

Course Portfolio

Course Title: Ancient Western History and Civilisation II

Semester: Autumn 2015

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Introduction

This course was instructed by me for the first time in the Autumn semester of 2015. The majority of students were first grade, although several second grade students did attend the class.

The course was a continuation of the previous semester's ancient history course. That prior experience allowed me to design a course that was much more suitable to the students' needs and expectations. Since the course also covers history that is more modern there was also some overlap with my own major area of study and this was very useful.

This course is more interactive than other courses and requires that the students take a more active role in class time. I always encourage the students to participate actively, as this shows they are focusing on the class but also allows myself to gauge whether the students fully understand the material.

This portfolio is useful in helping me to analyse the course design, enactment and results. Where possible improvements are made and the comments given by the students are always readily received.

Schedule

Week	Topic
1	Course introduction
2	Silk Road
3	Mongolian empire
4	Ottoman and Spanish empires
5	Reformation, Education and Colonisation
6	Thirty Years War, Treaty of Westphalia
7	Industrial Revolution
8	Mid-term (paper)
9	Russian empire
10	American Civil War
11	Napoleonic France
12	Pax Britannica
13	WWI~WWII
14	Cold War and Decolonisation
15	Review
16	Final exam (in-class exam)

Syllabus

Week 1: Introduction

This involves informing the students about the schedule for the semester and what will be taught each week, as well as the grading for the course. Since students change courses during the first week, I keep week 1 simple.

Week 2: Silk Road

This week has two goals. The first is to link in the class with the previous semester's ancient history class. For those students who took the course in the previous semester we finished around the Byzantine empire. To avoid having a gap between the two course the Silk Road provides a good opportunity to link the two courses in terms of time period and civilization. However, for those who did not take the ancient history I class, they will not feel neglected as this is a new topic.

The second goal is to start looking more away from Rome and Greece and towards global history, including Asian history.

Week 3: The Mongolian empire

This empire was very influential for how it developed so quickly, but also allowed trade to flow between the continents of Europe, Asia and Eurasia. The social structure of the Mongolians is also discussed.

Week 4: Ottoman and Spanish Empires

Week 4 starts to look at how the Europeans grow in power. The growth of the two powers, the Ottomans and the Spanish, was important in influencing how other European empires also started to act, as well as their participation in later events in history, for example the Spanish exploration and discovery of the Americas.

Week 5: Reformation, Education, Colonisation

This week starts to look more at society and how the domination of the Church starts to be threatened by several different people in different countries, eventually leading to the reduced power of the Pope and Vatican City. With this decrease in religious dominance we then look at how more empirical scientific study starts to grow and its subsequent influence on efficiency in navigating the globe and discovering colonies.

Week 6: Thirty Years War, Treaty of Westphalia

The Thirty Years War was one of the most influential and important wars in European history. It involved most European powers at some point and the resulting peace, that was made official with the Treaty of Westphalia, paved the way for big changes in political and social life. The Thirty Years War is studied in different parts and the Treaty is analysed for its historical importance.

Week 7: Industrial Revolution

The industrial revolution has greatly influenced the world in which we live in today. The factors behind the start of the revolution and why in particular it started in the UK are all discussed.

Week 8: Mid-term exam

The students are given a report to write on one of the topics from the first six weeks of the course.

Week 9: Russian Empire

This week looks at the more modern era of the Russian empire, starting with Peter the Great's reforms and how they affected the future of Russia. The class then looks at two more of the most influential tsars, namely Catherine and Nicholas II. The class looks at the reasons

why the Russians demanded revolution and how this revolution came about. This is important in later classes where crossover between historical events occurs.

Week 10: American Civil War

A look at how and why the Americans went through their own Civil War.

Week 11: Napoleonic Era

A look at how Napoleon became the leader of France and the background to his growth, namely the French revolution.

Week 12: Pax Britannica

This period of history is important to understand what was happening in Europe between the industrial revolution and WWI. The Concert of Europe is a complete contrast to the centuries of war and conflict that have taken place on the continent. The reasons behind this peace are examined. This class also helps to explain the causes of WWI.

