

## History 130: Introduction to World History

University of Wisconsin-Madison: Spring Semester 2025, traditional classroom – 4 credits

Paul Glen Grant, PhD: [pgrant@wisc.edu](mailto:pgrant@wisc.edu)



*International Students at UW-Madison, 1951. This university has always been a global crossroads. How will you take advantage of the opportunities for cross-cultural connection while you are part of this community?<sup>1</sup>*

### COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course is about the entire world throughout all of history. Themes include: empire and imperialism, global trade and globalization, war, migration, gender, race, religion, and nationalism. If that isn't ambitious enough, we will do the whole thing in four months. Each week, then, covers vast stretches of human experience. To make this intelligible, we will also go small, learning to see ourselves in the lives and experiences of people unlike ourselves.

This course is designed as a sequence of weekly themes roughly united by chronology. Most weeks include three lectures, one discussion section, and a number of readings (mostly from the textbook) and written response assignments. Over the course of the term, students will work on a small research project, identifying the ways their family's story intersects with world history.

---

<sup>1</sup> Want to know more about these students? Here: <https://digital.library.wisc.edu/1711.dl/IM7EYP7BSIN6V8D>

## Instructors:

Dr. Paul Glen Grant — [pgrant@wisc.edu](mailto:pgrant@wisc.edu); office hours (5212 Humanities): Tuesdays, 9-11 am and by appointment.

Assistant: Larissa Redditt — [redditt@wisc.edu](mailto:redditt@wisc.edu); office hours (4274 Humanities): Mondays, 3-5 pm.

Lectures: Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 11:00-11:50 in 1651 Humanities

Discussion sections: various times and locations – see your enrollment documents!

Canvas Course URL: <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/447768>

## Course Designations and Attributes:

- *Breadth: Humanities or Social Science*
- *Counts as Liberal Arts and Science credit in L&S*
- *Level: Elementary*

**Instructional Modality:** in-person

**Requisites:** none

## How Credit Hours are met by the Course

*This course consists of fourteen modules, most completed over one week, in a mixture of live meetings and assigned work, and carries the expectation that students will work on course learning activities (reading, writing, attending class, etc.) for about twelve hours per week.*

*The credit standard for this course is met by an expectation of a total of 180 hours of student engagement with the courses learning activities (45 hours per credit), which include lectures, discussion, reading, writing, and other student work as described below.*

## COURSE LEARNING OUTCOMES

- 1. Define important historical questions.** Evaluate the evidentiary and theoretical bases of pertinent historical conversations in order to highlight opportunities for further investigation.
- 2. Analyze evidence.** Examine the context in which sources were created, search for chronological and other relationships, and assess the sources in light of that knowledge.
- 3. Present original conclusions.** Present original and coherent findings through clearly written, persuasive arguments and narratives.
- 4. Connect history and career.** Processing the past in career-focused affinity groups.

## REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

Included with course fee: J. R. McNeill, *The Webs of Humankind: A World History* (combined volume, 2<sup>nd</sup> Seagull edition) (W. W. Norton, 2024), including access to quizzes.

## ASSIGNMENTS and GRADING SCALE

Grades are assigned on the basis of accumulation of points over the course of the term (up to 100; see below). In theory, each student could get an A (or could fail). For the most part, you accumulate points through short written work.

### **Grading scale:**

Fewer than 60 points = F; 60-70 = D; 70-77 = C; 78-82 = BC; 83-87 = B; 88-92 = AB; 93 or greater = A

### **ASSIGNMENT DESCRIPTIONS:**

- **REFLECTIVE JOURNALS**

Six times during the semester, you will compose a video journal of about two minutes reflecting on the historical material. Each journal is worth 1% of your grade.

- **SOURCE ANALYSES (in-class)**

Once a week (most weeks), we will break into groups to work over historical documents. Worksheets, each worth 1% of your final grade, will be submitted at the end of the hour. No make-up credit available. Students may receive credit for ten of the twelve.

- **NARRATIVE ANALYSES (in-class)**

Once a week (most weeks), we will break into small groups to dissect various (and at times competing) narratives about the week's subject matter. You will analyze these narratives—the message, how the historian is supporting it, and what he or she is omitting. Worksheets, each worth 1% of your final grade, will be submitted at the end of the hour. No make-up credit available. Students may receive credit for ten of the twelve.

- **TERM PROJECT: YOUR FAMILY IN WORLD HISTORY**

In the second half of the semester, you will compose three short essays (about 250 words apiece, plus footnotes) placing yourselves, and your family or cultural/ethnic/religious roots, into the bigger story of world history. You will then present on your findings in your discussion section, before combining the three into a single essay, during the final week of class. Instructions to follow.

- Week 7: ancient roots to your family (language and/or religion) (4%)
- Week 10: migration and education (how global processes shaped your background before the last century) (4%)
- Week 12: your recent family history, since about 1950 (4%)
- Week 13: 3-minute presentations in discussion sections (2%)
- Week 14: combination essay—paper copies submitted in final lecture (4%)

- **FIELD TRIP EXERCISES**

Memorial Library: On February 25, discussion sections will be held inside Memorial Library, where you will complete a worksheet orienting yourself to the library's physical resources. Worth 2% of your grade.

