

Civilizations of the Ancient World

“History is philosophy teaching by examples.”
— THUCYDIDES

Course and section: HIS 246, section J01FY
Fall 2011

Meetings: Room CA-210
Mondays and Wednesdays
12:30 – 1:45 p.m.

Instructor: Mark Wilson
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Office Hours: Room CA-293
Mondays and Wednesdays
9:30 – 10:30 a.m.



Rationale Our entire lives are conditioned by concepts like *civilization* and *society*, yet we seldom stop to think about how they shape our behaviors and expectations. By traveling back to the very emergence of civilization, we can experience both the revolution in how humans related to each other and the proliferation of new kinds of societies—each with their own distinct ideas about communities and individuals, communication, trade, protection, gender, mortality, and the wild, unbounded realms of the gods. All of this forms not just the background but the substance of the modern world—how we think, and what others think of us. The everyday hubbub of ancient worlds vibrates in the bones of our own societies.

Aims In this course we will survey of the Mediterranean world, beginning with the first humans and tracing the development of civilization from Mesopotamia and Egypt to the ancient Greek City-States and the rise and fall of Rome. Our plan will be to compare the principles and practices of these societies, toward a stronger understanding of human society in general.

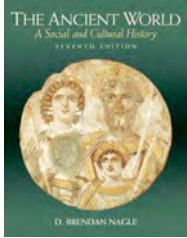
Specific Learning Objectives In this course we'll be pursuing a number of goals, including:

- ▶ Exploration of the emergence of civilization and its implications for humanity
- ▶ Exposure to the cultures and beliefs of a wide array of diverse Mediterranean civilizations
- ▶ Exploration of evolutionary changes in the realms of politics, economics, military techniques, religious beliefs, social norms, writing and literature practices, artistic patterns, and science and philosophy
- ▶ Examination of how the many interactions and transformations of ancient civilizations developed into a Western identity, part of the origin of the modern Western world
- ▶ Development of the skills associated with the study of history, including the interpretation of primary sources and other evidence.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

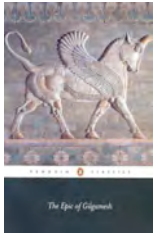
Course Readings

The following three books are required:



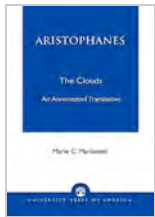
Nagle, D. Brendan.
The Ancient World: A Social and Cultural History, 7th edition.
New York: Prentice Hall, 2010.
ISBN: 978-0-205-63744-7.

- ▶ Make sure you get the right edition, especially if you're buying a used copy.



George, Andrew R.
The Epic of Gilgamesh.
London: Penguin Books, 2003.
ISBN: 978-0-140-44919-8.

- ▶ Penguin has more than one Gilgamesh. I strongly recommend the Andrew George edition because he translated directly from the source. It also has a useful introduction.
- ▶ If you get another edition, make sure it is based on the Standard Version of the epic. There is not a trustworthy version online, so you're best off with the Penguin.



Aristophanes, and Marie C. Marianetti.
The Clouds: An Annotated Translation.
Lanham, Md: University Press of America, 1997.
ISBN: 978-0-761-80588-5

- ▶ The play itself is widely available, but we'll also be working with Prof. Marianetti's annotations and interpretations, so you'll need to get this version. It's regularly assigned in her classes, so it should be available used.

All three books are available from Lehman College Bookstore, either on person or via their website: <http://www.posmancollegiate.com/posman/>. All three are also available from Amazon and other online retailers. (There are links on my website.) If you order online, make sure you do so enough in advance that you'll receive the books in time for the assignments.

Attendance

Class attendance is required. Missing classes *will* damage your grade. The textbook is designed to give you the basics; it's in class that we try to make sense of things and sift out what's important. Missing classes means you miss out on a key part of our trying to put things together. Plus, if you miss classes, you'll miss quizzes, which will put a big crimp in your grade for the course. Religious observances that affect your class attendance should be discussed in advance.

Make-up exams are given only in cases of documented medical emergencies.

