

Oglethorpe University
CORE 301-003: Historical Perspectives on the Social Order I
Fall 2014, M/W 2:15pm-3:45pm Hearst Hall, Rm. 212

COURSE SYLLABUS

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Office: Hearst Hall 319

Office Hours: Mon/Wed 1pm-2pm, 4pm-6pm and by appointment

The word 'history' is derived from an Ancient Greek verb meaning "to inquire into a thing; to learn by inquiry; to narrate what one has learned". The noun counterpart to this verb, our familiar term 'history', was understood to mean both a specific type of learning done through inquiry and "an account of one's inquiries". In this course, we will investigate different *historical* inquiries into the nature and formation of social orders in Ancient Greece, Medieval Times, and the Renaissance of Italy. In our investigation, we will consider what each historical text teaches us about the way in which people of a particular time period conceived of themselves and the world, the kinds of social orders that existed as a result of this conception, and other factors that played a role in constituting the social orders of a particular time. In addition, our examination of these historical perspectives on the social order will provide us with a framework for thinking about the emergence of modern consciousness, the nature of modernity, and the social orders that constitute modern society.

Learning Outcomes

From our studies you will understand and be able to articulate different historical accounts of the factors that shape and determine the social orders of a particular time. In addition, you will continue to develop your critical thinking, reading, and writing skills. By the end of the semester each of you will

- ✓ Be familiar with the central themes and arguments of three historians: Francois de Polignac, R.W. Southern, and Jacob Burckhardt
- ✓ Be able to read texts of a historical nature in order to grasp more accurately the themes and arguments therein
- ✓ Have improved the caliber of your oral and written communication skills so that you may present and discuss these themes and arguments more accurately
- ✓ Have learned how to engage these historical arguments critically, considering their strengths and weaknesses, presenting objections and considering replies.

Methods of Instruction

Our classes will be a mixture of lecture and discussion with the majority of each class devoted to the latter. There will be regular reading and writing assignments. What you get from this course and how well you do in it depends on the time you devote to preparing for class and the thoughtfulness with which you approach the material. To succeed in this course you not only need to read the assigned reading and do the assigned written work, you must also actively engage yourself with the material and come to class prepared to participate fully in class discussions and in-class activities.

Required Texts

The following texts are required and can be found in the bookstore, in the library, and from online book retailers.

- Francois de Polignac, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City State*
- Sophocles, *Antigone* (This play can be found and read online)
- R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*
- Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance in Italy*

There will be required reading from supplemental primary texts. Photocopies of these readings will be distributed to the class when necessary.

Methods of Assessment

A) Four "Learning Projects": 80% (20% each)

B) Writing-to-learn Activities and Assignments (10%)

C) Participation/Attendance: 10%

A) Four Learning Projects

You will have four "learning projects" for this course.

Your first learning project will be an essay that is 5-7 pages in length.

Of your remaining 3 learning projects, one **must** be an essay that is 5-7 pages in length, but you are free to choose the format of the other two projects. Whatever "alternative" format you choose, you must also prepare a 5-10 minute oral presentation. For example, if you choose to do a poster board project, a diorama, a photography exposition, a piece of art, or a painting you must also prepare an oral presentation of your project.

Note: If you do not want to do an "alternative learning project", you may write an essay for all four of your learning projects. Oral presentations are not required if you choose to write an essay for any of your learning projects.

For each learning project, I will give you a question or topic to explore in the project. You should consider these projects as learning opportunities in which you will not only deepen your thinking on a particular question or issue but also continue to sharpen your abilities to read critically, think critically, and communicate your thoughts in a clear, well-reasoned manner. Your grade for the projects will be based on the quality of your insights about the topic, your use of the text in supporting these insights, and the coherence of your argument and presentation.

All learning projects must be turned in at the beginning of class on the date that they are due. If you chose to do an alternative learning project, you will give your presentation in class on the date that it is due.

