLEASE ATTEND THE FIRST CLASS MEETING TO RECEIVE A FULL SYLLABUS. **IF YOU PLAN TO TRY TO ADD THE COURSE DURING ADD/DROP, PLEASE ATTEND ALL CLASS MEETINGS.** STUDENTS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL MATERIAL REGARDLESS OF WHEN THEY ADDED THE COURSE.

HIST 2701: History of World Civilizations to 1500

TTh 9:30-10:45, 221 Le Conte Hall

Prof. Susan Mattern  
Office: 327 Le Conte, Hours TTh 11-12  
smattern@uga.edu

***Goals:***

This class will probably be different from any other you have taken. In the first place, if the dissemination of expert knowledge is the model of teaching that you are used to, it is not going to work here; no one is an expert in world civilization. The instructor offers guidance in how to read texts, how to ask questions and approach problems, and how to formulate a convincing argument based on primary evidence; but what you get out of the class is up to you.

Secondly, world civilization is not a subject that can be "covered" in any meaningful sense. The textbook and brief lectures on historical background will provide a minimal narrative framework; but if the main goal of this course were to familiarize students with the most important names, dates, and events from world history it would be a hopeless failure. Instead, it is organized around a few themes, offering ideas about how to approach the study of any unfamiliar civilization. Chronology is an extremely difficult problem in teaching a course like this, because civilizations developed in very different ways and at different times, and in the pre-modern period, with which we are concerned, had little contact with one another. As a result, though some effort has been made to preserve a rough chronological organization, students will find themselves moving backward and forward in time in this class.

The thread that ties the course together is the question of how societies organize themselves. The emphasis will not be on formulating some objective definition of the city, the family, and so on, but on investigating how different societies construct and understand these institutions. To do this, we will focus on the close reading of **primary sources** (that is, texts produced by the societies we are studying, not by modern scholars) from several different civilizations. As always, this instructor prefers to teach history by doing it--this means that students will learn to read and interpret primary evidence and come to their own conclusions about pre-modern societies.

**Texts:** All of the following except the textbook (*Traditions and Encounters*) and the reader are on 2-hour closed reserve at the Main Library. If you cannot afford to purchase all the books, you may read them there or photocopy the assigned sections and take them home.

- Jerry H. Bentley and Herbert F. Ziegler, *Traditions and Encounters: A Global Perspective on the Past*, vol. 1: *From the Beginnings to 1500*, 3rd edition (2005), McGraw-Hill.
- Aeschylus, *Oresteia*, tr. Richmond Lattimore. University of Chicago Press, 1983. **You can avoid purchasing this book** by photocopying the text of *Agamemnon* (the first play in the trilogy) from the copy on reserve at the library.
- A. G. McDowell, *Village Life in Ancient Egypt*, Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1999. **This book is quite expensive but you can avoid purchasing it by photocopying the library's copy.**
- Dennis Tedlock, tr., *Popol Vuh: The Mayan Book of the Dawn of Life*, 2nd ed., New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996.
- Philip K. Hitti, tr., *An Arab-Syrian Gentleman in the Period of the Crusades: Memoirs of Usamah Ibn-Munqidh*, New York: Columbia University Press, 2000.
- John William Johnson and Fa-Digi Sisòkò, *The Epic of Son-Jara: A West African Tradition*, 2nd edition, Indiana University Press, 1992.
- Julius Caesar, *The Conquest of Gaul*, tr. Jane Gardner, Penguin, 1983.
- Reader, available at Bel-Jean's copy center on Broad Street.

