

## NORTHERN VIRGINIA COMMUNITY COLLEGE

### HISTORY 101-052L History of Western Civilization I Fall 2009

#### Syllabus

Dates: Thursday nights, August 27 to December 17  
Time: 7 p.m. to 9: 45 p.m.  
Location: Room 314, Signal Hill Plaza, Loudon Campus

Instructor: Professor Joseph A. Esposito  
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Office hours: Available by telephone, Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon;  
other times, including in-person at Loudon Campus, by  
appointment.

#### Overview:

HIS 101 reviews the general history of the West from about 3000 B.C.E. to 1600 C.E., and allows students to reach a basic understanding of the historical, political, economic and social development of Western civilization. The course also helps students to develop an appreciation of the academic discipline of history and promotes the intellectual goals of the college. Grading in the course is based on written assignments and on class work that demonstrates critical thinking. It is expected that students possess college-level writing skills.

#### Course Objectives:

1. Develop knowledge of the major societies that contributed to the growth of Western society;
2. Learn about significant events that impacted these societies and the course of history.
3. Study the methods and legacy of leading historical figures;
4. Identify key movements and trends from pre-history to the Reformation;
5. Sharpen critical analytical skills;
6. Appreciate the role that history plays in understanding human existence; and
7. Understand how history can be a tool in understanding the contemporary world.

Professor Esposito:

I have taught Western Civilization I classes at NVCC or other institutions many times. A particular area of interest is the early Roman Republic and the Roman Empire of the first and second centuries. You can get additional background on my career by going to my NVCC website: [www.nvcc.edu/home/jesposito](http://www.nvcc.edu/home/jesposito)

My teaching philosophy is to challenge students to learn and enjoy history and to begin to apply lessons from the past to understand contemporary issues. I also motivate them to sharpen their critical thinking skills, approach problems objectively and express themselves clearly and effectively. This is accomplished by creating a nurturing partnership with students in which the end goal is learning for them and for me.

Books:

- Judith Coffin and Robert Stacey, *Western Civilizations*, either the *Second Brief Edition* combined volume (W. W. Norton, 2009, ISBN: 9780393932652) or the *Brief Edition*, combined volume (W. W. Norton, 2005, ISBN: 9780393925586); either is acceptable. Please note that you can use this same textbook for HIS 102.
- *Gilgamesh: A Verse Narrative* (Herbert Mason translation, ISBN: 9780618275649)
- Chaucer, *Selected Canterbury Tales* (ISBN: 9780486282411)
- *The Song of Roland* (ISBN: 9780451528575)
- Machiavelli, *The Prince* (ISBN: 9780486272740)

Assignments:

The two major assessments of this course are a mid-term and final examination, each worth 25 percent of the grade. The exams will be primarily essays and will be administered in class on October 15 and December 17.

There also are four short papers, each representing 10 percent of the overall grade. The short papers are to be done on separate required books. They need to be two pages in length and summarize, analyze and reflect on the book and its historical importance. Further paper guidance will be provided. Content is a primary consideration in grading, but spelling, grammar and punctuation also are considered. Papers are to be submitted in class on the due dates or e-mailed to me on or before the due date.

If a student receives an "A" (90 percent or better) on the first three papers, he or she can opt out of the fourth paper. In that case, the three papers will constitute 40 percent rather than 30 percent of the overall grade.

I am available to discuss the papers on an individual basis. Also, students can and should consult Dr. Evans' excellent Charlie's History Writing Center, which is located online at: <http://novaonline.nvcc.edu/eli/evans/writingCenter/writingCenter.htm>

List of Assignments:

Paper 1	<i>Gilgamesh</i>	Due September 3	100 points
Paper 2	<i>Canterbury Tales</i>	Due October 22	100 points
Paper 3	<i>The Song of Roland</i>	Due October 29	100 points
Paper 4	<i>The Prince</i>	Due November 19	100 points
Mid-term Examination		October 15	150 points
Final Examination		December 17	250 points
Class participation		Ongoing	100 points
Group work/presentations		Ongoing	100 points

Late Policy:

Papers not submitted on time will lose the equivalent of one grade (for example, a "B" rather than an "A"). You will have additional week, seven days, to submit the paper for a decreased grade. A paper which is more than one week overdue will not be accepted.

Sometimes emergencies arise regarding the submission of papers or the taking of examinations. Please consult with me ahead of time if there are issues such as a family emergency or a medical issue which affect your ability to meet a deadline.

Extra Credit:

Opportunities for extra credit will arise over the course of the semester, and I will discuss these in class. In addition, students can propose their own ideas for extra credit. I also will add points to papers if a student uses the Campus Writing Center before submitting a paper; please provide some documentation. Those interested in extra credit should consult with me.

Plagiarism:

Plagiarism is a serious offense. Please familiar yourself with the rules of plagiarism.

The following statement is taken from the NVCC website:

College courses require that students and instructors be honest. With a candid exchange of ideas and opinions, students and teachers will grow as individuals and as a class. Therefore, the work students submit must be their own -- with their own strengths, weaknesses, ideas and writing, just as the comments instructors make about that work must be academically honest.

Failure to adhere to these principles will lead students to plagiarism. Plagiarism, taken from the Latin word *plagiarius*, literally means "kidnapping." More specifically, plagiarism occurs when writers pass off work ideas, opinions, wording, or anything else that comes from other sources (books, essays, magazines, newspapers, electronic media, films, tutors, friends and relatives) as their own. Even material rewritten as paraphrases or summaries must be documented appropriately to the assignment and to the teacher's directions.