

THE WORLD

HIST 125 (202470.75672- 008) FALL 2024

Dr. Gretchen Beasley

Class Times: M/W, 1:30 to 2:45 pm (IN 132)

Email: gbeasle1@gmu.edu

Office Hours: By appointment only.

Please use: [Dr. Beasley's Calendar](#)

(<https://calendly.com/gbeasle1/dropin>) to book appointment times.

WELCOME TO THE WORLD! You will learn a lot of “stuff” in this course—the names, dates, events, and processes that make up world history. From the 1200 to present, we will take a look at varied societies in world history not as individual civilizations or nation-states, but as part of a larger global community—exploring sites of contact, mutual interaction, codependence, and conflict. Focusing on Europe, the Americas, Africa, Asia and the Middle East, the course will examine the cultural, technological, political, economic, religious and social transformations that shaped the societies of these geographic regions, as they became part of an interworking global system.

You'll also learn a bunch of skills—like claim testing and contextualization. This course is all about helping you bring together that information and those skills to make meaning of the world you're living in. Historians write all sorts of narratives about the past. How can we use those narratives to create usable history that you find relevant to your own lives?

Since world history by its nature involves going over enormous amounts of information, I do not expect you to retain a detailed knowledge of everything. We will focus instead on developing an overall framework of what has happened in the world and what broad patterns and trends we can use to make sense of it (such as Communities, Networks, Production and Distribution, etc.) and then fitting the details into that framework. In doing so, we will pay attention both to interactions and encounters among the various societies, and to what sorts of useful comparisons we can draw between them. Finally, we will pay particular attention to sources and interpretations — so that you can see where the generalizations in your textbooks come from, and what they are based upon.

Learning Outcomes

Upon completing this course, you will be able to:

1. Identify major chronological developments in global history from the pre-modern period (before 1400 CE) to the present.
2. Communicate a historical argument through writing, speech, and/or digital media using a variety of primary and secondary sources.
3. Apply historical knowledge and historical thinking to contemporary global issues.

Academic Integrity and Course Conduct

I am committed to a class dynamic that supports diversity in race, ethnicity, national origin, gender identity, sexuality, class, disability, age, and religion. All communication in this course must be done with respect and civility toward others who have different ideas, perspectives, and traditions than your own. This also applies to newer forms of digital disrespect: Zoom bombing, trolling, cyberbullying, or other inappropriate behavior will not be tolerated. If anything is said or done in our classroom spaces that makes you uncomfortable, by me or a fellow student, please schedule a time to talk with me as soon as possible and we will find a solution.

In addition, there are some guidelines that I expect to be applied to our class spaces at all times.

1. **Be empathetic.** We're all adjusting to new situations and workflows, and I want us to stay sensitive to that as we move through the semester. If you need something, please ask for it and I will do my best to help or find someone who can.

2. **Be flexible.** A cardinal rule of any class is that the tech rarely works as expected. Please stay flexible as we work through any technical issues and figure out which workflows make sense for our group. Also, as we move through the course, I challenge you to approach the messiness and technical failures as moments to reflect on how to adjust and adapt. These can also be moments to identify the boundaries or limitations of technology and imagine creative solutions.

I reserve the right to shuffle, remove, or swap out readings and assignments at any point throughout the semester. This is meant to anticipate the anxieties and unknowns that might come with living through, well, life. I will never increase your workload but will do my best to respond to events as they unfold. You will be informed of any changes ASAP, and I will make changes directly in our course website and via email and Slack.

3. **Practice good calendar management.** This will be key to keeping on track this semester. Establish a calendar early on to keep track of due dates. Make sure to incorporate the rule of thumb that for a 3-credit class, you can expect 6 to 8 hours/week for "homework".

4. **Communicate!** This is crucial. Falling behind or need some extra help? Schedule a meeting with me. Have a tech issue or don't fully understand an assignment? Pose your questions in our discussion spaces. Have ideas for how to improve our workflow? Let me know!

The Fine Print: Course Requirements and Policies

REQUIRED MATERIALS

There is no required textbook for this course, though there is a course reader with the majority of articles. Additionally, there may be a need to have access to Netflix and small purchase for videos (2 to 3).^{*} Everything you need will be posted on our Course Website (here) and Canvas.

