This course is designed to examine the unique development of civilization in the West. We will begin by discussing what the term “West” means, and outlining the differences between traditional approaches to Western Civilization versus more novel approaches drawn from World History that examine the West in the larger context in which it developed. We will survey the interaction of civilizations from Ancient Mesopotamia, Egypt, West Asia, Greece, Rome, the Islamic World, as well as Medieval and Early Modern Europe. We will seek to understand the unique trajectory of Western thought while understanding the roots of the West in the Ancient Near East and Egypt.

We will seek to understand what the discipline of History is, how historical literature is unique and different from other kinds of texts, and the methodologies employed to examine the past. Persistent themes explored will include the development of agricultural technology, socialized urbanization, trade, religion, gender roles, political institutions, economic organization, class divisions, ethnicity, and race. We will discuss questions such as:

1) What is civilization?
2) What is history, and how can we use it to learn from the mistakes of the past?
3) How have different areas of the world developed uniquely, and how did early civilizations interact with one another?
4) What are the different types of history, and how can we utilize different methodologies to learn about the past and ourselves?
5) How was the Western trajectory of civilization unique, and yet how was the West dependent upon interaction with other parts of the world?
6) How did monotheism transform the West, and what are the implications of religion upon Western history?
7) How is Islamic civilization a part of the West? What traditions do Islam, Christianity, and Judaism share?
8) How is the West defined by a common cultural legacy, derived from both Greco-Roman antiquity and the Judeo-Christian tradition?
9) What kinds of unique political constitutions and institutions were developed by the ancient Greeks and Romans? What kinds of cultural developments uniquely mark the
development of Western civilization? How were these sets of ideas revived in the Italian renaissance, and what effect did they have in bringing Europe out of the Middle Ages?

10) What kinds of role models did ancient literature provide from women of the day?

11) How were the lives of women impacted by the male orientation of politics in democratic societies?

12) How did Martin Luther transform Christianity, and why? What issues did he face in dealing with the Catholic church, and how did he prevail against church authorities?

13) What kinds of lessons can we learn from ancient literature? What kinds of lessons does the Prince offer to politicians? Is this advice useful still today?

**GOALS:** The primary goals of the course will be:

1) To learn to think critically
2) To write and communicate effectively
3) To organize comparative materials in a logical, coherent fashion
4) To gain an understanding of geography as it relates to history
5) To identify major turning points in Western History
6) To obtain insight into global politics today by understanding the origins of today’s religious tensions and conflicts in the premodern world.
7) To analyze texts with sensitivity to their diverse cultural contexts and historical moments.
8) To develop familiarity with Western (including Islamic) value systems (e.g. religious, ethical, philosophical) and the ways in which they are communicated across time and cultures.
9) To argue from multiple perspectives about issues in Western History that have personal and global relevance (for example, to understand various perspectives on the concept of Holy War, including Muslim, Christian, Jewish, and individual perspectives).
10) To demonstrate the ability to approach complex historical problems by asking complex questions drawing upon knowledge of the Western historical trajectory and Western humanities more generally (again, where the term “Western” includes Islam).

**Required Texts:**


*The Bible*. Selections from the Old Testament are in the reader (see below). Alternatively, you can use another edition of the Bible, provided that you give the citation in ancient format, along with the name of the translator or version of the Bible.

Example:

Isaac and Ishmeal buried their father Abraham at the Cave of Machpelah in Hebron (Genesis 25:9, Revised Standard Version).

The above required texts are available at the SDSU bookstore on campus.
Reader: There is also course reader, which is available through University Readers and must be purchased SEPARATELY ONLINE at www.universityreaders.com. Please order the reader now so that you will have it for class breakout discussions.

**Please direct ALL questions about the reader to University Readers.** If you experience any difficulties, please email orders@universityreaders.com or call 1.800.200.3908

The course pack includes materials that we will use in class daily, so you should purchase your own copy. Also, please keep in mind that our institution adheres to copyright law, so any copyrighted material should not be copied or duplicated in any manner.

To purchase the Reader, please follow the instructions below:

**Step 1:** Log on to https://students.universityreaders.com/store/.

**Step 2:** Create an account or log in if you have an existing account to purchase.

**Step 3:** Choose the correct course pack, select a format and proceed with the checkout process.

**Step 4:** After purchasing, you can access a digital copy of the first few chapters (if you selected a print format) by logging into your account and clicking "My Digital Materials" to get started on your reading right away.

