Introduction to World History

Dr. Sheri Huerta
Office: Robinson Hall B, room 369B
Office Hours: T and Th, 12:15 – 1:15 pm
and by appointment
email: shuerta@masonlive.gmu.edu

Hist 125-008
Course time and location:
Tuesdays and Thursdays 1:30pm to 2:45 pm
Planetary Hall 120

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course explores broad historical changes that gave rise to today’s modern world. Starting around the year 1250, we will explore networks and interactions that connected Africa, Southwest Asia, Eastern Asia, Europe, and the Americas. We will discuss the effects of economic, social, political and cultural globalization by critically engaging with and analyzing primary and secondary sources. We also will explore how historians shape our understanding of the past. Throughout the semester students will actively participate in the work of historians by analyzing, comparing, debating, and questioning sources of information. Course participants will also identify major global trends and processes that occurred during the last eight centuries by developing a historical literacy through digital, spoken, and written exchanges of information. Completion of this course fulfills the Mason Core requirement for an Exploration Course in World History.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

1. Students will demonstrate familiarity with the major chronology of world history.
2. Students will analyze and explain long-term changes and continuities in world history.
3. Students will develop multiple historical literacies by analyzing a variety of primary source materials (texts, images, objects) and using these sources as evidence to support interpretations of historical events.
4. Students will integrate personal understandings of events with both primary and secondary sources in a classroom community in order to broaden perspectives on the significance of world events both in the past and for the present.
5. Students will communicate effectively – through speech, writing, and use of digital media – an understanding of the patterns, processes, and themes in world history.

REQUIRED TEXTS This text is available for purchase at the GMU Barnes & Noble in the Johnson Center

2. All other assigned readings can be accessed via our course site on blackboard.

RECOMMENDED TEXTBOOK While you are not required to purchase Pollard’s book (listed below), the information in the Worlds Together book provides context to the events and processes we study and is a very useful resource for identifying critical events and their definitions for papers and exams. A copy of this text is available on course reserves at the Johnson Center library.

I ask that you bring a copy (either electronic or hard copy) of each reading assignment to class for group discussions. Printing out a hard copy of online reading assignments allows you to take notes and highlight important passages in preparation for class. Alternatively, you may bring an electronic version of the online assignment (viewed on a laptop, notebook, or other device) for class discussion as long as you comply with guidelines for electronic use detailed later in this syllabus.

**UNIVERSITY AND COURSE POLICIES**

**Academic Integrity:** The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. Mason has an Honor Code with clear guidelines regarding academic integrity. Three fundamental and rather simple principles to follow at all times are that:

1. all work submitted be your own;
2. when using the work or ideas of others, including fellow students, give full credit through accurate citations; and
3. if you are uncertain about the ground rules on a particular assignment, ask for clarification.

Plagiarism means using the exact words, opinions, or factual information from another person without giving the person credit. Writers give credit through accepted documentation styles, such as parenthetical citation, footnotes, or endnotes. Paraphrased material must also be cited. A good citation guide to consult is located at [https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/](https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/717/01/). A simple listing of books or articles is not sufficient. Plagiarism is the equivalent of intellectual robbery and cannot be tolerated in the academic setting.

*No grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.* If you have any doubts about what constitutes plagiarism or have difficulties completing an assignment, please contact me. It is far better to let me know and to work out a solution, than to destroy your integrity by taking short-cuts.

**Academic Accommodations:** If you have a documented learning disability or other condition that may affect academic performance you should:

1. make sure this documentation is on file with Disability Services (visit the Office of Disability Services located in SUB I, Rm. 4205; 993-2474; http://ds.gmu.edu) to determine the accommodations you need; and
2. talk with me to discuss your accommodation needs.

**Sexual Harassment, Sexual Misconduct, and Interpersonal Violence:** George Mason University is committed to providing a learning, living and working environment that is free from discrimination and a campus that is free of sexual misconduct and other acts of interpersonal violence in order to promote community well-being and student success. We encourage students who believe that they have been sexually harassed, assaulted or subjected to sexual misconduct to seek assistance and support. University Policy 1202: Sexual Harassment and Misconduct speaks to the specifics of Mason’s process, the resources, and the options available to students.

