

HON 121.4
HISTORIC PERSPECTIVES I
La Salle University
Autumn 2019

General Information

Instructor

Jonathan W. Wilson, Ph.D.

Class Meetings

History Department

Office Hours

Required Books¹

Grafton and Bell, *The West: A New History*, vol. 1 (Norton, 2018): \$118
ISBN 9780393640854

Beard, *SPQR: A History of Ancient Rome* (Liveright, 2015): \$18
ISBN 9781631492228

Bale, trans., *The Book of Margery Kempe* (Oxford, 2015): \$16
ISBN 9780199686643

Wilson, trans., *The Odyssey of Homer* (Norton, 2018)
ISBN 9780393356250 (summer common reading)



Course Purpose

As part of the university's first-year Honors Triple, Historic Perspectives is specially designed to reveal the contexts of your honors literature and philosophy courses—including some of the roots of the Catholic tradition embraced by La Salle University. That means you will explore ways that “western” societies and their belief systems have developed and changed over millennia as part of the larger world. This course is a story about humans struggling to live together and find belonging in their communities. It will focus especially on the many meanings of citizenship in western civilizations.

Learning Objectives

This course addresses one of the university's core institutional learning outcomes (ILO 1): understanding diverse perspectives. You will study different cultures and belief systems, and the viewpoints of different kinds of people from the past, in order to gain a fresh perspective on your own world.

¹ The primary textbook (*The West*) must be purchased or rented immediately because you will use it throughout the semester. Used or e-book copies are fine; the electronic access code that comes with new copies is unnecessary. For all other assigned books, make sure to obtain the correct edition (indicated by the ISBN) so that the page numbers as well as the contents will match for all students.

In addition, this course is designed to promote four major student learning outcomes (SLOs) identified by the history department:

1. Students will identify those significant events, persons, institutions, and processes which have shaped ancient, medieval, and early-modern western history.
2. Students will carefully and critically read, analyze, and discuss a variety of primary and secondary historical sources.
3. Students will learn to think historically, asking questions of the past and developing research methodologies to answer them.
4. Students will develop clear expository and analytical writing skills.

Lasallian Philosophy

Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, a Catholic priest from an elite family, established the Institute of the Brothers of the Christian Schools in the 1680s, when basic education in France was relatively disorganized. (He was led to this work through the example of women teachers, the Sisters of the Holy Child Jesus in the French city of Reims.) The members of La Salle's order, living together in religious communities, gave up wealth and prestige in order to devote their lives to creating schools for working-class and poor children.² Today, the Brothers' primary mission is still to provide "a human and Christian education" to the world's poor—and to enlist the rich as partners. As their rule says, the Brothers seek common ground among people from all religious traditions in advancing "human dignity, solidarity among all human beings, and the integral development of the individual."³ La Salle University is one of six colleges and universities carrying out this mission at an advanced level in the United States, and one of about sixty worldwide.

Consistent with the Lasallian tradition, this history course is grounded in the belief that all humans—across time, space, and social boundaries—share a common dignity. We can recognize ourselves in each other despite our differences and conflicts. Because of this, all aspects of human history have the power to help us live together more coherently and meaningfully. You should use this course as an opportunity to develop greater solidarity with other people, especially the marginalized, through acts of the reason and the imagination. In the process, you may grow into a greater sense of your own personhood.

Academic Freedom

Scholars, including students, must sometimes engage in controversial research and critical discussion. In the United States, a professional right to do this is defined in a statement by the American Association of University Professors, which declares that "the common good depends upon the free search for truth."⁴ At Catholic colleges, this principle of academic freedom is recognized in *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, an apostolic constitution issued by Pope John Paul II. It promotes the "free search for the whole truth about nature, man and God" in an attitude of "mutual respect, sincere dialogue, and protection of the rights of individuals."⁵

² Luke Salm, *John Baptist de La Salle: The Formative Years* (Romeoville, Ill.: Lasallian Publications, 1989), 114–127; Léon Lauraire, *The Conduct of Schools: Pedagogical Approach*, trans. Allan Geppert (Rome: Maison Saint Jean-Baptiste de La Salle, 2006), 19–48.

³ Forty-fifth General Conference, *The Rule of the Brothers of the Christian Schools*, 2015 revision, art. 3 and art. 17.2, <http://www.lasalle.org/en/resources/publications/rule>.

⁴ American Association of University Professors, "1940 Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure," <https://www.aaup.org/report/1940-statement-principles-academic-freedom-and-tenure>.