For your essay learning projects:

- All papers are to be 5-7 pages typed, double-spaced. To help conserve paper please feel free to print on both sides.
- All papers are due at the beginning of class on the date that they are due. You **MUST** submit a **HARD COPY** of your paper. Electronic submissions will be accepted only under the direst of circumstances.
- All papers you hand in should carry the OU Honor Code pledge:

"I pledge that I have acted honorably." Signed _____

If you need an extension on a learning project you must ask me no less than three days prior to the due date. Papers handed in late (without my permission) will have 5 points deducted from the grade for each day that it is late. Papers that are more than 1 week late will not be accepted.

B) Writing-to-learn Activities and Assignments

You will have in-class and homework related writing activities and assignments. Why will you have in-class and homework related writing activities? For starters, writing about the material helps you learn the material better and helps you retain it longer. Second, because practice makes perfect, any writing you do can improve your writing skills. Finally, writing exercises give you the chance to learn about yourself – your feelings, values, cognitive processes, and learning strengths and weaknesses. Your in-class and homework related writing activities and assignments will take a variety of forms ranging from in-class free writes, one-minute papers, and one-sentence summaries to learning logs and directed paraphrasing. These in-class and homework related assignments will NOT be formally graded but they will be collected and checked to determine whether or not you have listened to the lecture and discussion and whether or not you have done and engaged with the assigned reading.

C) Participation/Attendance

A portion of your final grade depends on your attendance and participation in this course. In short, to succeed and get the most from this class, you must come to class and you must come prepared, ready to participate in discussions, and ready to engage with the text in a serious and meaningful way.

Participation: You are expected to be a regular and active participant in discussions and you are expected to contribute to those discussions in meaningful and positive ways. Not all participation is equal: to say something just to say something is not a meaningful contribution to the discussion. Participation in discussion is the best way for you to dig into the text and to decipher your own questions and thoughts concerning it.

Attendance: You are expected to come on time to every class. If you must be absent, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. **You are allowed to miss 5 classes without penalty; any absences over 5 will incur a 10-point deduction from your final grade.** If you miss 10 or more class meetings, you will not earn a passing grade for this course.

The following is meant only as a rough guide as to how your participation grade will be determined:

A: Participates voluntarily and frequently. Shows a good grasp of the material and good preparation.

B: Participates voluntarily with less frequency but still makes an important contribution to the class discussion.

C: Participates voluntarily but shows a lesser grasp of the material or little preparation.

D: Participates only when asked to do so.

F: Does not participate or is frequently absent.

Please see the university's policy with regard to INCOMPLETE grades in OU's 2012-2014 *Bulletin*.

Course Policies and Classroom Ethics

Classroom Ethics:

- Respect yourself and one another in the classroom. The obvious aim of this course is to provide an opportunity for you to engage in questions about historical consciousness and to sharpen your critical thinking skills. A classroom environment that is conducive to such learning must be one in which each person feels comfortable to freely express their thoughts, to ask questions, to make mistakes, to disagree in a non-combative way, and to learn from and with one another. In short, use neither disrespectful speech nor any other form of disrespectful behavior towards one another.
- Cell phones and all other electronic devices (laptops, tablets, music devices, etc.) may NOT be used in the classroom. They are unnecessary and distracting.
- Do not leave the room during class unless it is absolutely necessary. Leaving the room while class is in session is disruptive to your learning and to the learning of others.
- Enjoy yourself!

Course Policies:

- **Honor Code.** You are expected to adhere to standards of personal and academic integrity and to uphold the Oglethorpe University Honor Code. For a complete account of the Honor Code, review Section 10 in the 2012-2014 *Bulletin*. All work you hand in should carry the Honor Code pledge as it is quoted above. You are required to refrain from engaging in acts that do not maintain academic and personal integrity. These include but are not limited to plagiarism, cheating, fabrication, aid of academic dishonesty, lying, bribery or threats, and stealing. Each of these violations can be thought of as a form of cheating. Oglethorpe University defines cheating as "any willful activity impacting or connected to the academic enterprise and involving the use of deceit or fraud in order to attempt to secure an unfair advantage for oneself or others or to attempt to cause an unfair advantage to others." **Any violation of academic integrity is grounds for failing this course.**
- **Students with Disabilities.** I will work with Oglethorpe University to provide reasonable accommodations for every student with a learning disability or special learning needs. If you are a student with a disability or disability related issue and feel that you may need a reasonable accommodation to fulfill the essential functions of the course that are listed in this syllabus, you are encouraged to contact Disability Services in the Academic Success Center at 404.364.8869 or disabilityservices@oglethorpe.edu.