Chazen Museum: On March 11, discussion sections will be held inside the Chazen Museum, where you will complete a worksheet on historical perspectives gained from selected objects. Worth 2% of your grade.

- **INQUIZITIVE EXERCISES**

Weekly reading quizzes, integrated with the *Webs of Humankind* textbook. Most are worth 1 point (and in most weeks you will complete two). These are essentially guided reading exercises that help you grasp the most important aspects of the textbook.

- **QUIZZES**

You will write two take-home assessments – a mid-term and a final (each worth 5%). Both are open-book and available in Canvas for a week. There is no in-class final exam.

- **DISCUSSION SECTIONS**

Attendance is required and is cumulatively worth 5 points.

Participation (10 points) is evaluated using the following scale:

100%: Student comes to class prepared; contributes readily to the conversation but doesn't dominate it; makes thoughtful contributions based on the literature that advance the conversation; shows an interest in and respect for others' contributions; participates actively in all groups.

70%: Comes to class prepared and makes thoughtful comments when called upon; contributes occasionally without prompting; shows interest in and respect for other's views; participates actively in small groups.

50%: Student participates in discussion, but in problematic way: talks too much, rambles, interrupts instructor and others, or does not acknowledge others.

30%: Comes to class prepared but only minimally contributes.

0%: Has not prepared for class or does not contribute to discussion. Displays disrespect to students and/or faculty.

## **ASSIGNMENTS by POINT VALUE**

|                                                                               |     |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----|
| Career Journal: two-minute video in response to instructor's prompt: 6 x 1% = | 6%  |
| Source Analyses: 10 x 1% =                                                    | 10% |
| Narrative Analyses: 10 x 1% =                                                 | 10% |
| Term Project: 4 components x 4% + 1 x 2% =                                    | 18% |
| InQuizitive Exercises: multiple per week, worth a combined -                  | 27% |
| Library & Museum Exercises: 2 x 2% =                                          | 4%  |
| Mid-term and exam-week assessments: 1 x 5% and 1 x 5% =                       | 10% |

Subtotal: 85%

Discussion sections:

Attendance: graded as fraction of 5 points (attending 11 of 13 discussions = 85% = B) 5%  
Value added to discussion (see scale above): 10%

**Total: 100%**

### Grading conversations

I entertain grading conversations, but I require live discussion. If you wish for me to reconsider a score, you must: 1) Submit a formal request to me (by email), and 2) come to discuss the issue in person, justifying your complaint substantially (as in: explaining your answer/argument). I can be quite generous, but this formality is part of your learning experience.

## **ADDITIONAL COURSE GUIDELINES**

1. Lecture Attendance. A significant percent of your grade is earned for in-class work, and cannot be made up. If you do not attend class, you will not get a high grade, no matter what else you accomplish in your assignments. If you are sick, let us know by email (in case a lengthy illness becomes a factor in your grades). **If you need to miss class for a religious observance, write to your TA in advance.**
2. Reading & thinking. A word of caution: this course is more reading-intensive than most 100-level courses. Reading—and thinking critically about your reading—intentionally comprises a substantial proportion of your course grade.
3. PowerPoint. Slides are not distributed. You must take notes.
4. Assignments. All assignments are due on the day indicated below. Some are written, some are recorded, and some are presented; some are on paper, and some are in Canvas. You are responsible for looking ahead at the syllabus and balancing your work.
5. **Late Work. Late work is generally not accepted.** There are two exceptions:
  - InQuizitives. Although a weekly due date is posted, InQuizitives remain open until the semester's end. You may always return to quiz to improve your score!
  - Term Project Components. Late work accepted for half points.
6. Artificial Intelligence. You are accountable for everything you submit under your own name. That is, unsupported statements, missing annotations, and bibliographic notes are your work, even if you found it with machine assistance. If you cite an external source, it is assumed that you've read and can answer oral questions about it.
7. Email. Formality in address is part of your professional training; it is also the best way to ask questions outside of the classroom. Expect a weekday for a response.
8. Affinity Groups. In-class work groups will be as affinity groups, loosely organized by student interests. You will work with these students all semester long.

## **INSTITUTIONAL LEVEL POLICIES**

## **ACADEMIC CALENDAR & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES**

Students are responsible for notifying instructors within the first two weeks of classes about any need for flexibility due to religious observances. More here:

<https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/#religious-observances>

## **ACADEMIC INTEGRITY**

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. More here:

<https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/academic-misconduct/>

## **ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES**

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. More here:

<https://mcburney.wisc.edu/>

## **COURSE EVALUATIONS**

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their learning experience; this will come as an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that anonymous course evaluations are available. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

## **DIVERSITY & INCLUSION**

This course is about the whole world! Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

## **MENTAL HEALTH AND WELL-BEING**

Students often experience stressors that can impact both their academic experience and personal well-being. These may include mental health concerns, substance misuse, sexual or relationship violence, family circumstances, campus climate, financial matters, among others. Students are encouraged to learn about and utilize UW-Madison's mental health services and/or other resources as needed. Visit [uhs.wisc.edu](https://uhs.wisc.edu) or call University Health Services at (608) 265-5600 to learn more.