**If you have difficulty with these small purchases, please contact me.*

OFFICE HOURS/DROP-INS

All office hours (or drop-ins) this semester will be virtual, though if you want to meet in-person we can make arrangements. Feel free to use this time to talk about coursework, converse with me about history, or simply to get to know one another more than class time allows.

WHAT EACH WEEK WILL BE LIKE

All assignments must be completed in the schedule listed (in class and homework); this includes completing assignments and posting to our discussion board on Slack, Canvas, or via a course website.

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CREDIT HOURS AND EXPECTATIONS

This is a 3-credit course, which means that in addition to the daily discussions, you are expected to do at least 6-8 hours of course-related work each week during the semester. This coursework includes readings; skill-based assignments and writing assignments; and research and writing for your final project.

GENERAL PARTICIPATION

This is a collaborative course, focusing on discussion and work in groups. The class will be a cooperative learning experience, a true intellectual community. And so, you and your work are, in a very real sense, the primary texts for this course. In order for us to work together as a community, we'll all have to find ways to be "present" in the various places our course lives (Assignments, Slack, class discussions). If you can't finish work for any reason, chat with me in advance.

Join class prepared to discuss the readings due that day and having explored the tools we will be learning. Plan on expressing your ideas, frustrations, questions, and confusions using your voice during class whenever possible. This is a small, discussion-based class, so we have the opportunity to delve deeply into issues.

SLACK

Participation also extends to the online portal to the course, the Slack network. Slack serves as the central point of non-verbal communication during and outside of class meetings. You periodically will be required to post something in Slack for class and/or group work.

When you are unable to speak in class (due to e.g. anxiety, needing more time to collect your thoughts, etc.), you are encouraged to engage in discussion via Slack. Doing so will count toward your participation, but cannot fully replace spoken discussion during class.

Slack is also a space for airing questions and comments and sharing ideas and resources that don't come up in class. It is also a great place to share tangential thoughts and ideas that diverge from the main discussion but that you would like to share. Contributing to the conversation in Slack will help improve your participation.

HOW TO DO WELL IN THIS CLASS

First and foremost, please ask me for help for any reason, whether you are stuck, or whether you want to learn more about what we're doing in class. Second, be persistent. Be willing to experiment and be willing to make mistakes. Some of your best

assignments might include some mistakes. Third, remember that your goal is not to learn strictly history in a chronological sense, but concepts. Look for the skills and ideas underlying the specific assignments we will work with. Fourth, keep up by doing the weekly work – including the reading and any other preliminary assignments. If you miss part of the course work, you'll have a hard time keeping up.

I have a rolling grading policy for the semester with all things graded by the midterm period and before the final make-up period that I offer throughout the semester. I provide significant feedback on assignments leading up to the midterm, which is why grading comes back to students in a rolling basis. If you want feedback on assignments prior to receiving a grade, please set up an appointment with me.

ATTENDANCE POLICY

You will be allowed four (4) absences this semester (accounting to two weeks of instruction for a class that meets twice a week). For these four absences, I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused. These are your four absences to manage and do with what you wish. **After four absences, I will include these absences in your final grade evaluation.**

Should you exceed these absences, it is up to you to set up an appointment with me to discuss your options – I get it, things happen, but if you don't communicate with me, it is impossible for me to work with you. And a word on communication – please communicate with me to whatever extent you feel comfortable. I can't help you if I don't know something is going on, but again, you do not have to disclose private health information to me.

WHAT YOU WILL BE GRADED ON*

In a nutshell you will be graded on the following elements.

- **Class Participation, Discussion Sessions, and Exercises/Activities: (25%).** Class participation will be based how prepared you are to engage with the material, the class, and completion of activities. Some of these activities will be done individually, some in a group setting. Instructions will be provided per activity and/or discussion via class and/or the course website.
 - You should expect to join in on any class discussions. Paying attention to lectures, visual media, AND completing your reading assignments/homework are these are vital to your ability to participate in this class.
 - This section also includes drop-ins with me. Please meet with me once within the semester for a check-in. You can schedule your drop-ins here: [Dr. Beasley's Calendar](#)
- **Lecture/Reading/Video Responses: (25%)** Each unit contains a mixture of lectures from me, as well as some from other subject matter experts or scholars, and readings.
 - During class times, we will have the opportunity to engage in traditional question and answer during a class period. The purpose of these assignments is to capture your understanding of key concepts with a series of questions/prompts that will be available on Canvas/the Course Website so that you are able to fully participate in class.
 - Some of the video/lectures/readings will not be required to submit for a grade **BUT** be mindful that these questions may still appear on your Activities/Exercises.