As a faculty member and designated “Responsible Employee,” I am required to report all disclosures of sexual assault, interpersonal violence, and stalking to Mason’s Title IX Coordinator per university policy 1412. If you wish to speak with someone confidentially, please contact the Student Support
and Advocacy Center (703-380-1434), Counseling and Psychological Services (703-993-2380), Student Health Services, or Mason’s Title IX Coordinator (703-993-8730; cde@gmu.edu).

**Weather and Emergencies:** Closings and emergencies are announced on the GMU homepage. However, you can receive notification by cell phone or email if you register for Mason alerts at [https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/](https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/). In cases of inclement weather or emergency situations that affect the entire campus, I will revise the class schedule and assignments as appropriate. In general, even if class is cancelled due to inclement weather, assignments are still due on assigned dates and can be turned in electronically through blackboard. In the event of a weather closing or emergency, check our course page on blackboard for instructions.

**Emergencies** can occur to anyone, anytime, anywhere. Emergency procedure posters are located throughout campus. Students should take the time to read classroom and building procedures to help prepare for an emergency. In addition, other student emergency resources are located at [https://ready.gmu.edu/students/](https://ready.gmu.edu/students/). The phone number for campus police is 703-993-2810.

**My Expectations of Students:**

1. **Classroom Environment:** This is a place of learning, sharing, and collaboration where each and every member of the classroom community is valued and treated with respect. Discussions will arise in the classroom and not all students might share the same understanding or perspective. Historians often debate issues, as we should, to gain a better understanding, yet we debate with respect and use evidence and analysis to support arguments. Respect the views shared in the classroom and use this opportunity to explore historical topics, ask questions, and gain a broader perspective and understanding.

2. **Classroom Etiquette:** Arrive on time to class, ready to contribute. We all commute from some place to get to the classroom and that can be unpredictable at times, yet do not let that be an excuse for perpetual tardiness or unpreparedness. Expect to stay for the whole class. If you know you need to leave early, please let me know in advance. Turn off cellphones. Make plans to eat outside of the classroom before or after class. Beverages must be covered to avoid spills. Leave a clean space when you exit the classroom.

3. **Laptops and cell phones:** At specified times during class you will be asked to use your laptop or other internet device to complete in-class activities. At other times you may choose to view our assigned readings via laptop or other device in class and this is permissible. Use of laptops for taking notes is also a good use of technology in the classroom. Surfing and checking social media is not appropriate during class. It is rude and distracting to other students and to me if you decide to surf the web or check your social media during class. Be disciplined enough to use electronic devises only for assigned class activities and to put them away when not needed.

4. **Turning in assignments On Time:** Time management is a critical life-long skill. Plan ahead. All students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the deadlines for course assignments. Late work will be penalized by earning a lowered grade. The only exceptions will be when you have explicit, advance permission from your instructor to submit work late. If you anticipate a problem in completing or submitting your work on time, you must contact me in a timely manner. If you do not hear back from me, you should assume that your work is due on the original date. Regardless of whether or not you have been granted an extension, you must contact me to find out how to submit late work.
5. **Checking GMU email daily:** At times I may need to quickly send out information about class, assignments, or resources. Check your GMU email and course blackboard sites **daily**.

6. **Sending emails to me:** Communicate any questions or concerns you may have about the class using your GMU email only. For tips on email etiquette, (how to address me, what to write) see [http://college.usatoday.com/2012/03/15/five-things-to-remember-when-e-mailing-a-professor/](http://college.usatoday.com/2012/03/15/five-things-to-remember-when-e-mailing-a-professor/).

7. **Writing and Tutoring:** This course develops your ability to analyze documents and evidence and integrate your arguments into written form. If you have difficulty with writing papers, contact me or reach out to the Writing Center or Tutoring Center on campus. For more information about these resources see [https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/](https://writingcenter.gmu.edu/).

8. **Drop Deadlines:** In some cases, you might decide to drop the class. You are responsible for knowing that the last day to drop the course and still receive a 100% tuition refund is January 29. For other drop deadlines consult the academic calendar at [http://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/3YrCalendar-2017-19-approved-4.26.pdf](http://registrar.gmu.edu/wp-content/uploads/3YrCalendar-2017-19-approved-4.26.pdf).

