



# On-Campus Course Syllabus

## HUM 204a

### The Modern World

#### Fall 2021

### Class Information

**Day and Time:** Monday 7:30 – 10:00pm

**Room Number:** E205

### Contact Information

**Instructor Name:** Kirk Spencer

**Instructor Email:** kspencer@criswell.edu

**Instructor Phone:** 469.834.5211 (Please Text First)

**Instructor Office Hours:** Monday 11am to 1pm & Thursday 9am to 11am

### Course Description and Prerequisites

A survey of Enlightenment and Romanticism and how these opposing forces shaped philosophy, literature, art, and music. Various movements are examined such as the revolution, evolution, and World War I.

### Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course the student should be able to:

- A. Demonstrate a working knowledge of the basic geography and history of Europe and how the Modern World fits within this context.
- B. Distinguish between various movements that define the modern world and explain the impact of those ideas on history and culture.
- C. Appreciate the humanities as an interdisciplinary tool for life-long learning, applicable to both private and public life.
- D. Evaluate modernity in the light of Christ, Christianity, and Biblical teachings, and to use that evaluation to consider how to represent Christ in a modern context.
- E. Research and present areas of interest related to the Modern World.

### Required Textbooks

Any complete History of Western Civilization Text. (approved by Professor)

A Student's Guide to Liberal Learning, by James V. Schall. Intercollegiate Studies Institute, 2000. ISBN: 978-1882926534.

## Recommended Reading

Niebuhr, H. Richard. *Christ & Culture*. New York: HarperCollins World, 2003.  
[Published in 1951, established a basic yet unforgettable classification of historical relationship of secular and sacred within Christianity by inserting three prepositions between the words Christ and Culture: Christ **against** Culture, Christ **of** Culture and Christ **above** Culture. Then adding two other categories within Christ above Culture (Christ & Culture in Paradox and Christ Transforming Culture). These categories have been defined and redefined many times since their creation.]

Schaeffer, Francis A. *How Should We Then Live?: The Rise and Decline of Western Thought and Culture*. Wheaton, Ill: Crossway Books, 2005.  
[Watershed work, first published in 1976, tracing the decline of Western culture with the moral prescription to publicly live-out the Biblical Christian ethic.]

McGrath, Alister. *The Twilight of Atheism: The Rise and Fall of Disbelief in the Modern World*. Doubleday: New York, 2004. ISBN 0-385-5006-0  
[A interesting and concise history of atheism written by a Christian who began his academic career as an atheist.]

Veith, Gene. *Postmodern Times: A Christian Guide to Contemporary Thought and Culture*. Crossway Books: Wheaton, Illinois, 1994. ISBN: 0-89107-768-5  
[Landmark work about basic elements of postmodernism written from a modernist perspective by a Christian author.]

Grenz, Stanley, “Star Trek and the Next Generation Postmodernism and the Future of Evangelical Theology,” in David Dockery (ed.), *The Challenge of Postmodernism: An Evangelical Engagement*, Grand Rapids, Michigan: Baker Academic, 2001.

## Course Requirements and Assignments

### A. Participation

As a seminar course, it is very important that you attend and participate in class. A participation grade will be given based primarily on your attendance and the quality of questions asked and comments made during classroom discussions. Every unexcused absence will reduce your participation grade by 4 points. Your participation grade will determine **10%** of your final grade.

### B. Reading

To reduce your cost for textbooks and to add a variety of backgrounds for class discussion, it will be up to you to find any textbook on the History of Western Civilization. This text should include all of the History of Western Civilization from the Ancient Greeks to at least the 1970s. You can purchase it used from half-price books, off Amazon or borrow one from a friend. As soon as you have purchased this text, you should bring it to class and have it approved by the instructor (or if you are unsure if it would qualify, ask the professor before you purchase it). During the semester you will read the sections from

the Medieval Period through the middle of the 20th century. To keep the amount of reading uniform across different texts, each student should carefully choose *at least* 70 pages to read from each of the four time divisions of the course: Middle Ages to Renaissance (5th Century to 16<sup>th</sup> century), Age of Reason to Enlightenment (17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Century), Romanticism and the Gilded Age (19<sup>th</sup> Century) and Late Modern Period (1914-1986). Take time to find those sections that appeal to you and provide material for class discussion and postings on the discussion board for the class. Readings should be paced to stay up with class discussion and discussion board posts. As you read through the text material, mark-up the text and write notes, ideas and comments in the margins. This will document that you have read the assigned pages. At the end of the semester, I will collect your textbook to determine how thoroughly you have read the material. Your reading grade will determine **5%** of your final grade.