### **PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS**

Info on FERPA, the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act: <https://registrar.wisc.edu/ferpa/>

### **USAGE of RECORDED LECTURES**

Lecture materials and recordings for History 130 are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in this course may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in this class. Students may also take notes for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, you are not authorized to record my lectures without my permission unless you are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability requiring accommodation. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities. Students are also prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

### **Students' Rules, Rights, and Responsibilities**

<https://guide.wisc.edu/undergraduate/#rulesrightsandresponsibilitiestext>

\*\*\*

### **COURSE SCHEDULE**

Most weeks will have two in-lecture assignments; these are not listed below.  
Reading assignments are to be completed before the class for which they are listed.  
\* = file available on Canvas.

Discussion sections meet every week.

## **Week 1: January 20-26: Orientation**

Meet: No meeting 1/20, discussion sections meet on 1/21; lectures Wednesday and Friday.

Read (by 1/26): *Webs of Humankind* (henceforth *WOH*): chapters 3-4  
Complete the corresponding InQuizitives: How to use InQuizitive (zero points);  
InQuizitives for chapters 3-4 (1 point each)

Compose (due in Canvas by Sunday, Jan. 26, 11:59 p.m.): career journal 1 (video upload)

## Week 2, January 27-February 2: Early Civilizations

Meet: Discussion sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 2/2): *WOH*, chapters 5-6; InQuizitives for chapters 5-6

Compose (due 2/2): career journal 2

## Week 3, February 3-9: Ancient Eurasia

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 2/9): *WOH*, chapters 7-8; InQuizitives for chapters 7-8

## Week 4, February 10-16: Abrahamic Religions

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 2/16): *WOH*, chapters 9-10; InQuizitives for chapters 9-10

View: \*Qur'an 1 – external link to sung verse

## Week 5, February 17-23: Abr. Religions + Maturing Webs

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 2/23): *WOH*, chapters 11-12; InQuizitives for chapters 11-12

Compose (due 2/23): career journal 3

## Week 6, February 24-March 2: Maturing Webs

Meet: discussion sections **MEET IN MEMORIAL LIBRARY ROOM 231—bring student ID card and allow time to get in**; lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by March 2): *WOH*, chapters 13-14; InQuizitives for chapters 13-14

## Week 7, March 3-9: Re/Conquest

Meet: discussion sections; lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 3/9): *WOH*, chapters 15-16; InQuizitives for chapters 15-16

Compose (due 3/9): Term Project Component 1: Your Ancient Roots

## Week 8, March 10-16: Atlantic Encounters

NOTE: Holi (Hindu) and Purim (Jewish) holidays fall this week. Contact instructors in advance if you wish accommodation.

Meet: discussion sections **MEET IN CHAZEN MUSEUM, CHEN FAMILY STUDY ROOM**; lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 3/16): *WOH*, chapters 17-18; InQuizitives for chapters 17-18

Compose (due 3/16): midterm video essays

## Week 9, March 17-23: Atlantic Encounters, cont.

NOTE: next week (March 24-30) is Spring Break. If you will be travelling, submit your work early!

Meet: discussion sections; lectures Monday and Wednesday, **NO LECTURE Friday**

Read (by 3/23): *WOH*, chapters 19-20; InQuizitive, chapters 19-20

Compose (due 3/23): career journal 4

= = =

## March 24-30 Spring Recess (no meetings or work)

= = =

## Week 10, March 31-April 6: An Atomized World

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 4/6): *WOH*, chapters 21-22; InQuizitives chapters 21-22

Compose (due 4/6): Video Journal 5; Term Project Component 2: Migration and Education

## Week 11, April 7-13: Remaking Community

**OWING TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: due dates on Monday**

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 4/14): *WOH*, chapters 23-24; InQuizitive, chapters 23-24

## Week 12, April 14-20: World On Fire

**OWING TO RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES: due dates on Monday**

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 4/21): *WOH*, chapters 25-26; InQuizitive, chapters 25-26

Compose (due 4/21): Term Project Component 3: Your Last Century

## Week 13, April 21-27: The Last Century

Meet: Discussion Sections - Term Project Component 4: Presentations; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 4/27): *WOH*, chapters 27-28; InQuizitives chapters 27-28

## Week 14, April 28-May 2: World History and Your Future

Meet: Discussion Sections; Lectures Monday, Wednesday, and Friday

Read (by 5/2): *WOH*, chapter 29; InQuizitive for chapter 29

Compose (due 5/2) (due on Friday, not the following Monday as usual): Journal 6; Term Project Component 5: Combination Essay. **PAPER COPIES DUE IN LECTURE, 5/2**

## Exam Week:

Open-book exam open on Canvas until May 7 at 11:59 PM.