

Sul Ross State University – Rio Grande College  
History 3304 – Europe to 1815 (Web)  
Summer 2 2016

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Course meeting times: this is a web course and does not have scheduled meeting times.

Course Description: This course offers a survey of European civilization from the end of Greco-Roman Antiquity to the Napoleonic Era and its immediate aftermath. Topics will include: Christianity and evolving relations between sacred and secular authority; the Protestant Reformation and the Wars of Religion; the Renaissance; New World exploration, colonialism and the Atlantic trade nexus; the rise of the state and the international state system; the Scientific Revolution; the Enlightenment; the French Revolution and Napoleon. The course will offer a brief introduction to the various subfields of European history, including: cultural and intellectual history; social history; politics and institutions; international relations and the economy. Although this course is oriented primarily around Europe, it should also appeal to those with broader global interests.

Required Texts:

\*R.R. Palmer, Joel Colton and Lloyd Kramer, *A History of the Modern World to 1815*, tenth edition

\*Supplemental materials posted to Blackboard

Primary Learning Objectives

At the successful conclusion of this course, through performance on short written assignments, and a final examination, the student will be able to

- Demonstrate factual knowledge about key historical figures, dates and events spanning the time period that is the subject of this course.
- Explain how the historical process has shaped the contemporary world, and how contemporary perspectives in turn inform an understanding of the past.
- Demonstrate critical thinking, reading and writing skills.

## Course requirements, course objectives, and course grade breakdown:

Short written papers (80%): A key myth that this course will seek to dispel is the notion that history is just a collection of facts. First of all, too many things have happened during the course of human existence to ever be assembled into one coherent textbook. Second of all, without the judgment of the historian, the facts in-and-of-themselves would have no meaning. To state it another way, historians are in the career of making difficult decisions about what in history is important and how historical events connect into a coherent, usable and manageable narrative that matters and has meaning to a contemporary audience. In this course, through your short written assignments, you will be asked to do the same. For each course module, you will be given a selection from the textbook, and a set of PowerPoint slides (my contribution to the course narrative). For each set, you will be required, in coherent essay format, to answer a series of questions. (See below.)

Your responses will be limited to no more than 1000 words each and will be evaluated using a rubric. The best assignments will answer the questions as directly as possible, will make as much use of the available course material as possible, and will demonstrate thorough and accurate knowledge of the era in question. Per the rubric, they will also be evaluated based on the quality of writing and citation. (A simple parenthetical form of citation giving the name of the source and page number or PowerPoint slide number is acceptable.) Because time and space will be short, you can dispense with a formal introductory and concluding paragraph. Answer the questions as directly as possible, but each paragraph of your response must have a coherent transition from the preceding and following paragraphs. Your essays must be written in your own words, in your own voice. Please do not attempt to cut and paste material from the Internet and pass it off as your own. The SafeAssign tool through which your assignments will be submitted has become increasingly adept at identifying such material (as has your instructor). (While collaborative work has its merits, it will also be readily obvious to me if you are submitting slightly modified versions of the same paper.) Even if such efforts manage to evade detection, they will in any event receive a poor grade, because they will not be making effective use of the material made available in the course.

### Final Examination (20%)

The final examination will consist of 100 multiple-choice questions. These questions will be drawn both from the textbook and my PowerPoint presentations. The questions will be distributed in advance. You will be given two opportunities to take the test. On the first opportunity, I will indicate which questions you answered incorrectly. You will then have a second opportunity to answer the questions correctly.

Due Dates: You are encouraged to submit your work as early and as often as possible. I try to provide meaningful feedback to written work, but as we get closer and closer to the grade submission deadline, my ability to provide detailed and comprehensive written feedback will become increasingly limited. All work for this course, including the final examination, must be submitted no later than 5 pm, Thursday, August 11.

Grading methodology: Each of the short papers and the final examination will be evaluated on a 100-point scale as follows.