Print orders are typically processed within 24 hours; the shipping time will depend on the selected shipping method and day it is shipped (orders are not shipped on Sundays or holidays). If you experience any difficulties, please email orders@universityreaders.com or call 800.200.3908 ext. 503.

Class Procedures:

No make-up examinations or quizzes will be given. It is your responsibility to attend class regularly, and to take quizzes and exams as scheduled. I will drop your lowest quiz score at the end of the semester, so if you miss one quiz it won’t hurt your grade. Missing more than one quiz will lower your grade.

Please be courteous to your fellow students and instructor. Do not speak when others are talking.

There is to be NO use of ANY electronic devices except for notetaking. This includes playing games, sending text messages, or doing anything else on a mobile/smart phone, tablet, or other electronic device.
If you use a computer in the classroom for social media, this distracts the students sitting beside and behind you from learning.

**Cell phones MUST be turned off before class, NO EXCEPTIONS.** Anyone caught using a cell phone to text or answer a call will be asked to stop or leave class immediately. If you are having a family emergency, put your cell phone on vibrate. Do NOT answer the call until you have left the classroom, and the door is firmly closed behind you. Call the family member back once you are at least 50 yards from the classroom.

Please use the restroom before class or during the brief restroom break. Students coming and going constantly from the classroom disrupt the learning experience.

Use of IPods and other electronic devices is prohibited in class. **Anyone caught using an electronic device, including but not limited to cell phones, IPods, or PDAs during an examination will automatically receive an F on the exam.** Once an examination or quiz begins, noone is permitted to leave the room until they have turned in their paper.

**Assignments and Grading:**

**Quizzes:** Quizzes are based upon the reading assignments on the syllabus. Prepare readings before coming to class. For example, by Sept. 5 you should have read ALL of the *Epic of Gilgamesh*, chapters 1 through 7. So, since the reading assignment for Sept. 3 is chapter 1-2 and for Sept. 5 is chapters 3-7, you should have read the ENTIRE book by Sept. 5. **There are NO makeup quizzes. Your lowest score will be dropped at the end of the semester.**

**In-class Writing Exercises:** We will have several in-class writing exercises. Each is worth 2.5% of your grade. Please make sure that you attend class the day these happen, as there will be no make-ups except in extreme cases (e.g. hospitalization or other illness).

**Attendance/Participation:** Attendance is required. You will be called upon by the instructor to answer questions in class, and you will be graded for class participation. If you are not in attendance when you are called to answer a question, points will be deducted from your class participation grade. You will be responsible to obtain lecture notes from a classmate if you are absent. **Please do NOT email me if you are going to be absent. I will not be taking attendance as there are too many students, but rather randomly checking to see if you are in class. If you are absent when I call on you, you will get a second chance, but not a third unless there are extenuating circumstance (e.g. hospitalization).**

**Bring copies of assigned primary readings (e.g. *The Epic of Gilgamesh*, trans. Sanders). You will need them for class ON THE DATE THAT THEY ARE ASSIGNED.**

**Workshops:**
Jeffrey Brown, the Writing Coordinate and Teaching Assistant for our course, will be conducting voluntary outside workshops on Geography and Writing. Exact dates and times to be announced. While these workshops are not required, they are designed to give you individualized attention (that one cannot get in a large course with over 150 students), to help you improve your skills (e.g. geography, writing, grammar) and to help you learn to write better. We want to provide you with this information now, as a freshman, so that your writing can only continue to approve.
Jeffrey comes to us with much teaching experience and we are lucky to have him as a Teaching Assistant and Writing Coordinator. Please take advantage of his workshops and office hours.

Web Resources:

MyHistoryLab.com – contains some primary texts, self-testing mechanisms. This is NOT required, but something you can do on your own if it helps you.

BBC Ancient History Site: http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/ancient/ - this is an excellent site with diagrams of the Egyptian pyramids and many other useful tools.

The Perseus Project: http://www.perseus.tufts.edu/cache/perscoll_Greco-Roman.html - this site contains a photo gallery of Greek and Roman art and material culture.

Grading:
Your grade will be determined based on the following breakdown:

Map Test 10%
In-class writing exercises 5%
Expository Essay 15%
Quizzes 15%
Midterm 20%
Final 25%
Attendance/Participation 10%
Course Outline

Aug. 27 Introduction. Class Procedures; Review of Syllabus, Introductions. What is the West? Geography is Political.

