

CIV101 | Western Civilization I

Course Texts

No need to track down a textbook; these texts are provided digital as part of the course enrollment:

Sherman, Dennis and Salisbury, Joyce. *The West in the World*, 5th edition, McGraw-Hill, 2014.

Wilson, Julianna. *Western Civilization I*, Achieving the Dream, 2020.

Wilson, Julianna. *Western Civilization II*, Achieving the Dream, 2020.

Course Description

Beginning with the emergence of human communities, this course walks students through ancient civilizations and into the rise of Western society. Students will explore the ancient civilizations of Egypt, Rome, and Greece before learning about the Islamic world, Byzantium, the Renaissance, and the Scientific Revolution. Western Civilization I is a broad overview of key events and people that shaped the course of Western society. Students will explore these topics through readings, videos, and direct engagement with primary sources.

Learning Outcomes

After completing this course, students will be able to:

1. Identify key moments in the development of Western society
2. Describe the social, economic, and political impact that the discovery of the New World had on Europe
3. Analyze original historical materials
4. Interpret primary sources within their appropriate historical context
5. Organize historical events into chronological order
6. Justify your thinking with well-organized and well-supported thoughts
7. Compare and contrast early Western societies
8. Examine the secularization of religious authority to develop a deeper understanding of the political underpinnings of the Medieval world
9. Explain the rise and fall of the ancient Greek, Roman, and Egyptian civilizations
10. Identify and explain the social and political impact of the Scientific Revolution

Course Prerequisites

There are no prerequisites for Western Civilization I.

Academic Integrity Statement

Academic integrity is the pursuit of scholarly activity in an honest, truthful and responsible manner. Violations of academic integrity include, but are not limited to, plagiarism, cheating, fabrication and academic misconduct. Failure to comply with the Academic Integrity Policy can result in a failure and/or zero on the attempted assignment/examination, a removal from the course, disqualification to enroll in future courses, and/or revocation of an academic transcript.

Course Completion Policy

In order for a course to be considered complete, **all required coursework must be attempted, submitted, and graded.** Required coursework consists of graded assignments. Any Academic Integrity Policy violations may prevent a course from being considered complete.

Assessment Types

StraighterLine courses may include any combination of the assessment types described below. Review the descriptions to learn about each type, then review the Course Evaluation Criteria to understand how your learning will be measured in this course.

Benchmarks

Benchmarks test your mastery of course concepts. You have 3 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Note: Cumulative Benchmarks (final exams) only allow 1 attempt.

Capstones

Capstones are project-based assessments that help you apply concepts to real-world scenarios. You have 2 attempts, and your highest score counts.

Checkpoints

Checkpoints are quick knowledge checks on important course concepts. All are open-book, and most have 1-3 attempts.

AI Use-Case Policies

StraighterLine Capstone assessments operate under one of three AI Use-Case Policies. These designations are selected intentionally to support learners in developing digital literacy, ethical reasoning, and authentic communication skills. Each model requires students to engage meaningfully with the course outcomes while adhering to academic standards.

Independent Work Requirement: Capstones with this designation must be completed independently without using AI tools. The goal is for learners to showcase their own understanding and skills without AI assistance. Students are expected to generate and submit original work developed solely through their own reasoning and effort.

AI-Assisted Planning Option: Capstones with this designation may allow AI tools to support brainstorming and assessment planning. If allowed, students will be asked to document any AI assistance by noting how it informed their work. Documentation must be included within the assignment or in a designated reflection field. Examples include describing how an AI tool helped organize an outline, generate ideas, or surface sources for further exploration.

AI-Integration Requirement: Capstones with this designation require AI tools as part of the learning process. Students will be asked to reflect upon their AI interactions and AI contributions to the assessment. Reflections must include which tools were used, how they were used, and what insights students gained from the process. This promotes transparency, ethical use, and metacognitive skill-building.

Course Evaluation Criteria

Your score provides a percentage score and letter grade for each course. A passing percentage is 70% or higher.