### **C. Projects**

Two maps and one timeline project will be given at the beginning of the semester. Each of these projects will determine 10% of your final grade. Together they will total **30%** of your final grade.

### **D. Discussion Board Posts**

On Canvas, there are four discussion boards, one for each of the four divisions of the Modern World: Middle Ages to Renaissance (5th Century to 16<sup>th</sup> century), Age of Reason to Enlightenment (17<sup>th</sup> & 18<sup>th</sup> Century), Romanticism and the Gilded Age (19<sup>th</sup> Century) and Late Modern Period (1914-1986). During the weeks we are covering these periods of history, and each student is reading about these centuries in their text, you will be expected to start one thread on the appropriate discussion board on Canvas. You are free to write anything you want about what you are learning, however, you should also craft a discussion question about the time-period we are studying. Answering these questions will provide an opportunity for you to practice your critical thinking skills. It is expected that your responses will not just be descriptions and opinions. You should consider various perspectives, provided evidence and examples, and evaluate reasonableness and then synthesize the best aspects to come up with your own conclusions.

You should monitor your thread and respond to comments and lead the discussion about your particular question encouraging critical thinking skills. Each student should read the other threads and thoughtfully respond to at least two other threads. A discussion board grade will be given based upon fulfillment of the assignment, promptness in submissions and the quality of discussion. The average of your discussion board grades will determine **40%** of your final grade.

### **E. Research**

During the first two weeks of class you should select an area of interest that falls within the Modern Era (16<sup>th</sup> Century to the 20<sup>th</sup> Century) and do research for the first half of the semester. It is important to get an early start. Once you have your topic selected send an email to the Professor defining what it is. If you have trouble in finding a topic just consider the kinds of things you are most interested in and see if there is not a connection to the modern world in some way. For instance, if you like fashions, then study the fashions trends in some period of the Modern World. While you can do research on typical historical topics, like the causes of World War I, I believe the class and research will be more interesting if you make the topic your own and find something that fascinates you... Like the origin of baseball. All students should have their topic selected by the end of the second week of class, giving us enough time to make a presentation schedule so you can tell the class what you have learned. During the first two months of the

course each student should become knowledgeable in their particular area and prepare to lead class discussion. The week before you are scheduled to lead the class, you should prepare a document of at least one page and now more than two pages in length summarizing the basic information you have learned. During scheduled class time, you will present your findings to the other students and answer any questions they have. A grade will be assigned for the project based upon the summary handout and the quality of presentation. This grade will determine **15%** of your final grade.

## **Course/Classroom Policies and Information**

### **Online Exam Protocol**

Online test will be timed tests. You should take the exam as quickly as possible from memory.

You can take the online test as many times as you need to get the grade you want, however, I would advise against trying to learn the maps and timeline by taking the exam over and over. It will be best to spend time learning the maps and timeline and then take the test. If you do not get the grade you want, then study those areas you were weak and take the test again.

Here is a list of activities which will be considered cheating:

- Talking to someone about the exam to give or get information about the content of the exam.
- Using the timeline or maps to find the answer to a question before you have submitted the exam.
- Using any other source material to look up answers while taking the exam.
- Letting someone else take the exam for you.
- Taking the exam for someone else.

### **Class Attendance**

Students are responsible for enrolling in courses for which they anticipate being able to attend every class session on the day and time appearing on course schedules, and then making every effort to do so. When unavoidable situations result in absence or tardiness, students are responsible for acquiring any information missed. Instructors are not obliged to allow students to make up missed work. Per their independent discretion, individual instructors may determine how attendance affects students' ability to meet course learning objectives and whether attendance affects course grades.

### **Campus Closure**

To ensure the health and safety of students and employees, college administrators may decide it is necessary on rare occasions to close the campus. Once this decision is announced, instructors will contact students to provide further details regarding the campus closure's impact on those courses. Students are responsible to watch for

communication from their instructors and respond appropriately. (Unless otherwise specified by the instructor in this syllabus, this communication will be sent to the student’s Criswell College e-mail account.)

