



Nanchang University
HIS21: World History
(Last Updated in Jan. 2025)

Credit: 4

Contact Hours

This course is composed of 24 lecture sessions, 3 tutorial sessions and 9 office hours. Each lecture session takes 2 contact hours in length; each tutorial session takes 3 contact hours in length; There will be a Q-A review session (3 contact hours) and Final Exam (3 contact hours) at the end of this term. This course has 72 contact hours in total.

Course Description

This course is an introductory survey of world history, which provides a historical overview of major processes and interactions in the development of human society since the development of agriculture some 10,000 years ago. The course should enable students to treat world history as an arena for study of the past that address large-scale patterns as well as local narratives, in which they can pursue their interest in various types of knowledge.

In its audience, the course is intended for undergraduate students in all majors, especially in their first two years. For this wide range of students, the course not only provides background on globalization today, but reveals the contrasting process of large-scale social interaction which takes place rapidly (such as technology) as compared with those that take place slowly (such as social values).

For majors in History, the course will provide an initial step in the interactive and interdisciplinary study of the past that they will explore in more detail at advanced undergraduate levels. And for those considering a career in teaching, this course provides strong background for the world-history curriculum that is now taught in most secondary schools.

Note: This Syllabus is subject to change based on the needs of the class.

Required Textbook

Textbook: *Bird's-eye View of World History*, by McNeil, J.R and McNeil, William. New York: W.W. Norton, 2003.



Grading

- Participation 10%
- Weekly Writing 40%
- Midterm 20%
- Final Exam 30%

A+ 96-100	A 90-95	A- 85-89
B+ 82-84	B 78-81	B- 75-77
C+ 71-74	C 66-70	C- 62-65
D 60-61	F < 60	

Course Schedule

The course has 24 class sessions in total. All sessions are 2 contact hours in length. At the end of this term, there will be a Q-A review session(3 contact hours) and Final Exam (3 contact hours).

Note: the course outline and required readings are subject to change.

Class 1:

The World and History, an Introduction

Class 2:

A Bird's Eye View of World History

Introduction, p. 3-8

Class 3:

Homo Sapiens and the Cognitive Revolution

The Human Apprenticeship, p. 9-24.

Class 4:

Hunter and Gather Societies; Agricultural Societies

Shifting to Food Production, p. 25-40.

Class 5:

Cities, States, and Empires

Worlds and Civilization in the Old World, p. 41-59.

Weekly Writing

Class 6:

Civilizations & Axial Age

Worlds and Civilization in the Old World, p. 60-81.

Class 7:

Classical Age Empires



The Growth of Webs in the Old World and America, p. 82-15.

Class 8:

Post Classical Age: Political Fragmentations

Class 9:

Post Classical Age: Eurasian Contacts

Class 10:

Pax Islamica: Muslim Conquest & A Linking Corridor through Eurasia

Thickening Webs, p. 116-136.

Weekly Writing

Class 11:

Review for the Midterm

Class 12:

Midterm Exam

Class 13:

Pax Mongolica: Nomadic Empires

Thickening Webs, p. 137-154.

Class 14:

Brave New Modern World

Spinning the Worldwide Web, p. 15-17.

Class 15:

Pax Iberica: European Expansion

Spinning the Worldwide Web, p. 178-21.

Class 16:

World Wars 1618-1815

Weekly Writing

Class 17:

The Great Divergence and Pax Britannica

Breaking Old Chains, Tightening the New Web, p. 213-267.

Class 18:

The Industrial Revolution

Class 19:

Industrial Revolution (Cont.)



Strains on the Web: The World since 1890, p. 268-318.

Class 20:

The 20th Century

Class 21:

The 20th Century (Cont.)

Class 22:

Globalization

Big Picture and Long Prospects, p. 319-328.

Class 23:

Weekly Writing

Class 24:

Overall Review

Attending Policy

Regular and prompt attendance is required. Under ordinary circumstances, you may miss two times without penalty. Each absence over this number will lower your course grade by a third of a letter and missing more than five classes may lead to a failing grade in the course. Arriving late and/or leaving before the end of the class period are equivalent to absences.

Policy on "Late Withdrawals"

In accordance with university policy, appeals for late withdrawal will be approved ONLY in case of medical emergency and similar crises.

Academic Honesty

Nanchang University expects all students to do their own work. Instructors will fail assignments that show evidence of plagiarism or other forms of cheating, and will also report the student's name to the University administration. A student reported to the University for cheating is placed on disciplinary probation; a student reported twice is suspended or expelled.

General Expectations:

Students are expected to:

- Attend all classes and be responsible for all materials covered in class and otherwise assigned;
- Complete the day's required reading and assignments before class;
- Review the previous day's notes before class and make notes about questions you have



about the previous class or the day's reading;

- Participate in class discussions and complete required written work on time;
- Refrain from texting, phoning or engaging in computer activities unrelated to class during the class period;
- While class participation is welcome, even required, you are expected to refrain from private conversations during the class period.

Special Needs or Assistance

Please contact the Administrative Office immediately if you have a learning disability, a medical issue, or any other type of problem that prevents professors from seeing you have learned the course material. Our goal is to help you learn, not to penalize you for issues which mask your learning.