

Professor Crews (he/him) | Area and Global Studies  
Class Times: Tue & Thu, 1:00-2:15 pm, ASH 1301  
Office Hours (LOH 112): M/W 12-2 & T/Th 10-12  
[chris.crews@gvsu.edu](mailto:chris.crews@gvsu.edu) | [@professorcrews](#)

## **History of Global Change and Social Transformation**

### **(GSI 202 / HST 202 – Section 4)**

#### **Course Description**

This course explores long-term, historical processes of global change and social transformation. We will focus on connections between communities, peoples and nations from ancient times to today with the goal of better understanding how and why the world looks the way it does. We will learn about some key historical turning points and how a diverse set of transformations around the planet helped to bring about an increasingly interconnected and globalized world.

#### **Course Goals**

The aim of this course is to help you better understand and participate in the complex, global world we live in today. We will use a wide range of theoretical and empirical materials that help us think about what it means to study global issues from diverse perspectives and across a variety of cultures. You will come away with a better understanding of some of the central issues of concern in the study of the past, as well as some of the debates currently taking place within and across the broad fields of global studies and global history.

#### **Required Class Book**

**1177 BC - The Year Civilization Collapsed.** Eric Cline. Princeton U. Press. 2015.  
*An electronic copy of the first edition of this book can be accessed [via library Ebooks](#).*

**The Silk Roads - A New History of the World.** Peter Frankopan. Penguin Books. 2017.  
*A copy of this book is on reserve in the library (2 hour checkout).*

#### **Additional Course Readings**

Additional course readings/content will be posted on Blackboard and is indicated by (\*BB) on the syllabus for those readings.

*\* This syllabus may be updated during the course of the semester.*

# **Policies and Procedures**

## **Class Structure**

- **Participation:** You are expected to have read materials before class and to take an active role in all classroom discussions and activities.
- **Presentations:** You will be put into small groups, and each group will be responsible for leading class discussions or other assigned class activities.
- **Blog Posts:** You will write a series of short blog posts on relevant global history topics.
- **Quizzes:** There will be several short in-class quizzes.
- **Exams:** There will be a midterm exam and a final exam.

## **Class Participation (10% of final grade)**

You are expected to read and think about the issues raised in our readings before class, and to fully participate in class conversations and activities. Please bring all assigned materials (books or handouts) for that day with you to class. Participation will count for 10% of your grade.

## **Group Presentations (20% of final grade)**

You will be divided into groups and each group will make a short class presentation related to class materials and readings. Each student in the group will be responsible for leading part of the group discussion, as well as preparing any materials for use in class. Each group will have 20 minutes to present. The presentations will count for 20% of your grade.

## **Blog Posts (20% of final grade)**

Students will be asked to write a series of short blog posts (2 posts in total, 750-1000 words) reflecting on a historical theme or question. These posts will require students to critically reflect, analyze and comment on course content. Each post will count for 10% of your grade.

## **Quizzes (20% of final grade)**

There will be 4 short quizzes during the semester. Each quiz will count for 5% of your grade.

## **Midterm and Final Exam (30% of final grade)**

There will be a midterm exam and a final exam. Each exam will count for 15% of your grade.

## **Assignment Due Dates**

Please turn in your assignments on time. Late assignments will only be accepted within 24 hours of the original due date and with an automatic 25% grade reduction. No credit will be given for any assignment more than 1 day late without official documentation of an excused absence.

## **Class Attendance**

More than 3 unexcused absences may result in a grade reduction for the course. Coming to class significantly late will count as an unexcused absence. See policies in the GVSU [Student Code](#).

Exceptions for class absences are as follows:

- Personal illness or death in the family (documentation required)
- Religious holiday or participation in university-approved activity (documentation required)
- Cosmic event making attendance impossible (flood, earthquake, zombie apocalypse)

## **Office Hours & Communication**

If you need to meet with me you can either speak to me before or after class or come to my office (LOH 112) during posted office hours. I try to respond to emails within 48 hours, but if for some reason you don't receive a reply after two days, please send me a follow up email.

## **Use of Electronics in Class**

Cell phones **MAY NOT** be used during class. Put them on silent and keep them in your bag. Laptops or tablets are allowed **if** being used for note taking or viewing our class readings. Checking your Facebook/Twitter/WeChat/WhatsApp/Instagram/SnapChat/Tinder/Grindr/Weibo, etc. is not class participation. Repeated abuse of electronics is grounds for a reduced final grade.