Assignments

Your grade for the course will be determined from the following:

- 15% **Quizzes** We'll have very short quizzes at the start of class, roughly every other class (they will not be on a regular, predictable schedule) to help gauge our relationship with the material in the readings.
- ▶ Quizzes are based on the readings for that class in both the textbook and the two ancient readings (*Gilgamesh* and *The Clouds*, when they're assigned). If you did your reading for the class, you should be prepared for the quiz.
 - ▶ Missed quizzes are not made up. If you come late to class and miss a quiz, you'll get a zero for that quiz. Therefore, please make sure you come to class on time and prepared.
 - ▶ Quizzes are always based on the readings listed on the assignment sheet, even if I am slightly behind the syllabus in the topics I discuss in class. Make sure to do the assigned readings.
- 25% **Interpretive Essays** You'll write two interpretive essays, one for each of the two ancient readings (*Gilgamesh* and *The Clouds*). We'll talk in class about what's expected for these essays, and I'll have handouts with the specific assignments. Your essay will be based on your assessment of the reading and its context in the society that produced it, both of which will be discussed in class.
- ▶ You can submit a draft of the paper to me up to a week before it's due; I'll give general feedback (but not a grade). Because I accept drafts, I do not allow students to submit revised versions of their final paper after the final due date.
- 25% **Midterm Exam** The midterm exam will cover the course up to that point. We'll discuss the content and structure the previous week, and a review sheet will be provided. The exam take place during our regular class meeting on Monday, Oct. 24.
- 35% **Final Exam** The final exam will cover from the midterm onward—*except for the essay*, which will be cumulative. We'll discuss the content and structure the previous week, and a review sheet will be provided. The final exam will take place on Monday, Dec. 19, from 1:30 to 3:30 p.m.

Submitting Assignments

You may email me your written assignments, but it doesn't "count" unless you get an email back from me saying I received it. Unless I reply back to you, I didn't receive it. If there's any question about whether I'm receiving your emails, please talk to me about it in class.

Late assignments will be marked down. Written assignments will be marked down one letter grade per class meeting after the assignment due date, up to a maximum of 30 points. That means you're still better off turning in your paper late, and having it be marked down, than not turning it in at all.

Grading Procedures

I do not give extra credit opportunities except to the entire class. I do not grade on a curve.

>97	93–97	90–92	88–89	83–87	80–82	78–79	73–77	70–72	68–69	63–67	60–62	<60
A+	A	A–	B+	B	B–	C+	C	C–	D+	D	D–	F

GUIDELINES

Don't waste this opportunity! Make the most out of this class.

Please use me as a resource. Come to my office hours, talk to me after class, or send me emails with any questions you have—whether they relate to the requirements of the course or ideas we're reading about or discussing in class.

Be on time and prepared. By prepared, I mean you should come into class having done the readings for that day and thought about them. Come in ready to talk about your reactions to the readings and the questions they raised in your mind.

Check your email. Make sure I have a good email address for you and check it, as I occasionally send information and updates by email. If you have not gotten an email from me within the first week after school begins, check your spam folders. If you can't find an email from me, email me to let me know.

Cell phones and electronics need to be silenced and stowed. A phone ringing during class is hugely disruptive. Texting during class is just as rude and insulting as talking on the phone.

Talk to me if you're struggling. Come to me in office hours or after class, and the sooner the better. Don't wait until it's too late to turn things around.

ACADEMIC POLICIES

Academic Integrity

Lehman College is committed to the highest standards of academic honesty. Acts of academic dishonesty include—but are not limited to—plagiarism (in drafts, outlines, and examinations, as well as final papers), cheating, bribery, academic fraud, sabotage of research materials, the sale of academic papers, and the falsification of records. An individual who engages in these or related activities or who knowingly aids another who engages in them is acting in an academically dishonest manner and will be subject to disciplinary action.

Plagiarism includes the incorporation of *any material that is not original with you* without attribution, whether from a book, article, web site, or fellow student, in any paper or assignment. Assignments that include any plagiarism will receive a zero and the offending student will be subject to additional action by the College. Students engaging in repeated instances of plagiarism will fail the course outright and will be remanded to the College for disciplinary action.

- ▶ For more: <http://www.lehman.edu/undergraduate-bulletin/academicintegrity.htm>

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities

Lehman College is committed to providing access to all programs and curricula to all students. Students with disabilities who may need classroom accommodations are encouraged to register with the Office of Student Disability Services.

- ▶ For more information, please contact the Office of Student Disability Services, Shuster Hall, Room 238, phone number, 718-960-8441.