90-100 (A) 80-89 (B) 70-79 (C) 60-69 (D) <60 (F)

**Plagiarism or academic misconduct of any kind will result in an automatic grade of “0” for the assignment and will result in disciplinary action from the university.**

ADA (Americans with Disabilities Act): Sul Ross State University is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1973. It is the student’s responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Students who need accessibility services should contact Kathy Biddick at 830-279-3003. The address is 2623 Garner Field Road, Uvalde, TX 78801.

Distance Education Statement: Students enrolled in distance education courses have equal access to the university’s academic support services, library resources, and instructional technology support. For more information about accessing these resources, visit the SRSU website. Students should submit online assignments through Blackboard or SRSU email, which require secure login information to verify students’ identities and to protect students’ information. The procedures for filing a student complaint are included in the student handbook. Students enrolled in distance education courses at Sul Ross are expected to adhere to all policies pertaining to academic honesty and appropriate student conduct, as described in the student handbook. Students in web-based courses must maintain appropriate equipment and software, according to the needs and requirements of the course, as outlined on the SRSU website.

### Short Writing Assignments

#### Short Writing Assignment 1: The Protestant Reformation and the Wars of Religion

Reading: Textbook, Chapters 1-3; PowerPoint presentations posted to Blackboard  
Assignment: In no more than 1000 words, answer the following questions in coherent essay format: (1) If the goal of the Christian Church after the fall of the Roman Empire in the West in 476 AD was to unify the Christian faith, why, ultimately did it fail? (2) What was the Protestant Reformation, why was it called that, and what happened during the Protestant Reformation that defined or set the period apart as distinct from the past? (3) What happened during the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent wars of religion that was of the most consequence to that time period? (4) What happened during the Protestant Reformation and the subsequent wars of religion that was of the most consequence to subsequent history, including today’s world?

#### Short Writing Assignment 2: The Rise of the Modern State System

Reading: Textbook, Chapters 4-5; PowerPoint presentations posted to Blackboard  
Assignment: In no more than 1000 words, answer the following questions in essay format: (1) What specifically changed in the relationship between state and spiritual

(church) authority as a result of the Thirty Years' War? (2) Why is the period 1640-1740 sometimes called the "Era of State-Building?" Why had states become the central focus of history starting in this period? What had changed from the previous era? (3) What were the important states in Europe during the period 1640-1740, what specific factors made them important and what challenges did they face? (4) What happened during the "Era of State-Building" that would be of most consequence to subsequent history, including today's world?

### Short Writing Assignment 3: The Scientific Revolution and the Age of Enlightenment

Reading: Textbook, Chapters 6-8; PowerPoint presentations posted to Blackboard  
Assignment: in no more than 1000 words, answer the following questions in essay format: (1) What were the "Scientific Revolution" and the "Enlightenment" and why were these eras so named? (2) It has been argued that these eras inaugurated a profound departure in prevailing ways of thinking or understanding both the natural and social worlds. Why? To answer this question, you should explain briefly how worldviews, belief systems or systems of thought functioned differently before this period. (3) What happened between the start of the Scientific Revolution and the conclusion of the Enlightenment that was of the most consequence to the period? (4) What happened between the start of the Scientific Revolution and the conclusion of the Enlightenment that would be of the most consequence to subsequent history, including today's world?

### Short Writing Assignment 4: The French Revolution and the Age of Napoleon

Reading: Textbook, Chapters 9-10; PowerPoint presentations posted to Blackboard  
Assignment: in no more than 1000 words, answer the following questions in essay format: (1) Many histories of the "modern" world begin in 1789. Why? Why was this year (and what immediately followed) seen to be such a profound rupture in history? (2) Who was Napoleon? What was his relationship to the French Revolution? Should he be seen as part of the French Revolutionary period? Why or why not? (3) What happened between 1789 and 1815 that was of most consequence to that period? (4) What happened between 1789 and 1815 that would be of most consequence to subsequent history, including today's world? (Note: you can consider the immediate aftermath, extending up to 1848.)

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