Aug. 29 What is History? The relationship between Geography and History.
Reading: “What is History?” Handout on Blackboard, under Course Documents.
Levack, et. al. 2-9.

_Epic of Gilgamesh_ introduction, chs. 1-2

Sept. 5 QUIZ ON EPIC OF GILGAMESH. Mesopotamia (cont’d.) _Epic of Gilgamesh_, The Flood Story, Literature
Reading: _Epic of Gilgamesh_ chs. 3-7 (pp. 85-119)
Discussion: How is the distinction between civilization and the wild represented in the Epic of Gilgamesh? Which characters represent civilization, and which represent the wild? What are the dangers of becoming civilized for Enkidu? How is the monarchy of Gilgamesh unjust? Is his power limited? How do the gods calm Gilgamesh? How is the story of the flood similar to and/or different from the biblical story? Is Gilgamesh able to achieve immortality in the end? Why or why not?

Reading: Levack, et. al. 19-28
Reader: #1 Selections from “The Code of Hammurabi.”
Discussion: What principles of justice are displayed in the Laws of Hammurabi? How was punishment for crime meted out in Babylon? Were punishments meted out fairly? Did a person’s class matter?

Sept. 12 GEOGRAPHY EXERCISE DUE. Egypt: The Gift of the Nile.
Reading: Levack, et. al.:29-41.

Sept. 17 Egypt Cont’d. Art, Literature
Reading: Reader: The Aton Hymn and Psalm 104 Levack, et. al. 42-55
Discussion: Compare the Aton Hymn and Psalm 104. What can the similarities tell us about cultural exchange between the Egyptians and Hebrews?

Sept. 19 Phoenicia, Israel/Canaan
Ancient claims to modern lands: Israelites/Philistines/Canaanites and Israel/Palestine today. Biblical History. The twelve tribes. 

**Reading:** Levack, 64-75.

**Sept. 24**

**QUIZ ON GENESIS. Ancient Israel (cont’d):** The Old Testament, Abraham, 
**Reading:** Genesis 1-40

**Class Discussion:** How is the story of Noah similar to the Sumerian Flood Story? How is it different? Who is Abram/Abraham? Why is he significant? What does god promise him? Who is Sarah? Who is Hagar? Who are Ishmael and Isaac? How are they different? Who inherits Abraham's estate and why? Who are Jacob and Esau? Who is disinherited according to Genesis of the two? Whom do they each marry?

**Sept. 26**

**Ancient Israel (cont’d):** Biblical/Jewish law, Crime and Punishment 
**Reading:** Genesis 41-50
**Exodus** 19-33

**Discussion:** How does Moses receive the ten commandments? Why is this important? How are the ten commandments reflected in modern law? How does biblical law ethnically define the Israelites? How will those who transgress

**Oct. 1**

**MAP TEST. Last 30 minutes of class. Ancient Israel (cont’d):** The United Kingdom, Israel vs. Judah, Phoenicians, Philistines, Assyrian Conquests, Babylonian Captivity. The Alphabet. 
**Reading:** Levack, 55-64.

**Oct. 3**

**Reading:** Levack: 46-49; 76-79.

**Oct. 8**

**Greece (cont’d): Sparta.** Military society, the god Fear, Gender roles, class distinctions. The Persian Wars. The 300 and the Battle of Therompylae. 
**Reading:** Reader: Plutarch *Lycurgus* 14-19 (pp. 23(bttm.) to 32), *Cleomenes* 9 (p. 77); Xenophon *Spartan Society* 1-9 (pp. 166-176). 
**Levack, et. al.** 79-83

**Discussion:** What were the gender expectations of the Spartans? How were these roles reinforced? What was unusual about Spartan marriage? How did the Spartans use fear to order their society? Were the Spartans tolerant of difference and disability?

**Oct. 10**

**MIDTERM EXAMINATION. Make-up examinations will NOT be scheduled.**

**Oct. 15**

**Classical Athens.** The Persian Wars (cont’d.). The development of art, architecture, philosophy, tragedy, theatre. Herodotus, The Father of History. 
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 83-102; 106-107.
**Reader:** Herodotus 1.1-13.

