

HIST 1500 - Discovering World History

Fall 2026 Syllabus, Section 07, CRN 43532,

Credit hours: 3

Instructor

William O'Brien

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Public Instructor Information

Instructor Title: Adjunct Instructor

Instructor Professional Qualifications: M.A. History, *Youngstown State University*. B.A. History, *Youngstown State University*

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Course Description

1500. Discovering World History. Introduction to the methods, problems, and content of world history from Antiquity to the present. Emphasizes the relevance of past events and developments to the modern world. 3 s.h.

Course Readings

Group	Title	Author	ISBN
Required	The Silk Road	National Geographic Society	
Required	Concerning the Palace of the Great Kaan	Excerpt: Marco Polo	
Required	Emperor Quin Lang, Letter to George III	E. Backhouse and J. O. P. Bland, <i>Annals and Memoirs of the Court of Peking</i> (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1914), pp. 322-331	
Required	The Outbreak of WWI	Imperial War Museums	
Required	Willy and Nicky Telegrams	Isaac Don Levine, ed., with an introduction by N.F. Grant. London, Hodder and Soughton Ltd, 1920	
Required	Jan Hus at the Council of Constance	https://www2.kenyon.edu/projects/margin/hus.htm	
Required	The 95 Theses	Martin Luther	
Required	The Expulsion of the Jews From France, 1182 CE	From the <i>Gesta Philippi Augusti</i> , monk Rigord	
Required	Maiden Speech to Parliament, 1969	Bernadette Devlin	
Required	A Brief History of the Troubles	Restorative Justice and Peace in Northern Ireland, an address by Brendan McAllister (SPI '96 & '98) at the European Forum for Restorative Justice in Barcelona, June 16, 2006.	
Required	I Saw The Black Death	History of England by Henry Knighton, in <i>Source Book of English History</i> , by E.K. Kendall.	
Required	Report of the Paris Medical Faculty, 1348.	R. Hoeniger, ed., <i>Der Schwarze Tod</i> (Berlin, 1882), appendix III, pp. 152-6	



Required	How Smallpox Devastated the Aztecs - And Helped Spain Conquer an American Civilization.	Richard Gunderman, professor of medicine, liberal arts and philanthropy, Indiana University
Required	Aztec Account of the First Smallpox Epidemic.	Fray Bernardino de Sahagún, General History of the Things New Spain, Arthur J. O. Anderson and Charles E. Dibble, trans, book 12, The Conquest of Mexico (Santa Fe: School of American Research and the University of Utah, 1975).
Required	Evidence Before The Sadler Committee	Readings in European History Since 1814, edited by Jonathan F. Scott and Alexander Baltzly (Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1930.) The headnotes preceeding each sections are by Scott and Baltzly.
Required	Pericles Funeral Oration	Thucydides (c.460/455-c.399 BCE): Peloponnesian War, Book 2.34-46
Required	Declaration of Independence	Jefferson, Thomas, et. al. National Archives
Required	Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen	Avalon Project, Yale University
Required	What is to be Done?	Translated by Jane Scales
Required	Peace in our Time	Excerpted from The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich, by William Shirer
Required	Disaster of the First Magnitude	Winston Churchill speech before Parliament, Oct. 5, 1938
Required	The Women's Land Army	National Archives, United Kingdom
Required	Speech on Release from Prison	Nelson Mandela
Optional	The Crime of Galileo	Modern History Sourcebook

There is no dedicated text for this course. Instead the readings are excerpts from mostly primary documents accessible online.

The course readings are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, research developments, current events, and/or to ensure better learning.

Schedule of Topics and Assignments

Week of	Reading(s)	Proposed Topic	Due/To Prepare for Class
8/24	Video: Kublai Khan: China's Mongol Emperor The Silk Road Concerning the Palace of the Great Khan	The Mongol Empire, Trade, and the Silk Road	8/29 11:59 PM
8/31	Emperor Qian-Long: Letter to George III	The Emergence and Rise of European Empires	9/5 11:59 PM
9/7	How The World Went to War Willy and Nicky Letters	Empire and World Conflict	9/12 11:59 PM
9/14	John Hus and the Council of Constance 95 Theses: Luther	The Early Reformation	9/19 11:59 PM
9/21	Expulsions of the Jews from France, 1182 CE	Expulsions and Intolerance in the Middle Ages	9/26 11:59 PM
9/28	Brief History of the Troubles Maiden Speech to Parliament: Bernadette Devlin	Religion, Political Rights, and Northern Ireland	10/3 11:59 PM



10/5	I Saw The Black Death Report From the Paris Medical Faculty	The Great Plague and its Impact.	10/10 11:59 PM
10/12	How Smallpox Devastated the Aztecs Excerpt: General History of New Spain	The Columbian Exchange and Aftermath	10/17 11:59 PM
10/19	Video: The Children Who Built Victorian Britain Testimony Before the Sadler Commission	Health, Welfare and Environment in the Industrial Revolution	10/24 11:59 PM
10/26	Pericles Funeral Oration Video: The Golden Age of Athens	Greek Political Institutions	10/31 11:59 PM
11/2	Declaration of Independence Declaration of the Rights of Man and Citizen Video: Crash Course French Revolution	The American and French Revolutions	11/7 11:59 PM
11/9	Excerpt: What is to be Done? Video: Crash Course, The Russian Revolution	The Russian Revolution	11/14 11:59 PM
11/16	Video: The Munich Conference Peace in Our Time Churchill Speech Before Parliament, Oct. 5, 1938	The Munich Crisis and Coming of WW II	11/21 11:59 PM
11/23	Visuals: The Women's Land Army	The Home Front in Europe	11/28 11:59 PM
11/30	Video: Mandela: One Man Mandela Speech on Release from Prison	Post-colonial South Africa	12/5 11:59 PM
12/7	The Crime of Galileo	Scientific Revolution - Bonus Essay Finals Week	12/9 11:59 PM

The course schedule, policies, procedures, and assignments in this course are subject to change in the event of extenuating circumstances, by mutual agreement, and/or to ensure better learning.