

# World History Syllabus



## *Course Overview*

This course is a survey of big events and themes throughout world history that help to contextualize our modern era. The course will focus on what it means to think historically, through the context of the individual events and ideas discussed. Most of the class will not be solely lecture-based, but discussion-based in an attempt to go beyond the facts and create a more personal appreciation for world history. Short texts will also accompany in order to better understand the culture and people of the specific period.

## *Course Schedule and Learning Objectives*

### Week 1 - The Ancient River Civilizations

- Understand basic facts concerning Mesopotamia, Indus River Valley, and Ancient Egypt
- Understand how geography created different societies
- Discuss what it means for society to progress and what it means to be civilized
- Compare and contrast the development of each individual region
- Discuss the Epic of Gilgamesh

### Week 2 - How the Story Changed: What it Means to Write History

- Understand historical thinking skills
- Understand the changing of textbooks in Germany, Russia, modern day Japan and Texas
- Discuss western biases on the history of the world through discussion of Asia
- Discuss how a historians perspective shapes history through readings of ancient and modern historians
- Explain common misperceptions and simplifications throughout history

### Week 3 - Religion and Social Construction

- Understand how religion helped to organize different world regions
- Explain the main tenants of the largest world religions (Christianity, Buddhism, Islam, Hinduism)
- Explain major religious changes such as the Protestant Reformation, Ashoka the Great, Jewish Diaspora, Rise of Secularism.

### Week 4 - Mansa Musa and African Gold

- Discuss the power and influence Mansa Musa personified
- Discuss the importance of Islam in building Africa
- Explain the gold coasts of Mali and different political structures that arose before Europeans arrive

### Week 5 - What does it mean to be a nation? Intro to European History

- Understand the basics of historical thinking
- Understand the fertile crescent region
- Discuss who is best suited to rule a nation
- Understand the Enlightenment, and Humanism

### Week 6 - The Silk Road and Chinese history

- Explain why Chinese history is often overlooked
- Discuss the importance of trade
- Understand the role of women during different points in Chinese History

### Week 7 - Disease!

- Understand the impact of The Bubonic Plague and the Spanish Flu on World History
- Discuss examples of bad scientific thinking and the scientific revolution
- Explain how trade helped to multiply the effects of plagues

### Week 8 - Extortion, Power, and Greed: Mercantilism from the Old World

- Understand the central ideas mercantilism and imperialism from a social, economic, and political perspective for different nations between the years 1500-1900.
- Discuss the consequences of imperialism in different world regions

### Week 9 - The Fringes Coming to Power - Haitian and French Revolutions

- Explain Fringe theory through the examples of the Haitian and French Revolutions
- Discuss the impact of Fringes on our modern era

### Week 10 - Latin American History

- Explain the effects of Portugal and Spain on Latin America
- Discuss communism in Latin America
- Compare and contrast the role of women in Latin America versus China
- Relate the complexities of what it means to be a nation through the example of Panama

### Week 11 - Globalization and Trade

- Understand the economic reasons for trade

- Discuss what it means to have fair trade
- Explain the positive and negative effects of globalization
- Understand historic trade routes such as the Atlantic Slave Trade, Columbian Exchange, and Indian Ocean Trade

#### Week 12 - Industrialization, Nationalism and World War 1

- Understand the main causes of World War 1
- Compare and contrast the causes to different events in history
- Discuss what it means to be a soldier and the responsibilities of being in a nation

#### Week 13 - Nonviolent Peace Movements

- Compare and contrast major nonviolent movements throughout history and their impact on one another
- Understand the economic motivations behind the protests
- Discuss the methods and effectiveness of different leaders

#### Week 14 - Why Empires Crumble? Rome, Persia, Ottoman, and Russia

- Understand why most empires do not last forever
- Explain internal and external pressures that can lead to the collapse of an empire
- Compare and contrast each region with one another

#### Week 15 - Final Thoughts

- Discuss how to use the ideas from the course to impact your life and society as a whole