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**Student Expectations of Me:**

1. **Response to emails:** Use your official GMU email for communications to me. I cannot send course-related emails to private email accounts. I check emails during the work day, Monday to Friday, so expect a response by the end of the day. If you don’t receive a response by that evening, do email me again in case I did not receive your message. Expect a slightly longer response time for emails received over the weekend. My email is [shuerta@masonlive.gmu.edu](mailto:shuerta@masonlive.gmu.edu).

2. **Written feedback to submitted work provided in a timely manner:** My goal is to provide you feedback from submitted assignments within two weeks if not sooner. Grades will be posted to blackboard so you can keep track of what you have submitted, what I have received, and what grade you earned for the assignment.

3. **Availability to discuss history, talk about assignments, or answer questions:** I will hold office hours on campus prior to our class, from 12:05pm to 1:15pm on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Robinson Hall B, room 369B. If this time does not work with your schedule, contact me to set up a time when we can meet. I am also available to answer questions via email.

4. **Timely information about assignments:** Assignment information will be discussed in class and posted in blackboard. This includes expectations for the assignment, a rubric listing the criteria I will use to grade the assignment, resources to use to complete the assignment, and the deadline and format for turning in the assignment. Learning is a process of preparation, practice, and progress and this course is designed to guide you through this process.

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**COURSE CONTENT NOTE:**

At times this semester we will be discussing historical events that may be disturbing, even traumatizing, to some students. If you ever feel the need to step outside during one of these discussions, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You will, however, be responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually. If you ever wish to discuss your personal reactions to this material, either with the class or with me afterwards, I welcome such discussion as an appropriate part of our coursework.
**Course Requirements & Grading**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Attendance and Participation</th>
<th>20%</th>
<th>200 points</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2. Discussion Board Posts (4) and Responses (2)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Short Paper #1 (Comparing Perspectives)</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>100 points</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Short Paper #2 (Comparing Cultures)</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Mid-Term Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Final Exam</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>200 points</td>
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### Assignments:

**Attendance and In-Class Participation (20% - 200 points):** Active participation in class discussions and activities is vital for developing and expressing your historical voice. Part of your grade will come from completing weekly in-class assignments and Primary Source Analysis (PSA) papers as assigned. The PSA format will be provided in Blackboard. Another part of your grade will come from active participation in class discussions and small group activities. Communicate with me any concerns you may have about speaking up in class and we will develop a plan. **Attendance is expected.** If you are not attending class, your comprehension of the material and your participation grade will suffer. More than three (3) unexcused absences could result in a whole letter drop in your grade. Please provide advance notice if you know you cannot attend class.

**Discussion Board Posts and Responses (10% - 100 points):**

Weekly discussion forums require you to critically engage with the text and primary source materials and help create a community of historians in our class through digital communication. Out of ten possible weekly discussion forums, you are required to contribute to four forums in addition to Discussion Forum #1. Discussion Forum #1 is required so you can practice using the discussion board interface. This means you will upload / submit a total of five thoughtful and reflective posts to the weekly class discussion forums on blackboard. For two of these forums you will create a response to a fellow historian’s posts. If you wish, you may submit one additional post and response and I will drop the lowest post or response grade, taking the top four posts and two responses for your grade. Discussion board posts are due by 11:59 pm on Wednesdays. Responses are due the following Saturday by noon (12:00 pm).

**Consult the schedule listed below and the weekly syllabus reminders to alert you of deadlines.**

I will open the discussion forums on blackboard at least one week before they are due. In general, discussion forum posts should be about 200-300 words. Refer to each discussion board forum for specific guidelines. An online etiquette guide as well as a grading rubric and sample posts and responses are available in our Blackboard – Course Documents folder. Remember to respect other perspectives and use evidence to frame and support your position, not opinion.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussion Forums</th>
<th>Posts (four required) 20 pts each max</th>
<th>Discussion Posts due by 12:00pm (noon) on</th>
<th>Responses (two required) 10 pts each max</th>
<th>Response due by 12:00pm (noon) on</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>#1 (Week 2)* required</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wed. Jan. 31</td>
<td></td>
<td>No responses accepted for this forum</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#2 (Week 3)</td>
<td>Submit a post to at least one of these forums by:</td>
<td>Wed. Feb. 7</td>
<td>Respond to one of these posts by</td>
<td>Sat. Feb. 10</td>
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<tr>
<td>#3 (Week 4)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wed. Feb. 14</td>
<td></td>
<td>Sat. Feb. 17</td>
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<tr>
<td>#5 (Week 6)</td>
<td></td>
<td>Wed. Feb. 28</td>
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<td>Sat. Mar. 3</td>
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Short Paper #1: Comparing Multiple Perspectives (10% - 100 points): The first short paper assignment is a detailed analysis and comparison of two primary sources. Instructions for writing and turning in the assignment will be posted to blackboard and discussed in class. This assignment will be partially completed during class through collaboration with other classmates.