In order to make progress toward the courses’ objectives, instructors have the freedom during most campus closures to require students to participate in activities as alternatives to meeting on campus. An instructor may, for example, hold class remotely (through Zoom) at the scheduled time, provide a recording of a class or presentation for students to watch independently, or assign other activities that students are to accomplish before returning to campus. Students are responsible for accomplishing these alternative activities as well as any course requirements listed in this syllabus during the period of the campus closure. If, during the period of the campus closure, personal circumstances prohibit a student from accomplishing these alternative activities or course requirements and assignment listed in the syllabus during the campus closure, the student is responsible for communicating with the instructor as soon as possible. Instructors will not penalize students who do not have the means to accomplish the alternative activities during the period of the campus’s closure and will work with students whose circumstances during the campus closure prohibited their timely completion of course requirements and assignments in the syllabus.

### Grade Weight

Participation	10%
Reading	5%
Nation Map Project	10%
City Map Project	10%
Time Line Project	10%
Discussion Board	40%
<u>Research</u>	<u>15%</u>
Total	100%

### Grading Scale

Assigning grade definitions (i.e., above average, average, below average) is optional. Please delete the last column below if not assigning definitions. Additionally, delete these instructions when completing syllabus.

			Grade Definitions (optional)
A	93-100	4.0 grade points per semester hour	Superior Work
A-	90-92	3.7 grade points per semester hour	
B+	87-89	3.3 grade points per semester hour	
B	83-86	3.0 grade points per semester hour	Above Average Work
B-	80-82	2.7 grade points per semester hour	
C+	77-79	2.3 grade points per semester hour	
C	73-76	2.0 grade points per semester hour	Average Work
C-	70-72	1.7 grade points per semester hour	
D+	67-69	1.3 grade points per semester hour	
D	63-66	1.0 grade point per semester hour	Below Average Work
D-	60-62	0.7 grade points per semester hour	

F	0-59	0.0 grade points per semester hour	Unacceptable Work
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## Incomplete Grades

Students requesting a grade of Incomplete (I) must understand that incomplete grades may be given only upon approval of the faculty member involved. An “I” may be assigned only when a student is currently passing a course and in situations involving extended illness, serious injury, death in the family, or employment or government reassignment, not student neglect.

Students are responsible for contacting their instructors prior to the end of the semester, plus filing the appropriate completed and approved academic request form with the Registrar’s Office. The “I” must be removed (by completing the remaining course requirements) no later than 60 calendar days after the close of the term or semester in which the grade was awarded, or the “I” will become an “F.”

## Academic Honesty

Absolute truth is an essential belief and basis of behavior for those who believe in a God who cannot lie and forbids falsehood. Academic honesty is the application of the principle of truth in the classroom setting. Academic honesty includes the basic premise that all work submitted by students must be their own and any ideas derived or copied from elsewhere must be carefully documented.

Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to:

- cheating of any kind,
- submitting, without proper approval, work originally prepared by the student for another course,
- plagiarism, which is the submitting of work prepared by someone else as if it were his own, and
- failing to credit sources properly in written work.

## Institutional Assessment

Material submitted by students in this course may be used for assessment of the college’s academic programs. Since programmatic and institutional assessment is done without reference to specific students, the results of these assessments have no effect on a student’s course grade or academic standing at the college. Before submitting a student’s work for this type of assessment, the course instructor redacts the work to remove anything that identifies the student.

## Institutional Email Policy

All official college email communications to students enrolled in this course will be sent exclusively to students’ institutional email accounts. Students are expected to check their student email accounts regularly and to respond in an appropriate and timely manner to all communications from faculty and administrative departments.

Students are permitted to setup automatic forwarding of emails from their student email accounts to one or more personal email accounts. The student is responsible to setup and maintain email forwarding without assistance from college staff. If a student chooses to use this forwarding option, he/she will continue to be responsible for responding appropriately to all communications from faculty and administrative departments of

the college. Criswell College bears no responsibility for the use of emails that have been forwarded from student email accounts to other email accounts.

## **Disabilities**

Criswell College recognizes and supports the standards set forth in Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) of 1990, and similar state laws, which are designed to eliminate discrimination against qualified individuals with disabilities. Criswell College is committed to making reasonable accommodations for qualifying students, faculty, and employees with disabilities as required by applicable laws. For more information, please contact the Student Services Office.

## **Intellectual Property Rights**

Unless otherwise specifically instructed in writing by the instructor, students must neither materially nor digitally reproduce materials from any course offered by Criswell College for or with the significant possibility of distribution.