**Oct. 17**

**Classical Athens.** The Great Peloponnesian War. Thucydides and the evolution of historical literature.
Reader: Thucydides 1.1-23.

Discussion Questions: What is Thucydides’ method of collecting information to write history? How does he record speeches? What is the difference in writing about the remote past vs. contemporary (at the time of Thucydides—not now) history? What does Thucydides think of the intellectual capacity of the average person to understand history? Do most humans think critically and analytically according to Thucydides? What does Thucydides think of Homer and the poets/storytellers (e.g. Herodotus)? What is the real cause of the Peloponnesian War?

In-Class Exercise: Developing a Thesis Statement (on Thucydides’ idea of how to write history).

Oct. 22
Reading: Reader: Plato Apology
Levack, et. al., 102-105.

Discussion: How was the Athenian trial of Socrates similar to a trial in the USA today? How was it different? What was the charge against Socrates? Is there a separation of church and state in Athens, as in the USA? Does Socrates help or hinder his defense? How so? How is Socrates’ wisdom significant in the text?

Oct. 24
Philip of Macedon and the Conquests of Alexander the Great. Alexander’s Successors and the Hellenistic East.
Reading: Levack, et. al. 108-119.

Writing Tutorial/In Class Exercise: Writing a Paragraph (on Socrates)

Oct. 29
Reading: Levack, et. al. 119-135.

Oct. 31
The Etruscans and the Founding of Rome. The Roman Republic.
Reading: Levack, et. al. 136-150

Writing Tutorial: Writing an Essay, Do’s and Do Not’s.

Nov. 5
QUIZ – ROME. The Late Roman Republic and the Civil Wars. Julius Caesar, Cleopatra, Marc Antony, Octavian/Augustus. Augustus and the “Restoration” of the Republic.
Reading: Levack, et. al. 150-171.

Nov. 7
The Roman Empire. The Julio-Claudians. Christianity.
Reading: Levack, 172-201
Reader: Gospel of Mark

Discussion: What do stories of demon possession tell us about Christian beliefs? What is the most important principle of Christianity, as expressed in the text? How does the gospel underscore hypocrisy? How does Jesus treat “sinners”? How do miracles give Jesus authority? Is Jesus a prophet or a teacher, according to Mark? How is the teaching of Jesus radical? How does
he try to change Judaism? Does Jesus call himself the son of God or the son of man? What does Mark call him? Does Jesus call himself the king of the Jews? What charge is brought against Jesus? Why? What is the final message Jesus gives to his disciples? How is this message significant to Christianity today?

Nov. 12  
**EXPOSITORY ESSAY DUE. Late Antiquity/Early Medieval Period.**  
The Fall of Rome in the West. The Byzantine Empire. The Coming of Mohammed.  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 202-248.

Nov. 14  
**QUIZ – KORAN. Islamic Expansion and Civilization. The Crusades.**  
Pope Urban II and Christian Holy War.  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 248-261, 288-297.  
**Reader:** Koran, selections.  
**Discussion:** How is the Islamic afterlife described? What happens to unbelievers? Can Jews and Christians be incorporated into the Islamic idea of the afterlife, according to the Koran? What is the attitude towards Jews and Christians in the Koran? Is this attitude consistent or contradictory? Who revealed the Koran to Mohammed and the Muslims? How? Under what condition is fighting permissible according to the Koran? When is one not supposed to fight?

Nov. 19  
**Medieval Europe.** Charlemagne. Vikings.  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 262-281

Nov. 21  
**QUIZ – MEDIEVAL EUROPE. Medieval Europe (cont’d.) Crusades, Papacy, Development of Universities.**  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 282-297; 306-329

Nov. 26  
**The Renaissance.**  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 364-388.  

Nov. 28  
**NO CLASS – Happy Thanksgiving.**

Dec. 3  
**QUIZ – MACHIAVELLI. The Renaissance (cont’d.).** Machiavelli  
**Reading:** Machiavelli, *The Prince*. 44-85.

Dec. 5  
**The Reformation.** Indulgences and Martin Luther. Protestantism vs. Catholicism in the Early Modern Period.  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 426-455.

Dec. 10  
**European Colonialism and Expansion.** Columbus, Cortez and the Fall of the Aztecs, Spanish Colonialism.  
**Reading:** Levack, et. al. 394-414.
Dec. 17       FINAL EXAMINATION Weds. 1-3 PM