

HIS 308: Navigating World History

Instructor: Stephen Ruzicka
2123 MHRA 334-5488
Office Hours: 10-11 MWF

This is a comprehensive, one-semester World History course. It is designed to prepare Social Science Licensure majors to teach the required High School World History course in North Carolina. It aims to provide students with an understanding of World History as a distinct field of History, to familiarize them with historical explanation, and to acquaint them with major developments in and patterns of World History. While it is expected that students will learn a lot, the course is not intended as means of delivering huge quantities of factual information. The title of the course—“Navigating World History”—indicates that the course is particularly concerned with providing skills that will enable students to continue global journeys as learners and teachers. Assignments will sometimes ask students to think as students, sometimes as teachers.

We use one text, Robert W. Strayer, *Ways of the World. A Brief Global History with Sources*. It is a textbook but also a compendium of primary sources, illustrations, maps, and charts. It serves also to illustrate how to analyze and discuss historical matters, particularly world historical matters—what things to look at, what kinds of questions to ask, what kinds of answers to anticipate

We are going to refer constantly to the 3-C’s rubric that Strayer discusses on pp. xlv-xlvi: Comparison, Connection, and Change. We add a D, Description, and use these 4 headings as a means to organize our understanding of material chapter by chapter in summary fashion. These serve to remind us of what we are doing when we are trying to understand history or, to put it another way, they point to the questions we ask about history: what are the characteristic features of this or that institution, behavior, body of ideas, beliefs, social system, etc? (Description) How is it similar or dissimilar to that of other societies? (Comparison) How did it affect other peoples? (Connection) How and why did it change? (Change). Note which of these 4 is under consideration as you move through the narrative in each section. There are clues in the headings of the margin review questions which you will see in the margins of various pages, but these are not exhaustive, so you will need to identify the perspective on your own most of the time.

There are 3 kinds of assignments—daily (“Thesis Statements”), periodic (“World History Stories”), and final (“Final Exam”). They appear in the Writing Assignments section at the end of the syllabus.

Grading is: Thesis Statements 30%; World History Stories 30%; Final Exam 30%; Attendance and Participation 10%.

Class Schedule/Reading and Writing Assignments (S = Strayer, *Ways of the World*)

8/22 Introduction. Course objectives, content, procedures, terms, concepts, assumptions.

What is history about? Why does it happen? What does it mean?

8/24 Reading this textbook and using primary sources S li-lix, 3-9, 132-141, 324-331,
618-623, 770-777, 968-973; xlv-xlix

1. Beginnings

8/26 Early economies and societies: hunting, gathering, growing S 3-83

8/29 Early cities and states S 85-112

8/31 Early traditions (religion, cosmogonies, art and “literary” forms S 115-131

9/2 Writing assignment B.1/Discussion

2. “Classical Era”

9/7 Large state systems and cultural diffusion (e.g. Japan) S 132-187

9/9 Social structures (caste, Confucian, citizen, fluid) S 237-270

9/12 New traditions S 189-235

9/14 Africa and Americas S 280-323

9/16 Writing Assignment B.2/Discussion

3.500-1500

9/19 Collapse, Transformation, and Rebirth I S 324-331, 379-405

9/21 Collapse, Transformation, and Rebirth II S 425-471

9/23 Collapse, Transformation, and Rebirth III S 473-519

9/26 Early Global Networks S 332-377

9/28 The Mongol Moment S 520-568

9/30 Interactions and Identities/Toward a Global World 1000-1500 S 569-617

10/3 Writing Assignment B.3/Discussion

4.Early Modern

10/5 Empires and Encounters S 618-671

10/7 Eurasia and Transoceanic Exploration S 672-688

10/12 Global Commerce and Slave Trade S S 689-719

10/14 Religions and societies (Ottomans, Safavids, Mughal India, Islam in Africa, Christianities) S 720-736, 749-769

10/17 Birth of Modern Science S 737-745

10/19 Writing Assignment B.4/Discussion

5.European Moment

10/21 Atlantic Revolutions S 770-784, 787-793

10/24 Atlantic Revolutions S 784-787, 806-808

10/26 Atlantic Revolutions S 793-805, 809-816

10/28 Industrialization in European Context S 824-839

10/31 Industrialization in Global Context S 840-866

11/2 Transformations (Japan, China) S 876-921

11/7 Imperialism S 922-940

11/9 Colonizers and Colonized S 941-967

11/11 Writing Assignment B.5/Discussion

6. 1914-2010

11/14 Toward World War S 976-984

11/16 Soviet Communism S 1028-1035

11/18 Totalitarian Solutions S 985-996

11/21 1939-1945 Global War S 996-1027
11/28 Decolonization S 1080-1131
11/30 Cold War S 1029-1079
12/2 Seeking Global Order and Sustainability S 1132-1166
12/5 Writing Assignment B.6/Discussion
11/12 Final Exam Papers due

Writing Assignments

A. *Thesis statements*

Most of the daily reading assignments comprise a chapter in Strayer. The chapters typically begin with an overview which sets the stage for the specific information provided in the rest of the chapter. For each of the reading assignments you are to produce in a sentence or two a brief statement of the main point of the chapter. This might be called Strayer's thesis statement or general interpretive statement and will typically be found in his introductory discussion (not the vignette) in the first page or two of each chapter. (When the reading assignment starts with The Big Picture section, you will need to go to the page where the chapter itself starts.) Do this, at least preliminarily, before you read the whole assignment. That is write it down; then as you read check to make sure that the body of the chapter indeed follows from and illustrates the main point you identified. If not, figure out a different generalization. When you are satisfied, go to Blackboard and submit your statement as a Journal entry. The aim of this exercise is to have you make sure you know what the reading is about and what main points it makes before you do the reading.

B. *World History Stories*

For each of the parts (1-6) into which the text and course is divided, you are to write up a lecture in which you discuss developments in that part of world history. Your discussion should deal with the following points:

- What is the "story line" or "plot" (essentially, what is this part of world history about?)

- Who are the main “players”?
- What determines the chronological boundaries of this part of world history?
- What are some representative (illustrative) particular events or developments?
- Is there a particular event/episode that encapsulates important features of the story?
- What are some primary sources that illustrate important aspects of this story and what exactly do they illustrate?

Submit double-spaced, typed hardcopies of these to me.

C. Final Exam

You are to write your own final exam and explain it. Imagine that you have been teaching this course and using the Strayer textbook. As a demanding teacher you are going to give your students a demanding final exam which will test their understanding of World History. You need to develop 10 essay questions which in your opinion get to the heart of the most important developments and issues in World History. Your assumption is that if students know the answers to these 10 questions they will have acquired a sound understanding of the major features and issues of world history (in your opinion).

Fashion your questions (make sure there is at least one which addresses each part of this course) and explain why you chose each of them and what kind of answer you expect.

Submit this in typed form to me.