⁵ John Paul II, *Ex corde Ecclesiae*, Aug. 15, 1990, https://w2.vatican.va/content/john-paul-ii/en/apost_constitutions/documents/hf_jp-ii_apc_15081990_ex-corde-ecclesiae.html.

This freedom protects *all* of us through mutual obligations. It does not simply protect our ability to express our own opinions. It means we have a duty to protect the academic freedom (and other rights) of other students and professors, including those who may feel more vulnerable than we do. It means we should encourage others to participate, especially when they have different perspectives. Above all, it implies that we have a duty to listen—a responsibility to examine our own beliefs in the light of others' arguments and evidence.

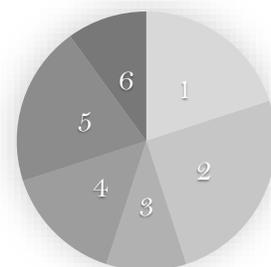
Grading

In a perfect world, learning would be its own reward; each student would be responsible for continually adding to her own understanding, regardless of her starting point. In the existing world, you will receive a grade for your work in this course. The professor hopes this will be an incentive to challenge yourself, studying and learning things you otherwise might not, rather than an enticement to compete for distinction through easy conformity.

It is possible to earn the following final grades in this course: A (93.00–100.00%), A- (90.00–92.99%), B+ (87.00–89.99%), B (83.00–86.99%), B- (80.00–82.99%), C+ (77.00–79.99%), C (73.00–76.99%), C- (70.00–72.99%), D+ (67.00–69.99%), D (63.00–66.99%), and F (0.00–62.99%). All the scores in the course will be treated as percentages for calculation purposes. (For example, a score of 8 out of 10 on an assignment is equivalent to a score of 80%.)

Your final grade will be based on the following forms of work, weighted as follows:

1. Participation	20%
2. Chapter Quizzes	25%
3. Analytic Essay I (1,000 words)	10%
4. Analytic Essay II (1,250 words)	15%
5. Analytic Essay III (1,500 words)	20%
6. Capstone Essay (1,000 words)	10%



To earn a high grade, you must work steadily throughout the semester and participate regularly in class discussions and in-class work. Keeping up with all assigned reading is a necessary part of participation (as well as important for preparing for quizzes and assignments). You are expected to spend about six to nine hours per week, on average, on the reading and writing for this course.

Policies

Syllabus

This syllabus is a sort of contract between you and the professor, laying out expectations and responsibilities. However, the syllabus is subject to reasonable change during the semester as circumstances require. In particular, the professor may vary the timing and nature of readings or assignments. In general, the professor agrees to seek a class consensus before making significant changes, except in emergencies.

Attendance

You are allowed three (automatically excused) absences for any purpose. After that, each additional absence, *for any reason*, will lower your participation score by five percentage points. After eight or more total absences, you will receive an F as a final course grade on the grounds that you have not completed the course. However, if a university commitment,

ongoing illness, family responsibility, life crisis, etc., requires you to miss more than a few classes, please speak with the professor about it as early as you can. Any remedy for absences in such extraordinary cases is solely at the professor's discretion.

Email

You should check your lasalle.edu email account regularly; it is the primary way you and the professor will communicate outside of class. Your email messages should be courteous and reasonably professional; think of them as letters, not text messages. Plan ahead so that the professor will have time (at least 48 hours, except in emergencies) to respond. The professor may not reply to rude or last-minute email. For the sake of security, use only official lasalle.edu accounts to communicate with your professors about your courses.

Electronics

Research so far indicates that many students learn better when they take notes by hand.⁶ For this reason, and especially in order to avoid distractions that hinder class discussions, the professor usually recommends that you avoid using laptops, tablets, or other electronic devices in class. However, your needs may vary. If you do use electronic devices, you must prevent them from causing a distraction—to other students *or yourself*. (That means no social media, non-emergency messaging, or work for other courses.) To protect everyone's privacy and freedom of discussion, photography and electronic recording are prohibited unless they are allowed by an accommodation plan.

Chapter Quizzes

Weekly chapter quizzes will normally be administered at the end of class on Thursdays as indicated in the semester schedule. At the end of the semester, your lowest three quiz grades, including up to three grades of zero from missed quizzes, will be dropped. No make-up quizzes will be administered.

Late Work

Writing assignments turned in late will be penalized at the rate of five percentage points per day. However, each student is allowed a single one-week extension on a writing assignment of her choice. To receive the extension, email the professor before the assignment deadline, indicating when you will submit your paper. (Note: *All* course work, including any late work, must be completed by the end of finals week so that it can be included in your course grade. The final deadline will be announced by the professor.)