## **Writing & Research Help**

If you need additional writing or editing help contact the Writing Center, Lake Ontario Hall, 120. More information is available here: <https://www.gvsu.edu/wc/>. The Mary Idema Pew Library also provides a variety of resources for writing and research, including the Knowledge Market and Service Desk. For details visit: <https://www.gvsu.edu/library/>.

## **Classroom Conduct**

You are expected to treat your fellow students and the professor with respect. The nature of politics is disagreement, and arguments do emerge over deeply-held personal beliefs. You are encouraged to express your beliefs and convictions, but must do so respectfully and without insulting or attacking classmates. Discriminatory remarks, personal attacks and threats will not be tolerated, and you will be asked to leave if you cannot be respectful to others in class.

## **Plagiarism**

Plagiarism is a sign of intellectual laziness. You risk an F for the course if you are found guilty of plagiarism. GVSU's statement on Academic Integrity of Grades and Scholarship is listed [here](#):

*“The principles of academic honesty and integrity are fundamental to a community of scholars. The University expects that students will not engage in acts of academic dishonesty in curricular and non-curricular academic activities. Engaging in academic dishonesty compromises the integrity of university grades, and scholarship and research. Academic dishonesty is defined as actions or behaviors that misrepresent one’s contributions to or the results of any scholarly product submitted for credit, evaluation, or dissemination. This definition includes, but is not limited to, fabrication, falsification, cheating, and plagiarism.”*



### **Disability Support**

I will make every effort to accommodate any special needs you may have in the classroom. If you need accommodations for a learning, physical or other disability, please provide a memo from Disability Support Resources indicating the existence of a disability and the suggested reasonable accommodations. If you have not already done so, please contact the Disability Support Resources office (JHZ 4015) by calling 331-2490 or email [dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu](mailto:dsrgvsu@gvsu.edu). Please note that I cannot provide accommodations based upon disability until I have received a copy of the DSR issued memo. More information is available at: <https://www.gvsu.edu/dsr/>.

### **Gender Pronouns & Preferred Name**

I will gladly honor your request to address you by an alternate/preferred name or gender pronoun (she/her/, he/him/, they/them, etc.). Please advise me of your preferences so that I can update my records. You can also change your name within the university system through myName. More info about GVSU's myName process is online at: <https://www.gvsu.edu/myname/>.

### **Course Learning Objectives**

At the end of this course you should be able to **explain** and **evaluate** how historical knowledge is produced, how issues of language, culture, geography and power shape this knowledge, and the importance of understanding history from multiple perspectives. Students will also learn to develop **critical thinking** and **reading skills**, apply **ethical reasoning** to the texts and develop **oral presentation** skills. Additional learning outcomes are included in the GenEd handout at the end of the syllabus. This course is subject to all GVSU policies: [www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies](http://www.gvsu.edu/coursepolicies).

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## --- PART I: INTRODUCTION & BACKGROUND ---

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### **Week 1 (1/8, 1/10): Welcome & Course Introduction**

*Hand out syllabus, review goals, organization and materials, class introductions.*

Readings:

- **Peter Stearns** - Why Study History? (\*BB)
- **Joshua Mark** - The Origin and History of the BCE/CE Dating System (\*BB)

### **Week 2 (1/15, 1/17): When Civilization Collapsed**

Readings:

- **Eric Cline** – 1177 BC (Prologue, Ch 1)

Assignments:

- **\*Blog Post #1** - Due 1/22

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## --- PART II: GLOBAL HISTORIES ---

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### **Week 3 (1/22, 1/24): Conflicts & Struggles for Power**

Readings:

- **Eric Cline** – 1177 BC ( Chs 2-3)

Assignments:

- **Quiz #1** - 1/24

### **Week 4 (1/29, 1/31): Calamity and Collapse**

Readings:

- **Eric Cline** – 1177 BC (Chs 4-5)

Assignments

- **\*Presentation Group #1** (Tue 1/29)

### **Week 5 (2/5, 2/7): Lessons from the Ancient Past**

Readings:

- **Eric Cline** – 1177 BC (Epilogue, Afterward)

Assignments:

- **\*Quiz #2** - 2/7

## **Week 6 (2/12, 2/14): The Birth of a New World**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Preface, Chs 1-4)

Assignments:

- **\*Presentation Group #2** (Tue 2/12)