Class Schedule

- This schedule is TENTATIVE and subject to change throughout the course of the semester. If we find that, as a class, we would like (or need) to spend more or less time investigating a particular text we will adjust the schedule as necessary.
- The reading and writing assignments are due on the date under which they are listed. For example, if the schedule reads **August 20:** Aristotle, pp23-24; Learning

Project #2 due, then you should come to class on August 20 having already read the Aristotle and ready to hand in your Learning Project.

Class Schedule: Core 301, Fall2014, M/W 2:15pm-3:45pm Hearst Hall, Room 212

Monday, August 18

Introductions

Wednesday, August 20

READ: Joseph Bryant, "Intellectuals and Religion in Ancient Greece: Notes on a Weberian Theme" pp.269-289

*This article can be found on JSTOR: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/590358>

Begin reading Polignac, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State*, Foreword, Preface, and Introduction

Monday, August 25

Polignac, *Cults, Territory, and the Origins of the Greek City-State*, Ch. 1: Cults, Offerings, and Sanctuaries

Wednesday, August 27

Polignac, Ch. 2: The Nonurban Sanctuary and the Formation of the City

Monday, September 1

LABOR DAY NO CLASS

Wednesday, September 3

Polignac, Ch. 3: Cults and Colonial Foundations

Monday, September 8

Polignac, Ch. 4: The Hero and the Political Elaboration of the City, and the Conclusion

LEARNING PROJECT #1 (ESSAY) DUE

Wednesday, September 10

Sophocles, *Antigone*: Lines 1-470

Monday, September 15

Sophocles, *Antigone*: Lines 470-928

Wednesday, September 17

Sophocles, *Antigone*: Lines 928-end

Monday, September 22

Plutarch, *The Life of Lycurgus* (Handout)

Wednesday, September 24

Plutarch, *The Life of Solon* (Handout)

Monday, September 29

LEARNING PROJECT #2 DUE

LEARNING PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Wednesday, October 1

R.W. Southern, *The Making of the Middle Ages*, Ch. 1

Monday, October 6

Southern, Ch. 2

Wednesday, October 8

Southern, Ch. 3

Monday, October 13

NO CLASS: FALL BREAK

Wednesday, October 15

Southern, Ch. 4

Monday, October 20

Southern, Ch. 5

Wednesday, October 22

Geoffrey Chaucer, *The Canterbury Tales*: "The Knight's Tale" (Handout)

Monday, October 27

NO CLASS: I WILL BE OUT OF TOWN

While I am out of town work on your next learning project and begin reading:
Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance of Italy*, Part I, pp. 19-56

Wednesday, October 29

NO CLASS: I WILL BE OUT OF TOWN

Monday, November 3

NO CLASS: I WILL BE OUT OF TOWN

Wednesday, November 5

LEARNING PROJECT #3 DUE

LEARNING PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

Monday, November 10

Jacob Burckhardt, *The Civilization of the Renaissance of Italy*, Part I, pp. 19-56

Wednesday, November 12

Burckhardt, Part I, pp. 56-97

Monday, November 17

Burckhardt, Part II, pp. 98-119

Wednesday, November 19

Burckhardt, Part III, pp. 120-184

Monday, November 24

Burckhardt, Part IV, pp. 185-229

Wednesday, November 26

NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING HOLIDAY

Monday, December 1

Burckhardt, Part V, pp. 230-270

Wednesday, December 3

Burckhardt, Part VI, pp. 271-351

Monday, December 8

LAST DAY OF CLASS

LEARNING PROJECT #4 DUE

LEARNING PROJECT PRESENTATIONS

THERE IS NO FINAL EXAM FOR THIS COURSE.

**YOUR FINAL GRADES FOR THIS COURSE WILL BE POSTED ON OASIS BY
DECEMBER 18.**

HAPPY WINTER BREAK!