

HIST-2351 section 13787

Dr. Thomas Behr  
Western Civilization, Part I

University of Houston, Spring 2007

**\*\*\*\* SYLLABUS \*\*\*\***

Office: 548 Agnes Arnold Hall, ext. 3-3113  
Mailto: [thomasbehr@earthlink.net](mailto:thomasbehr@earthlink.net) (spam filter)  
Office Hours: M,W, 3:00-4:00 p.m. and by appointment  
TA: Holle at 641 AH, M 11:30-1:00, W 2:30-4:00

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:**

The class will cover the people, ideas, events and major trends — economic, social, political, and cultural — in Western Civilization from pre-history upto approximately 1500. We will analyze and seek to understand the great movements in Western society, reflecting on the nexus of inter-relationships between various objective and subjective factors (see “Course Objectives” ). Our study will always be aimed at linking up experience of the past to critical issues of interest to us today.

**COURSE CONCEPTUALIZATION and LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

The course has a double objective: one is to acquire substantive knowledge about the history of the Western cultural tradition, the other is to develop the intellectual virtues (reading, reasoning, speaking and writing) and some practical virtues that are the hallmarks of a liberally educated person and form the basic “skills” for an engaged and rewarding life. History as a humanistic discipline stands between the social sciences and the liberal arts. The past may well dictate various socio-political, economic and cultural horizons to people of all times, but individual human beings still have to choose, in the final analysis, what they think most likely to lead to happiness. In conditions not of their own choosing, free and responsible people make their own history. Looking over the record of those experiences may have something to tell us.

*The Course Compass* website access is <http://www.coursecompass.com/>  
Connection information to be announced in class, students are required to consult Course Compass for announcements, grades and any potential Syllabus changes.

**REQUIRED TEXTS:**

King, *Western Civilization, A Social and Cultural History, Vol. I: to 1750, 3<sup>rd</sup> ed.*  
Behr, T., *Western Civilization, Part I. Course Companion.*  
Behr, T., *History Notes. Western Civilization by Margaret King, A Study Guide.*  
Auden, W.H., ed., *Portable Greek Reader*  
Lucretius, (Humphries, trans.), *The Nature of Things*  
Augustine of Hippo, *Enchiridion on Faith, Hope, and Love*  
Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica.* T. Behr, ed.

**GRADING:** (see details below)

1) Exam One (King chs. 1-4, <i>Greek Reader</i> readings)	25%
2) Exam Two (King chs. 5-8, Lucretius and Augustine)	25%
3) Final Exam	
Part 1 – Last 1/3 (King chs. 9-13, Aquinas)	25%
Part 2 – Comprehensive	25%
4) Participation	x%
5) Bonus Culture Credit points	up to 5%

Exams will be in-class, open book. Bring Blue Books. No other papers will be accepted.

Culture credits are awarded as specified in particular announcements (on Course Compass) up to .2 GPA scale points added directly on to final GPA (4.0) scale grade.

**Plagiarism or other cheating on the exams will be reported and penalized. For further information about Academic Honesty, the Academic Calendar, Religious Holy Days, and Disabilities, refer to:**

[http://www.uh.edu/provost/stu/stu\\_syllabsuppl.html](http://www.uh.edu/provost/stu/stu_syllabsuppl.html)

Schedule -- check Course Compass for changes

1/17	- Introductions: the Uses and Abuses of History
1/22	- Realist Historical Theory: read <i>Course Companion</i> , Introduction and pp. i-xx
1/24+29	- Civilization (and its discontents?): read King Ch. 1
2/5	- Cult and Civitas at the Cross-Roads: read King Ch. 2
2/7	- Development of the Greek <i>Polis</i> : read King Ch. 3
2/12+14	- Greek Reader, pp. 52-82; 202-241; 339-373
2/19+21	- Greek Reader, pp. 374-392; 406-430; 476-485; 639ff
2/26	- The Greek 'Age of Absolutism': read King Ch. 4
2/28	- Greek Reader, pp. 435-464; 477-485; 534-558
3/5	- FIRST EXAM
3/7	- Rome from Urbs to Orbis: read King Ch. 5
3/12-16	- Spring Break
3/19	- Lucretius, Books I – III and, Bk IV, lines 1038-1191
3/21	- Rome from Republic to Empire: read King Ch. 6
3/26	- Cult and Civitas, revisited: read King Ch. 7
3/28	- Augustine, Secs. I – XVIII, XXIII – XXVI, LXX – LXXIII, CXVII - CXXII
4/2	- The "Fall" of Rome: read King Ch. 8
4/4	- SECOND EXAM
4/9	- The Invention of Europe: read King Ch. 9
4/11	- Christendom and the foundations of Western Modernity: read Ch. 10.
4/16	- Western Capitalism: read King Ch. 11
4/18	- Western Social, Political and Cultural Paradigms: read King Ch. 12
4/23	- Aquinas, pp. TBD
4/25	- Aquinas, pp. TBD
4/30	- Crisis and Expansion: read King Ch. 13