Course Syllabus

Department: Social Sciences
Date: 4/15/15

Course Prefix and Number: HIS 100

Course Name: Western Civilization I

Credit Hours and Contact Hours: 3 credit hours and 3 contact hours

Catalog Description including pre- and co-requisites: no pre-requisites or co-requisites
This course, the first half of the history of western civilization sequence, explores the social, political, intellectual and cultural origins of the western tradition in Europe. Using a variety of sources (primary and secondary) and spanning the two millennia from Classical Greece (5th c B.C.) and the eras of Alexander the Great and the Roman Empire, through the Christian Middle Ages to the Italian Renaissance and the Age of Overseas Exploration (16th – 17th c.), this course traces the development of peculiarly western attitudes, values and institutions in Europe, and the notions of reason, individual rights, humanism, rule of law, and political liberty, that underpin them. This course also examines the manifold points of contact between the west and the wider world. (Also listed as HUM 100)

Student Learning Outcomes:
Students will:
Demonstrate knowledge of the development of the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture etc of modern Western civilization.

Relate the development of Western civilization to that of other regions of the world, and obtain the historical knowledge necessary to live interdependently in a diverse global community.

Demonstrate the ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate college-level primary and secondary source readings.

Identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the historical field, and, in their own writing, will demonstrate well-reasoned arguments when interpreting historical subject matter.

Demonstrate an understanding of the political evolution of western civilization (including the development of direct and indirect forms of democracy, constitutionalism, human rights, and/or efforts to limit the power of autocratic government), so as to better equip themselves with the knowledge, skills and values necessary to be involved in their communities.
Demonstrate the ability to identify, locate, evaluate, use and share information from a range of published and electronic historical resources.

Relationship to Academic Programs and Curriculum:
May be taken to fulfill the SUNY General Education requirement of 3 credits of a western civilization course, or as a Humanities (HUM 100) or Social Science (HIS 100) elective requirement. (Also listed as HUM 100)

College Learning Outcomes Addressed by the Course:
☐ writing ☒ computer literacy
☐ oral communications ☐ ethics/values
☒ reading ☒ citizenship
☐ mathematics ☒ global concerns
☒ critical thinking ☒ information resources

III. Instructional Materials and Methods

Types of Course Materials:
Textbook, published primary source reader (or electronic equivalent), assigned historical monograph, College learning management system.

Methods of Instruction:
Lecture, reading and discussion

IV. Assessment Measures:
Student knowledge of the development of the distinctive features of the history, institutions, economy, society, culture of modern Western civilization will be assessed using in-class, closed-book essay examinations (Critical Thinking competency).

Quizzes and/or essay examinations will be employed to assess students’ ability to comprehend, interpret, analyze and evaluate college-level primary and secondary source readings (Reading competency).

An assigned research paper will be employed to assess students’ ability to gather information from a range of published and electronic historical sources, to identify, analyze and evaluate arguments made by some of the major authors in the historical field, and to develop a well-reasoned and evidence-supported historical argument (Critical Thinking, Computer Literacy and Information Resources competencies)

Quizzes and essay examinations will be employed to assess students’ understanding of the political evolution of western civilization (Citizenship competency).
Quizzes and essay examinations will be employed to assess students’ understanding of the manifold ways in which the history of western civilization connects with that of the wider world (Global Concerns competency).

V. General Outline of Topics Covered:

Classical Greece: Humanism and the Greek Miracle

Alexander the Great and the Hellenistic Fusion

Republican and Imperial Rome

Decline of Rome (Internal and External factors)

Origins and Early History of Christianity

Heirs of Rome, 500-1000 A.D.: Germanic (Barbarian) Europe, Byzantium and the Islamic East

High Middle Ages in Western Europe: “Great Leap Forward,” Twelfth Century Renaissance, Medieval Papacy and the Crusades, 1000 – 1300 A.D.

Late Middle Ages (1300 – 1500 A.D.) and the “Calamitous Fourteenth Century”

Protestant Reformation & Catholic Counter-Reformation

Italian Renaissance & Northern Renaissance

Age of Overseas Exploration