

The International College of Economics and Finance
Syllabus for World History

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Class teachers: Simon Skempton, Krister Sairsingh, Yuri Zaretsky, Alexander Koryagin

Course description

World History is a two semester course which covers the major events and developments in the history of human kind.

- The course material is introduced through both original historical texts and secondary sources
- The time period covered begins with the first civilizations in the river valleys and ends in the present day
- The course covers major developments around the globe including Europe, Americas and Asia

Teaching objectives

The course aims at giving students:

- The ability to critically analyse information and incorporate it appropriately into a well-supported argument
- The understanding of the basic patterns of social explanation
- A basic command of historical material: key events, personalities, trends/developments
- Understanding of how the present world order came about

Teaching methods

The following methods and forms of study are used in the course:

- Lectures
- Seminars
- Consultations with teachers
- Self study with literature
- Use of Internet resources

During each semester students will make an oral presentation and write an essay (3–4 pp.).

Grade determination

There will be an intermediate examination at the end of the first semester and final examination at the end of the second semester. During each semester an oral presentation and a 3-4-page essay on assigned topics will be required of each student. Attendance and active participation in the weekly seminars are required. The final grade will consist of:

- Presentations 10%

- Participation in seminars 10%
- Written assignments (Essays) 20%
- Examinations 60%

Essential reading

Required texts for the course:

1. Bulliet, Crossley, Headrick, Hirsch, Johnson, Northrup, *The Earth and Its Peoples: A Global History* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2005)
2. Reilly, K. (ed.), *Worlds of History: a Comparative Reader: Volume One: To 1550 / Volume Two: Since 1400* (Boston: Bedford / St. Martins, 2010)

Course outline

First Semester

1. Origins of Agriculture and First River-Valley Civilizations

- The earliest river valley civilizations: Mesopotamia, Egypt, Indus Valley.
- Technological and social (e.g. labour organization) responses to environmental challenges.
- Contrasting social and political systems and the reasons for their emergence.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 1
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.1-80

2. China 2000-221BC

- Political and social differences between the Shang and Zhou periods.
- Ideas of political legitimacy. Legalism, Confucianism, Taoism, and what these philosophies say about ancient Chinese culture and society.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and its Peoples*, chapter 2
2. *Worlds of History*, pp. 122-148.

3. Ancient Greece

- Geographical influences on the emergence of city-states.
- The effects on society of the development of certain military formations.
- Intellectual innovations.
- Differences between Athenian and Spartan societies.
- Impact of Macedonian conquests on the Eastern Mediterranean.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 3
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.102-121

4. Ancient India

- The structure of Indian society and the reasons for its emergence.
- Religious developments (the Vedic religion and later Hinduism, Jainism, Buddhism) and their role in maintaining and challenging aspects of Indian culture.
- The Mauryan Empire.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 4
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.81-101, 198-211

5. Ancient Rome

- The Roman republic.
- Imperial expansion; the conquests of Italy, Carthage, and the whole Mediterranean.
- The spread of Christianity and the reasons for it. The fall of the empire.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 5
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.149-163, pp.231,233, pp.243-249

6. The Rise of Islam

- The rise of Islam. Mohamed and the emergence of the Umma.
- The nature of Islam and its political and cultural influence.
- The rise of the Caliphate and the reasons for its eventual fall.
- The Arabic conquests. Urbanization and the development of Islamic culture.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 8
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.259-271, pp.289-292

7. Christian Europe 600-1200

- The emergence of Christian Europe.
- The Byzantine Empire. Early mediaeval Western Europe.
- The Carolingian dynasty.
- Kievan Rus.
- The revival of the West.
- The crusades.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 9
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.281-283, 350-386

8. China and East Asia 600-1200

- The Tang and Song periods.
- The roles of Confucianism and Buddhism in China and other East Asian nations.
- Technological and economic advances in the Song period.
- Emergence of Korea, Japan, and Vietnam as unified states.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 10
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.254-258, 296-304

9. The Mongolian Empire

- How Mongolian rule spread rapidly across Eurasia.
- How the empire was governed.
- The Golden Horde and the Il-Khan: the impact of Mongolian rule on Russia and the Middle East.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 12
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.391-397, 413-431

10. The Latin West 1200-1500

- Social changes and technological developments.
- The Black Death and its social consequences.
- The rise of trading cities.
- Cultural developments and the emergence of universities.
- The relationship between religious and secular authorities.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 14
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.432-455, 479-480-, 497-498

11. Maritime Revolution

- The Maritime Revolution.
- The emergence of Spain and Portugal as unified states.
- The economic, religious and technological reasons for the Spanish and Portuguese voyages of discovery and conquest.

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 15
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.547-594

Second Semester

12. Transformations in Europe, 1500–1750

- Reformation
- Counter-reformation
- The Scientific Revolution
- Absolutism
- English and Dutch parliamentarism

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 16
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.653-664, 710-729

13. Southwest Asia and the Indian Ocean, 1500–1750

- The Ottoman Empire
- The Safavid Empire
- The Mughal Empire

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 19
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.644-652,

14. Northern Eurasia, 1500–1800

- Japanese Reunification
- The Later Ming and Early Qing Empires
- The Russian Empire

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 21
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.638-641

15. Revolutionary Changes in the Atlantic World, 1750–1850

- Prelude to Revolution: The Eighteenth-Century Crisis
- The American Revolution, 1775–1800
- The French Revolution, 1789–1815

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 21
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.752-771

16. The Early Industrial Revolution, 1760–1851

- Causes of the Industrial Revolution
- The Technological Revolution
- The Impact of the Early Industrial Revolution
- New Economic and Political Ideas
- Industrialization and the Nonindustrial World

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 22
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.792-808

17. Nation Building and Economic Transformation in the Americas, 1800–1890

- Independence in Latin America, 1800–1830
- The Problem of Order, 1825–1890
- The Challenge of Social and Economic Change

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 23
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.772-776

18. Africa, India, Australasia, 1750–1870

- Changes and Exchanges in Africa
- India Under British Rule
- Britain's Eastern Empire

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 24

19. The New Power Balance, 1850-1900

- Socialism and labour movements
- Nationalism and the unification of Italy and Germany
- The great powers of Europe, 1871-1900

Literature:

1. *The Earth and its Peoples*, chapter 26

20. The New Imperialism, 1869–1914

- The New Imperialism: Motives and Methods
- The Scramble for Africa
- Asia and Western Dominance

- Imperialism in Latin America
- The World Economy and the Global Environment

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 27
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.826-867

21. The Crisis of the Imperial Order, 1900–1929

- Origins of the Crisis in Europe and the Middle East
- The “Great War” and the Russian Revolutions, 1914–1918
- Peace and Dislocation in Europe, 1919–1929
- China and Japan: Contrasting Destinies
- The New Middle East
- Society, Culture, and Technology in the Industrialized World

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 28
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.903-941

22. The Collapse of the Old Order, 1929–1949

- The Stalin Revolution
- The Depression
- The Rise of Fascism
- East Asia, 1931–1945
- The Second World War
- The Character of Warfare

Literature:

1. *The Earth and Its Peoples*, chapter 29
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.942-980

23. The Cold War and Decolonization

- The Cold War
- Decolonization and nation building
- Beyond a bipolar world

Literature:

1. *The Earth and its Peoples*, chapter 31
2. *Worlds of History*, pp.981-1018