Short Paper #2: Comparing Cultures (20% - 200 points): The second short paper assignment requires you to integrate and analyze information from primary and secondary sources. Required resources for this assignment include lecture materials, primary sources, and the book *Abina and the Important Men*. The WTWA (optional) textbook may also be used in constructing this paper if you wish, but this is not required. Instructions for completing and turning in the assignment will be posted to blackboard and discussed in class.

Mid-Term Exam (20% - 200 points) and Final Exam (20% - 200 points): Each exam will consist of three parts: short identifications of terms; a primary source analysis; and either a short answer section or an essay. A detailed study guide will be distributed in advance and we will conduct in-class reviews to help prepare. Even so, it is your responsibility to keep track of weekly assignments, make notes of important themes, and discuss these concepts with classmates. If you miss either exam, there will not be a make-up exam without prior coordination. If you know in advance that you have a legitimate conflict, please contact me either via email or during office hours to discuss an alternate arrangement.

COURSE SCHEDULE:
Note that all assigned readings are provided in Blackboard in our course Weekly Modules folders.

The schedule is subject to change due to weather or other unforeseen circumstances. I will notify you of any changes via email and blackboard should they become necessary. Refer to the Weekly Modules in Blackboard for the definitive list of assigned readings, due dates for assignments, and all deadlines.

Section #1: Early World Connections and Exchanges between Cultures, 1250 – 1500

Week 1: Building a Community of Historians

Class meetings: Tuesday, January 23 and Thursday, January 25

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T  Patrick Rael, “How to Read a Primary Source”
T  Patrick Rael, “How to Read a Secondary Source”
Th  Ibn Hajar al-‘Asqalani, “The Pilgrimage of Mansa Musa”

Monday, January 29: Last day to add a class. Last day to drop a class and receive a full tuition refund.

Week 2: Exchanges along the Trade Networks – Traveler Perspectives of Other Cultures

Class meetings: Tuesday, January 30 and Thursday, February 1
Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
Nicholas D. Kristof, “1492: The Prequel.”
Ibn Battuta: Travel in Asia and Africa, 1325-1354
The Book of Ser Marco Polo, The Venetian, Concerning the Kingdoms and Marvels of the East.
“Zheng He’s Liujiagang Inscription of 1431”
“Ibn Battuta Describes Chinese Ships on the Indian Coast”

Assignments due this week:
Short Paper #1 assignment distributed to class and posted to Blackboard
Discussion Forum #1 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, January 31 (required!)
Digital Source Comparison: due by the end of class on Thursday, February 1 (see blackboard for instructions)

Week 3: Multiple Perspectives on Exploration and Conquest in the New World

Class meetings: Tuesday, February 6 and Thursday, February 8 (paper writing workshop)

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T Christopher Columbus Reports from his First Voyage, 1493
Th Bernal Diaz, The Conquest of New Spain
Th The Broken Spears: The Aztec Account of the Conquest of Mexico

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #2 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 7

Section #2: Consequences of Expanded Networks, 1500 – 1850

Week 4: The Atlantic System: Sugar, Slaves, and Silver – Comparing Experiences of Enslavement

Class meetings: Tuesday, February 13 and Thursday, February 15

Readings for this week:
T Nzinga Mbemba “Appeal to King of Portugal”
T Capt. Thomas Phillips “Buying Slaves in 1693”
Th Frederick Douglass, “Narrative of the Life of an American Slave”

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #3 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 14
Short Paper #1 due by 11:59 pm on Saturday, February 17 (posted to blackboard)

Week 5: Enlightenment Ideals and Atlantic Revolutions – Making Historical Connections Across Time and Distance