⁶ Classroom laptop use is a controversial topic among college educators. For information about the debate and explanations of some recent research, see Beckie Supiano, "Should You Allow Laptops in Class? Here's What the Latest Study Adds to That Debate," Feb. 6, 2019 (<https://www.chronicle.com/article/Should-You-Allow-Laptops-in-Class? Here's-What-the-Latest-Study-Adds-to-That-Debate>); Anya Kamenetz, "Laptops And Phones In The Classroom: Yea, Nay Or A Third Way?," Jan. 24, 2018 (<https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2018/01/24/578437957/laptops-and-phones-in-the-classroom-yea-nay-or-a-third-way>); David M. Perry, "The Futile Resistance Against Classroom Tech," Dec. 6, 2017 (<https://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2017/12/laptops-in-the-classroom/547607>); Katie Rose Guest Pryal and Jordynn Jack, "When You Talk About Banning Laptops, You Throw Disabled Students Under the Bus," Nov. 27, 2017 (https://www.huffpost.com/entry/when-you-talk-about-banning-laptops-you-throw-disabled_b_5a1ccb4ee4b07bcab2c6997d); Susan Dynarski, "Laptops Are Great. But Not During a Lecture or a Meeting," Nov. 22, 2017 (<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html>); and Cindi May, "Students are Better Off without a Laptop in the Classroom," July 11, 2017 (<https://www.scientificamerican.com/article/students-are-better-off-without-a-laptop-in-the-classroom>).

Privacy

To protect your privacy, the professor will never discuss specific grades by email, and he will not discuss your educational records with anyone else except La Salle University officials who have a legitimate need to know. The confidentiality of your records is protected by the federal Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA). However, please note the following limit to this privacy guarantee.

Discrimination and Sexual Misconduct

To protect students' dignity and security on campus, La Salle University requires almost all employees to report information they receive regarding sexual violence or exploitation, sexual harassment, stalking, domestic violence, or any form of legally prohibited discrimination. This means the professor cannot guarantee total confidentiality if you disclose such an experience; he is required to report that information to the campus Title IX coordinator. ("Title IX" refers to the most important federal law protecting students from sexual discrimination.) However, if you would like to discuss such an experience in complete confidentiality, you may speak with specially trained employees in the Student Counseling Center or the Student Health Center or other designated "campus confidential resources." A list of campus confidential resources, together with other useful information, is available at [REDACTED].

Academic Honesty

Learning happens through work and requires a relationship of mutual trust with your collaborators. In addition, your standing in a university honors program presupposes absolute personal integrity as a scholar. Therefore, plagiarism, the use of essay-writing services, or any other form of intentional cheating will result in a failing grade (0%) for the relevant assignment; the professor will also meet with the honors program director to discuss your future in the program. A second offense on any assignment will result in an automatic failing grade for the course. If you have any questions about how to maintain academic honesty in your work, feel free to speak with the professor *before* the assignment is due. The professor will be happy to help you produce honest, ethical work.

Support Services

Counseling

Life can be complicated for anyone, and many of us find college to be a particularly stressful time. Workers in the Student Counseling Center ([REDACTED]) can help students with a wide variety of concerns—including things like stress, anxiety, depression, hopelessness, loneliness, problems with identity, addictions, shyness, relationship difficulties, sexual issues, food and body image issues, family difficulties, and questions about academic or career development. An appointment can be made by calling the administrative assistant, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED]). In an emergency during the day, students may be seen without an appointment, and there is a walk-in hour on weekdays from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m.

Writing Tutors

Formally trained tutors in the Center for Academic Achievement ([REDACTED]) work with students to help them improve their written work. Tutoring sessions typically

run 30 minutes for short papers and 50 minutes for longer papers. Drop-in tutoring is available if a tutor is free, but to make sure, students can schedule a tutoring session by accessing GradesFirst, the online tutor scheduling system located in the MyLaSalle portal. For more information about writing tutoring, contact the coordinator of tutoring services, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] or [REDACTED]).

Subject Tutors

Tutoring is also available through the Center for Academic Achievement for students seeking content help in a variety of courses throughout the university. Subject tutoring should be arranged by appointment on GradesFirst. If you would like additional information about subject tutoring, contact the executive director, [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] or [REDACTED]).