## **Resources and Supports**

Canvas and SONIS: Criswell College uses Canvas as its web-based learning tool and SONIS for student data. Students needing assistance with Canvas should contact the Canvas Help Support line at (844) 358-6140. Tech support is available at this number, twenty-four hours a day. Students needing help with SONIS should contact the Campus Software Manager at [studenttechsupport@criswell.edu](mailto:studenttechsupport@criswell.edu).

Student Services: The Student Services Office exists to foster and encourage success in all areas of life—physical, intellectual, spiritual, social, and emotional. Students are encouraged to reach out for assistance by contacting the office at 214.818.1332 or [studentservices@criswell.edu](mailto:studentservices@criswell.edu). Pastoral and certified counseling services are also available to Criswell students. Appointments are scheduled through the Dean of Students, at [deanofstudents@criswell.edu](mailto:deanofstudents@criswell.edu).

Wallace Library: Students can access academic resources and obtain research assistance by contacting or visiting the Wallace Library, which is located on campus. For more information, email the Wallace Library at [library@criswell.edu](mailto:library@criswell.edu). Offsite login information is available in Canvas in the “Criswell Student Training Course” under “Library Information.”

Tutoring Center: Students are encouraged to consult with tutors to improve and enhance their skills and confidence in any subject matter taught at the college. Tutors have been recommended by the faculty to ensure that the tutor(s) are qualified to serve the student body. Every tutor brings experience and expertise in an effort to provide the proper resources for the subject matter at hand. To consult with a tutor, students can visit the Tutoring Center located on the second floor in room E203, or schedule an appointment by emailing [tutoringcenter@criswell.edu](mailto:tutoringcenter@criswell.edu) or by calling 214.818.1373.

**Course Outline/Calendar**

**Weekly Session**

**Assignment**

**Week 1** (August 16-20)

Introduction  
When the Modern World began?

Decide on Research Topic  
Study City and Nation Map

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**Middle Ages to Renaissance**  
(5<sup>th</sup> Century to 16<sup>th</sup> Century)

**Week 2** (August 23-27)

Early Middle Ages

Report Research Topic to Professor  
Text Reading (5<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Study Timeline

**TAKE CITY AND NATION MAP TEST**

**Week 3** (August 30-September 3)

High Middle Ages

Text Reading (5<sup>th</sup> – 16<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Research Topic  
Start Discussion Thread  
Study TimeLine

**Week 4** (September 6-10)

Renaissance

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic  
Study TimeLine

**TIMELINE TEST**

**Week 5** (September 13-17)

Renaissance

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic

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**Age of Reason to Enlightenment**



(17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Century)

**Week 6** (September 20-24)  
Age of Reason (Science)

Text Reading (17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Research Topic

**Week 7** (September 27-October 1)  
Age of Reason

Text Reading (17<sup>th</sup> – 18<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Start Discussion Thread  
Research Topic

**Week 8** (October 4-8)  
Enlightenment

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic

**Week 9** (October 11-15)  
Enlightenment

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic

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**Romanticism and the Gilded Age**  
(19<sup>th</sup> Century)

**Week 10** (October 18-22)  
Romanticism

Text Reading (19<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Research Topic  
Presentations

**Week 11** (October 25-29)  
Romanticism

Text Reading (19<sup>th</sup> Century)  
Start Discussion Thread  
Research Topic  
Presentations

**Week 12** (November 1-5)  
The Gilded Age

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic  
Presentations

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**Week 13** (November 8-12)  
The Gilded Age

Interact on Discussion Board  
Research Topic  
Presentations

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**Late Modern**  
(1914-1986)

**Week 14** (November 15-19)  
Late Modern

Text Reading (1914 - 1986)  
Start Discussion Thread  
Presentations

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Thanksgiving Break (November 22-26)  
No Classes

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**Week 15** (November 29 – December 3)  
Late Modern

Interact on Discussion Board

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**Week 16** (May 6-10)

**Finish all Assignments**

**EXTRA CREDENTIALS**

I encourage students to take the learning experience beyond the walls of the classroom. I call the extra work “extra credentials” rather than extra credit. Any learning experience related in some way to the Modern World will do. This can include such activities as:

- Visiting museums,

- Watching good feature length historical film,
- Reading a good historical novel,
- Attending expert lectures or society meetings on other campuses
- Participating (and organizing) historic parties with costumes, historical movies and period refreshments.

If the student participates in these learning experiences, they should keep record of what they have done and a very brief description of what they have learned. This can be recorded in whatever format the student chooses. Turn in this list to me at the end of the semester.