There are a total of 1000 points in the course:

Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Checkpoint 1: The Roots of Western Civilization	0	N/a
Benchmark 1: Introduction to Western Civilization	15	1, 2, 5, 6, 9
Checkpoint 2: The Contest for Excellence	0	N/a
Checkpoint 3: The Hellenistic World, 336-150 B.C.E.	0	N/a
Checkpoint 4: The Rise of Rome, 753-265 B.C.E.	0	N/a
Checkpoint 5: The Roman Empire, 31 B.C.E.-410 C.E.	0	N/a
Benchmark 2: Checkpoints 1-5	150	1, 2, 5
Checkpoint 6: Western Kingdoms, Byzantium, and the Islamic World, ca. 376-1000	0	N/a
Checkpoint 7: The Early Middle Ages, c. 750-1000	0	N/a
Capstone 1: Virtual Field Trip and Artifact Analysis	250	3, 4, 6
Checkpoint 8: The High Middle Ages, 1000-1300	0	N/a
Benchmark 3: Religion and Western Civilization	15	1, 2, 5, 6, 9
Checkpoint 9: The Late Middle Ages, c. 1300-1500	0	N/a
Checkpoint 10: The Renaissance c. 1300-1640	0	N/a
Benchmark 4: Checkpoints 6-10	150	1, 5, 7, 9
Checkpoint 11: Religious Reform and Warfare, 1500-1648	0	N/a
Checkpoint 12: European Expansion 1450-1700	0	N/a
Checkpoint 13: Europe's Social and Political Order, 1600-1715	0	N/a
Checkpoint 14: The Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, 1600-1800	0	N/a
Capstone 2: Primary Source Analysis	250	3, 4, 6
Benchmark 5: Looking Back and Looking Forward	20	1, 2, 5, 6, 9
Benchmark 6: Checkpoints 11-14	150	1, 7, 8, 10

Assessment	Points	Learning Outcomes
Total	1000	

Course Roadmap

This roadmap provides an overview of the checkpoints and lessons covered in this course.

Checkpoint 1: The Roots of Western Civilization

- Why Study History?
- Early Civilizations and the Ancient World
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 1
- Watch and Learn: A Day in the Life of an Ancient Egyptian Doctor (Optional)

Checkpoint 2: The Contest for Excellence

- Ancient Greece
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 2

Checkpoint 3: The Hellenistic World, 336-150 B.C.E.

- The Hellenistic World
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 3

Checkpoint 4: The Rise of Rome, 753-265 B.C.E.

- The Rise of Rome
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 4
- Pathfinder: The Roots of Western Civilization

Checkpoint 5: The Roman Empire, 31 B.C.E. - 410 C.E.

- Christianity and Rome
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 5

Checkpoint 6: Western Kingdoms, Byzantium, and the Islamic World, ca. 376-1000

- The Early Middle Ages
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 6
- Reading: Wilson: Pre-Islamic Arabia
- Watch and Learn Videos: Optional

Checkpoint 7: The Early Middle Ages, c. 750-1000

- Islam in the Medieval World
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 7
- Watch and Learn: A Day in the Islamic Golden Age (Optional)

Checkpoint 8: The Middle Ages, 1000-1300

- The Restoration of Order
- The Crusades
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 8

Checkpoint 9: The Late Middle Ages, c. 1300-1500

- The Late Middle Ages
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 9
- Pathfinder: The Shaping of Medieval Europe

Checkpoint 10: The Renaissance c. 1300-1640

- The Renaissance
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 10
- Reading: Wilson: 450-1750 Renaissance and Reformation

Checkpoint 11: Religious Reform and Warfare, 1500-1648

- The Reformation of the Church
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 11

Checkpoint 12: European Expansion 1450-1700

- The New World
- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 12
- Reading: Wilson: Global Networks of Exchange in the 1600s

Checkpoint 13: Europe's Social and Political Order, 1600-1715

- Textbook: Reading Assignment: Chapter 13
- Pathfinder: From Renaissance to Modernity

Checkpoint 14: The Scientific Revolution and the Enlightenment, 1600-1800

- The Age of Revolution
- Textbook Reading Assignment: Chapter 14

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