Academic Accommodations

La Salle is committed to giving students an equal opportunity to participate in its classes, programs, and activities. Students who need accommodations in order to participate fully in campus life (for reasons that may include disabilities, chronic illnesses, mental health concerns, or sensory impairments) should speak with the academic support specialist [REDACTED] ([REDACTED] or [REDACTED]), who will provide further information and work with you to get the personalized support you need. The professor will follow the university's guidance in order to protect your right to participate in this course. For more information about the protections you may have under federal law as a college student with disabilities, consult the guide published by the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights: www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html.

Further Information

La Salle University policies and support resources are available through the Getting Help link in the course menu on Canvas. All students should familiarize themselves with the university's Student Guide to Rights and Responsibilities and Academic Integrity Policy as the semester begins.

Semester Schedule

WEEK 1: Foundations

Tues., 8/27

Thurs., 8/29

- 🔗 Cate Denial, “How to Build Relationships with College Professors,”
<https://www.teenvogue.com/story/how-to-build-relationships-with-college-professors>
- ✍ Student Survey and Syllabus Notes

WEEK 2: Origins

Tues., 9/3

Thurs., 9/5

- 🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 1
- ✍ Beginning Narrative

WEEK 3: Golden-Age Greece

Tues., 9/10

Thurs., 9/12

- 🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 2

WEEK 4: Hellenistic Mediterranean

Tues., 9/17

Thurs., 9/19

- 🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 3

WEEK 5: Global Perspectives

Recommended: pp. 15-89 in SPQR

Tues., 9/24

- 📄 In-Class Writing Seminar

Thurs., 9/26

WEEK 6: Republican Rome

Recommended: pp. 91-130 in SPQR

Tues., 10/1

- ✍ **Analytic Essay I**

Thurs., 10/3

- 🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 4
- 📖 Emily Wilson lecture on translations (*required honors lab, 7 p.m., [REDACTED]*)

WEEK 7: Imperial Rome

Recommended: pp. 131-252 in SPQR

☞ *Mon., 10/7: Deadline to register to vote in Pennsylvania*

Tues., 10/8

Thurs., 10/10

☞ Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 5



WEEK 8: Global Perspectives

Recommended: pp. 253-434 in SPQR

Tues., 10/15

☞ Fall Break

Thurs., 10/17

WEEK 9: Imperial Christianity

Recommended: pp. 435-536 in SPQR

Tues., 10/22

Thurs., 10/24

☞ Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 6

WEEK 10: Roman Legacies

Tues., 10/29

✎ **Analytic Essay II**

Thurs., 10/31

☞ Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 7

☞ Zachary Greenberg lecture on academic freedom, sponsored by the La Salle chapter of the American Association of University Professors (*recommended, 12:30-1:45 p.m., [REDACTED]*)

WEEK 11: Medieval Society

Recommended: pp. ix-69 in Kempe

Tues., 11/5

☞ *Election Day*

Thurs., 11/7

☞ Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 8



WEEK 12: High Middle Ages

Recommended: pp. 69-160 in Kempe

Tues., 11/12

Thurs., 11/14

☞ Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 9

☞ Dr. Kecia Ali lecture, "Muslim Women: Unity and Diversity in a Global Tradition" (*recommended, 7 p.m., [REDACTED]*)

WEEK 13: Renaissance

Recommended: pp. 160-229 in Kempe

Tues., 11/19

Thurs., 11/21

🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 10

WEEK 14: Global Perspectives

Tues., 11/26

✍️ **Analytic Essay III**~~Thurs., 11/28~~

🦃 Thanksgiving Day

WEEK 15: Reformation

Tues., 12/3

Thurs., 12/5

🔗 Reading Quiz: *The West*, Chapter 11

FINALS WEEK

12/9-12/14

✍️ **Capstone Essay** (*deadline TBA*)

You are moving in the direction of freedom
and the function of freedom is to free somebody else.

Toni Morrison
Barnard College commencement, 1979

Student Survey

Please detach, sign, and complete the survey with as much information as you are willing to provide. Your answers will be kept confidential.

Semester Agreement

I have carefully read the entire syllabus for Honors 121.4 and believe I generally understand the course requirements and expectations.

X _____

Personal Information

Name:

Preferred name to be called:

Pronunciation (if helpful):

Pronouns: *she/her he/him they/them other:*

Hometown:

Major:

Questionnaire

What history courses did you have in middle and high school?

What other history, writing, or literature courses (besides HON 111) are you taking now?

What do you think is the purpose of a college education?

What plans do you have for life and work after college?

What concerns do you have about this course or your ability to complete it?

What else would you like the professor to know about you?