## **\*\* Midterm Exams \*\***

## **Week 7 (2/19, 2/21): A Story of Flesh and Fur**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 5-7)

Midterm Exam:

- **\*Midterm Exam - Tue 2/19** (Midterm exam covers materials from Weeks 1-6)

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## **--- Part III: RETHINKING GLOBAL HISTORIES ---**

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## **Week 8 (2/26, 2/28): Religion, Despair and Destruction**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 8-10)

Assignments:

- **\*Group Presentations - Group #3** (2/26)

## **\*\* Week 9 (3/5, 3/7): No Class – Spring Break**

## **Week 10 (3/12, 3/14): A History of Silver and Gold**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 11-14)

Assignments:

- **\*Group Presentations - Group #4** (3/12)

## **Week 11 (3/19, 3/21): Crisis, War and Oil**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 15-18)

Assignments:

- **\*Quiz #3** - 3/21

## **Week 12 (3/26, 3/28): Wheat, Genocide and the Cold War**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 19-21)

Assignments:

- **\*Group Presentations** - Group #5 (3/26)

## **Week 13 (4/2, 4/4): The Rise and Fall of Superpowers**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Chs 22-24)

Assignments:

- **\*Group Presentations** - Group #6 (4/2)

## **Week 14 (4/9, 4/11): Tragedy on a New Silk Road**

Readings:

- **Peter Frankopan** – The Silk Roads (Ch 25-Conclusion)

Assignments:

- **\*Quiz #4** - 4/11
- **\*Presentation Groups** - Group #7 (4/9)

## **\*\*No Thu class (4/18) – Professor Crews at WPSA Conference**

## **Week 15 (4/16): Final Exam Review**

Wrap-up & Final Exam Review

Assignments:

- **Blog Post #2** - Due 4/16

## **\*\* Finals Week \*\***

## **Week 16 (4/22): Finals**

Final Exam:

- Monday, April 22, 12:00-1:50 pm

The final exam will be taken in class and covers all materials from Weeks 7-14.

**### End of Class – Enjoy the Summer ###**

## ***GVSU General Education Program***

The mission of the Grand Valley State University General Education Program is to provide a broad-based liberal education experience that fosters lifelong learning and informed citizenship. The program prepares students for intelligent participation in public dialogues that consider the issues of humane living and responsible action in local, national, and global communities.

### **GSI 202 History of Global Change and Social Transformation Foundations - Historical Perspectives Cultures - Global Perspectives**

#### **Knowledge Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Explain how historical knowledge is created, including chronological thinking, a comprehension of primary sources, and historical analysis and interpretation.
2. Evaluate historical understanding through the examination of various human endeavors, such as social, political, scientific/technological, economic, and philosophical/religious/ aesthetic activities.
3. Explain how culture affects people's efforts to understand, use, and survive in their environments, and how these efforts, in turn, affect culture.
4. Explain within a cultural context the worldviews, language, or ways of life of societies, nations, regions, or peoples located outside of the United States.

#### **Skills Student Learning Outcomes:**

1. Critical Thinking – use systematic reasoning to examine and evaluate information and ideas and then synthesize conclusions to propose new perspectives and solutions. Students will:
  - Assess relevant information, perspectives and assumptions.
  - Construct logical conclusions based on reason and evidence.
  - Formulate novel approaches or create innovative interpretations.
  - Evaluate the novel approaches or innovative interpretations.
2. Ethical Reasoning —use a decision-making process based on defining systems of value. Students will:
  - Recognize ethical issues when presented in a complex situation.
  - Demonstrate understanding of key concepts and principles underlying various systems of reasoning.
  - Accurately apply ethical theories and terms to situations.
  - Demonstrate the ability to deal constructively with ambiguity and disagreement.
3. Critical Thinking – use systematic reasoning to examine and evaluate information and ideas and then synthesize conclusions to propose new perspectives and solutions. Students will:
  - Assess relevant information, perspectives and assumptions.
  - Construct logical conclusions based on reason and evidence.
  - Formulate novel approaches or create innovative interpretations.
  - Evaluate the novel approaches or innovative interpretations.
4. Oral Communication – effectively communicate verbally with a public audience across a variety of contexts. Students will:
  - Develop content appropriate to the presentation.
  - Organize the content in a logical manner appropriate for the intended audience.
  - Demonstrate evidence of rehearsal during the formal presentation.
  - Demonstrate effective formal presentation skills.

*Grand Valley State University educates students to shape their lives, their professions, and their societies.*