- **Assessments (25%)** will be administered periodically throughout the course. These assessments are in lieu of tests and exams. They will cover assigned readings and assignments.
- **Final Project: (25%)** You will be asked to demonstrate your knowledge of World History and how it connects to the world today in a 1000-1500 word research paper, website (min. 1000 words), OR 8-10 minute video/podcast. Your project must use citations (Chicago if you are a History major; MLA for all others). You will be asked to recall information, summarize, and draw conclusions on what you believe to be the most important piece from history – it can be a person, an event in history, a work of art, or a piece of technology (to name a few). It can be as small as a single weapon or as large as a world-changing event like the Industrial Revolution. **Your topic must be approved by me no later than Week 9.** Once you have identified your piece of/topic from history, you will locate a news story/current event that you think connects to your chosen subject/artifact/event in some interesting, meaningful way.
- If you miss the deadline, **there is only limited opportunity for make-ups (see [Make-Up Period \[Late Work\]](#))**

**I reserve the right to shuffle, remove, or swap out readings and assignments at any point throughout the semester. This is meant to anticipate the anxieties and unknowns that might come with living through...well who knows these days. I will never increase your workload but will do my best to respond to events as they unfold. You will be informed of any changes ASAP, and I will make changes directly in our course website, as well as send a message via email and Slack.*

GRADES WILL BE CALCULATED AS FOLLOWS

A+ = 98-100	B+ = 87-89	C+ = 77-79	D+ = 67-69	F = below 60
A = 93-97	B = 82-86	C = 72-76	D = 62-66	
A- = 90-92	B- = 80-81	C- = 70-71	D- = 60-61	

Please note: the amount of work you put in reflects the grade you receive. It is up to you to decide what grade you want in the course and how much work you complete to receive that grade.

I have a rolling grading policy for the semester with all things graded by the midterm period and before the final make-up period that I offer throughout the semester. I provide significant feedback on assignments leading up to the midterm, which is why grading comes back to students in a rolling basis. If you want feedback on assignments prior to receiving a grade, please set up an appointment with me.

THE FINE PRINT: MASON POLICIES & DATES

Accommodations: If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please contact the Office of Disability Services at 703-993-2474 or <http://ods.gmu.edu>

Communication: The best way of reaching me quickly is via Slack. If you email, I will respond to you promptly within 24 hours. I will hold office hours by appointment on Zoom.

Diversity Statement: “George Mason University promotes a living and learning environment for outstanding growth and productivity among its students, faculty, and staff. Through its curriculum, programs, policies, procedures, services, and resources, Mason strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study and personal growth.

An emphasis upon diversity and inclusion throughout the campus community is essential to achieve these goals. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds, and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected.

The reflection of Mason’s commitment to diversity and inclusion goes beyond policies and procedures to focus on behavior at the individual, group and organizational level. The implementation of this commitment to diversity and inclusion is found in all settings, including individual work units and groups, student organizations and groups, and classroom settings; it is also found with the delivery of services and activities, including, but not limited to, curriculum, teaching, events, advising, research, service, and community outreach.

Acknowledging that the attainment of diversity and inclusion are dynamic and continuous processes and that the larger societal setting has an evolving socio-cultural understanding of diversity and inclusion, Mason seeks to continuously improve its environment. To this end, the University promotes continuous monitoring and self-assessment regarding diversity. The aim is to incorporate diversity and inclusion within the philosophies and actions of the individual, group and organization, and to make improvements as needed.”

Medical Issues: Please consult Student Health Services or another physician if you need medical attention: <https://shs.gmu.edu/>

Please let me know if there are any medical issues that I need to know about.