Week 13: WWI~WWII

This week focuses on the causes of each war and the basic elements to each war. However, it focuses more on the political side, in particular when discussing the interwar years.

Week 14: Cold War and Decolonisation

To finish the course we look at the Cold War and the events that took place during the period. We then take a brief look at decolonization.

Week 15: Review week

This week is used to make up for any classes missed during the semester due to events. If there have been no missed classes I offer the students the opportunity to have a review class of the course.

Week 16: Final Exam

This accounts for 30% of the total grade. The final exam is a written exam in short essay/answer format. I give five questions covering topics studying in the second half of the course.

Course Description

The course will take a look at some of the main events that have taken place in Europe and the Western world since the Renaissance. However, to create more of a natural link with the previous semester's history course we start with a look at the Silk Road and Mongolian Empire.

The course starts with a look at the Silk Road and how that helped trade to flourish between East and West. This will also help provide some background to what happened in earlier history. From there the course starts to look at some of the biggest and most influential empires of the era, for example the Mongolian and Ottoman empires. Empires of Europe were very influential in shaping the world in which we live in today.

We then look at the Reformation and how increased education lead to the start of European colonisation. In this part of the course we look at which countries in particular were starting to dominate world colonization and how and why they were able to do so. The first half of the semester finishes with a look at the Thirty Years War and the subsequent Treaty of Westphalia, which is very important in modern day politics.

The second half of the course focuses on the industrial revolution, the French and American revolutions, the two world wars and the Cold War. This modern history is vital in understanding how modern society has developed. Many students in Korea do not have this basic history and so it is important that they learn even the basics.

Goals

The objective of the course is to study some of the biggest events in Western history and understand how those events have helped to shape the world we live in. By the end of the course the students will be able to discuss the topics in detail and will have a good understanding of how the Europeans dominated global relations from the Renaissance to the present.

Korean students do not have a good knowledge base of world history. Through this course I aim to educate the students as much as possible about the major events in world history and why they were so important. In particular, for those students who want to study abroad will need this basic knowledge.

Materials

The main materials used for the course are powerpoint presentations each week. These are emailed to the students at the start of the course. The powerpoints summarise the main points, although students are also expected to take notes as further explanation is given in class.

Videos downloaded from the internet are used in several classes, for example videos are shown on the Industrial Revolution, Silk Road and so on.

The main textbooks for the course are recommended. They are:

Grading/examining techniques

The grading for this course is divided into five areas:

- 20% is awarded for a 2-page summary
 - The topic is given to the students in week 11. They have four weeks to hand in the summary.
- 30% is awarded for the mid-term paper.
 - This is a written, research paper.
 - I give the students four questions covering the first six weeks of the course. Students then choose one topic area.
 - They have 2 weeks to complete the paper, often questions are handed out in week 6.
- 30% is awarded for the final exam
 - This is an in-class written exam.
 - The students must answer five questions covering topics discussed after the mid-term paper.
- 10% is awarded for attendance
- 10% is awarded for participation in class

Learning Outcomes

Students:

The students all attended this class and took part with enthusiasm and maturity. The feedback was very positive and the students agreed that they found the class very informative and useful. For example one study commented that they “had learned many essential things in history”. However, a couple of students did note that they found the course difficult to follow and the classes used difficult English.

The grade range for the students was quite wide, with some students receiving D grades, and others receiving A+ grades. This shows the course is designed well enough that it is neither too easy, nor too difficult.

Professor:

This course was a pleasure to teach. I greatly enjoyed being able to educate the students about parts of history that they knew very little about. In addition, the fact that most students seemed to be very enthusiastic and participated well showed that the students also liked my teaching style, despite the lessons being quite intense and difficult at times.

The overall design seems to be well structured. However, based on my own opinion and the students' feedback some possible areas to improve on are;

1. Increasing the number of videos/pictures to explain. This will make the lessons more interesting, rather than just listening to me speak.
2. Since the course was quite intensive and we covered a lot of different events and periods in history I will consider reducing the amount of material covered in one semester. The students commented to me personally that we had covered a lot of material, which they found difficult.