### **Contents of Course Reader:**

- "The Epic of Gilgamesh," tr. E. A. Speiser, in *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. James B. Pritchard, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958, 40-75.
- Aristotle, *Politics*, book 3, tr. Benjamin Jowett. New York: Colonial Press, 1899.
- R. S. Stroud, tr., "Drakon's Law on Homicide," in *Archaic Times to the End of the Peloponnesian War*, ed. C. W. Fornara. Translated Documents of Greece and Rome, vol. 1, 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1983, 18-20.
- Edward L. Shaughnessy, *Sources of Western Zhou History: Inscribed Bronze Vessels*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991, extracts.
- "The Code of Hammurabi," tr. Theophile J. Meek, in *The Ancient Near East: An Anthology of Texts and Pictures*, ed. James B. Pritchard, Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1958, 138-167.
- G. Bühler, tr., *The Laws of Manu (Sacred Books of the East)*, ed. F. Max Müller, vol. 25, Oxford: Clarendon, 1886, pp. 1-28, 74-86, 169-187, 301-327 (chaps. I, II.1-66, V.1-106, VIII.264-420).
- Ssu-Ma Ch'ien (= Sima Qian), *Records of the Grand Historian of China*, tr. Burton Watson, New York: Columbia University Press, 1961, vol. 2, "The Account of Ta-yüan" and "The Southwest Barbarians" (pp. 264-296).
- Bible, Revised Standard Version. *Genesis*, chap. 1-35.
- *The Secret History of the Mongols: The Life and Times of Chinggis Khan*, tr. Urgunge Onon, Curzon, 2001, chapters 1-2, 8-9.

- N. Levtzion and J. F. P. Hopkins, ed. and tr., *Corpus of Early Arabic Sources for West African History*, Princeton: Markus Wiener Publishers, 2000, selections from Ibn Battuta and Ibn Khaldun.

## ***Requirements and Deadlines:***

*Excessive Absences Policy:* The instructor will not take attendance for this large class. However, exam questions will be drawn primarily from material presented in lecture. If you do not wish to come to lecture, that is your choice, but don't expect to do well on exams. The instructor will not review lectures individually with students nor share notes with students regardless of the reason for the missed class. If you must miss several classes for a compelling emergency or medical reason, see the Office of Student Affairs about an emergency/medical withdrawal.

*Reading and Reading Quizze:* Reading is assigned for each day. Please complete the reading before class on the day for which it is assigned; when reading, please bear in mind the study questions assigned for each day. Lectures will only be meaningful to students who have done the reading. Reading quizzes in the form of brief, informal response papers will be given on an unannounced basis; these may not be made up, but one quiz grade will be dropped. Quizzes will be graded +, - or 0.

*Mid-Term Exam:* There will be one mid-term exam on **Thursday, Oct. 5**. Make-up exams will only be permitted with an official letter from the Student Affairs office. The make-up exam date will be Monday, Oct. 9, at 9AM, classroom TBA.

*Papers:* Students are required to write four two- to three-page papers over the course of the semester.

- Topics, guidelines and advice for paper assignments are attached to this syllabus; please read them carefully.
- Papers submitted late for whatever reason will have 1/2 grade deducted for each day late (including weekend days). Papers are due at the *beginning* of class on the due date.
- Procedure for submitting papers: Please hand the paper to the instructor when requested to do so at the beginning of class. If for any reason you cannot hand the paper directly to the instructor, go to the History department office (220 Le Conte) and have the department secretary sign and date your paper. Then bring it personally to my mailbox in the department mailroom; do not ask the secretary to do this ("the secretary must have lost it" is not a valid excuse for a late paper). *Do not email your paper except by special prior arrangement. Do not leave papers under my door or in my mailbox without a date and signature from the department secretary.* I don't come to campus every day, and will deduct points from an unsigned paper up until the day that I receive it, which may be several days after you left it.
- Plagiarism: Plagiarism includes quoting an author directly without enclosing the passage in quotation marks and citing the source correctly, paraphrasing or summarizing another author's work without citing the source correctly, presenting an idea as your own that was formulated by someone else, reproducing information compiled by another author without citing the source correctly, buying papers, or copying papers. You must cite your sources in footnotes or in parenthetical references every time you refer to them, not just in a bibliography at

the end of the paper. If I detect plagiarism university policy obligates me to report the incident to the Office of the Vice President for Instruction and the Academic Honesty Committee for review. Possible sanctions include a course grade of F, suspension from the university, and expulsion.

*Final Exam:* A cumulative final exam will be given on **Thursday, Dec. 14, 8AM.**

*Comportment:* Please do not: eat in class (coffee or cold drinks is OK); sleep in class; read newspapers or engage in other distracting behavior during class; or leave the room during class (visit the restroom beforehand). Turn off cell phones before entering the classroom. Do your best to arrive on time; quizzes will be given at the beginning of class. If you will be regularly late for a valid reason, please discuss this with the instructor.

### ***Grading:***

Response papers: 10%

Mid-term: 20%

Papers: 10% each

Final: 30%