Class meetings: Tuesday, February 20 and Thursday, February 22

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T John Locke, “Second Treatise on Government, (1689)”
Declaration of Independence, 1776
The French Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen
The Haitian Declaration of Independence, 1804
The Venezuelan Act of Independence, 1811

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #4 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 21
Primary Source Analysis: due Thursday, February 22, by the end of class

Week 6: Debating the Causes of Industrialization and its Effects

Class meetings: Tuesday, February 27 and Thursday, March 1
Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T Eric Williams, Capitalism & Slavery [excerpts]
T Daniel Defoe, The English Tradesmen [excerpts]

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #5 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, February 28
Primary Source Analysis: due Thursday, March 1, by the end of class

Week 7: Mid-Term Review and Examination

Tuesday, March 6   Mid-Term Review during class
Thursday, March 8  Mid-Term Exam

Week 8: Spring Recess: March 12 to March 18 – No class meetings

Readings for this week:
Abina and the Important Men: A Graphic History

Section #3: Empires in Collision, 1800 – 1939

Week 9: Mercantilism, Free Trade, and Defensive Modernization

Class meetings: Tuesday, March 20 and Thursday, March 22
Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T John W. Dower, “The Opium War in Japanese Eyes”
Th “The Ottomans and the West” in East to West, Episode 7, available via library.gmu.edu (view this program online – see blackboard for directions)
Th Hassan al-Bana, “The Tyranny of Materialism over the Lands of Islam”

Assignments due this week:
Week 10: Connecting the Individual to Larger Historical Forces

Class meetings: Tuesday, March 27 and Thursday, March 29

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
Th  Rudyard Kipling, “White Man’s Burden”
Th  Jules Ferry, “Speech before the French Chamber of Deputies, 1884”

Assignments due this week:
Primary Source Analysis: due Thursday, March 22 by the end of class

Week 11: Comparing Responses to Westernization in the Ottoman Empire and Japan

Class meetings: Tuesday, April 3 and Thursday, April 5

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #7 due by 11:59pm on Wednesday, April 4

Section #4: Shifting Frameworks of Power and Identity, 1900 - 2017

Week 12: Perspectives on the Human Costs of War

Class meetings: Tuesday, April 10 and Thursday, April 12

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
Th  Harry Truman, “Statement by the President Announcing the Use of the A-Bomb at Hiroshima” August 6, 1945
Th  Akihiro Takahashi, “Memory of Hiroshima”

Assignments due this week:
Preliminary draft outline for Short Paper #2 due by class time on Tuesday, April 10
Discussion Forum #8 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, April 11
Primary Source Analysis: due Thursday, April 12 by the end of class
Week 13: Comparing Ideals of Freedom in Colonial Asia and Africa

Class meetings: Tuesday, April 17 and Thursday, April 19

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T  Ho Chi Minh, “Declaration of Independence of the Democratic Republic of Viet Nam, 1945”
T  Mohandas Gandhi, Hind Swaraj
Th Jean Suret-Canale and A. Ado Boahen, “West Africa 1945-1960”
Th Nelson Mandela, “Statement from the Dock at the Rivonia Trial, Pretoria Supreme Court [1964]”

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #9 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, April 18
Short Paper #2 due by 11:59 pm on Saturday, April 21

Week 14: Placing Ideological Conflicts with Westernization into a Global Context

Class meetings: Tuesday, April 24 and Thursday, April 26

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T  Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, “The Uprising of Khurudad 15, 1979”
T  “Experiments with Culture: The Role of Islam in Turkey and Iran”

Assignments due this week:
Discussion Forum #10 due by 11:59 pm on Wednesday, April 25

Week 15: Problematizing Cultural Globalization and Reviewing for the Final Exam

Class meetings: Tuesday, May 1 and Thursday, May 3 (Final Exam Review)

Readings for this week: (be ready to discuss by class on Tuesday)
T  Peter N. Stearns, “International Consumer Culture”
T  Katherine Zoepf, “Barbie pushed aside in Mideast cultural shift”
T  Kate Samuelson, “Mattel Unveils First Hijab-Wearing Barbie in Honor of Athlete Ibtihaj Muhammad”

Final Exam: Tuesday, May 15, 1:30 – 4:15pm  Location To Be Determined