Counseling and Psychological Services: <https://caps.gmu.edu/>

Enrollment Status: You are responsible for verifying your enrollment status in this (and every) course. Any change in that status is your responsibility and must be made by the dates listed in the Schedule of Classes. After the last day to drop a course, withdrawal from the course must be approved by the Dean and will be approved only for nonacademic reasons. Attempting to add a class after the last day to add is not possible. Undergraduate students wishing to drop a class after the drop date may choose to exercise a selective withdrawal. See the Schedule of Classes for selective withdrawal procedures.

Honor Code and Academic Integrity: Please consult the resources from the Office of Academic Integrity, including the GMU Honor Code, here: <https://oai.gmu.edu/>

- *The integrity of the University community is affected by the individual choices made by each of us. As a Mason student, you should follow these fundamental principles at all times, as noted by the [Honor Code](#): (1) All work submitted should be your own, without the use inappropriate assistance or resources, as defined by the assignment or faculty member; (2) When you use the work, the words, the images, or the ideas of others—including fellow students, online sites or tools, or your own prior creations—you must give full credit through accurate citations; (3) In creating your work, you should not take materials you are not authorized to use, or falsely represent ideas or processes regarding your work. If you are uncertain about the ground rules or ethical expectations regarding the integrity of your work on a particular assignment or exam, you should ask your instructor for clarification. Support for you to complete your work is available; no grade is important enough to justify academic misconduct.*

If you aren't familiar with it, please also consult the "Understanding Plagiarism" tutorial created by GMU

Libraries: <https://library.gmu.edu/tutorials/plagiarism>

Statement Regarding Use of Generative AI Tools: *Use of Generative-AI tools should be used following the fundamental principles of the Honor Code. This includes being honest about the use of these tools for submitted work and including citations when using the work of others, whether individual people or Generative-AI tools.*

Important Dates

[Fall 2024 Academic Calendar](#) | [Office of the University Registrar](#) | [George Mason University \(gmu.edu\)](#)

WEEKLY SCHEDULE*

All assignments must be completed in the schedule listed (in class and homework); this includes completing assignments and posting to our discussion board on Slack, Canvas, or via a course website. More detail at: [The Fine Print: Course Requirements, Assignments, and Grading](#).

Usually, you will have one week's time (7 days) to complete the work associated with each week. If there is a separate deadline within the week, it will be noted. If you miss an assignment (or a few), check out our [Make-Up Period](#).

I reserve the right to shuffle, remove, or swap out readings and assignments at any point throughout the semester. This is meant to anticipate the anxieties and unknowns that might come with living in today's world. I will never increase your workload but will do my best to respond to events as they unfold. You will be informed of any changes ASAP, and I will make changes directly in this website.

Work towards YOUR needs and expectations

Some of you just want a C to fulfill a Mason requirement. Some of you want a B to maintain a solid GPA. Some of you want an A because top grades are really important to you. You all already know what your own average, good, or excellent effort feels like. So put in the work that justifies the grade you want for each assignment.

- **Week 1: Introduction**
- **Week 2: Narratives and Frames**
 - **September 2 – No Class: Labor Day**
- **Week 3: The Global Tapestry (1200-1450 CE)**

GRACE PERIOD TO TURN IN WORK FOR WEEKS ONE AND TWO ENDS 9/13/2024 at 9am

- **Week 4: Transoceanic Connections (1450-1750 CE)**
- **Week 5: Transoceanic Connections (1450-1750 CE) continued**
 - **[\(October 3\) MID-TERM MAKE-UP PERIOD](#)**
- **Week 6: Liberal & National Revolutions (1750-1914 CE)**

- **Week 7: Industrialization (1750 -1914 CE)**
- **Week 8: Empires and Consequences of Revolution (1850-1950 CE)**
 - **October 14: No Class – Fall Break**
- **Week 9: Global Conflict (1914-1945 CE)**
 - **Your topic for your final project must be approved by me no later than Week 9.**
- **Week 10-11: Convergence & Divergence**
 - **November 5: No Class – VOTE!!!!**
- **Week 12: Cold War and Decolonization (1945-1990 CE)**
- **Week 13-15: Globalization (1900-Today)**
 - **Week 14 – November 27-28 – Thanksgiving Break**
 - **(December 6) [FINAL MAKE-UP PERIOD](#)**
- **[Final Project](#) Due by end of your exam period**