



History and Political Science

HIS 1010 World Civilizations I

3 Units

Spring 2026

Meeting days/times (MWF 11:00am –11:55am)

Meeting location: Rohr Sociology 108

Final Exam: Wednesday, May 6, 10:30am-1pm

Information	Specifics for the Course
Instructor title and name:	R. Kennedy
Phone:	619-849-2537
Email:	rkennedy@pointloma.edu
Office location and hours:	Colt 209 Mon: 1:30-4:00 Tu-Thur 9am-4pm Wed: 12-3:30 Friday: 9:30-11am

PLNU Mission 

To Teach ~ To Shape ~ To Send

Point Loma Nazarene University exists to provide higher education in a vital Christian community where minds are engaged and challenged, character is modeled and formed, and service is an expression of faith. Being of Wesleyan heritage, we strive to be a learning community where grace is foundational, truth is pursued, and holiness is a way of life.

General Education Mission ☼

PLNU provides a foundational course of study in the liberal arts informed by the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In keeping with the Wesleyan tradition, the curriculum equips students with a broad range of knowledge and skills within and across disciplines to enrich major study, lifelong learning, and vocational service as Christ-like participants in the world's diverse societies and culture.

Course Goal

"Civilization" is defined, at minimum, as the "ization" or process of deepening and spreading civil society in the world. The History of World Civilizations I is the story of the beginnings of the world's most influential civic traditions. Since these traditions are founded in classic texts that are passed down through centuries, this class emphasizes understanding the historian's craft of reading old books, listening to dead people tell us what they were thinking, and entering a world-wide and three-thousand-year-old conversation about the proper ends of society. The course is Aristotelian in that it agrees with his first sentence in *Politics*: "A city-state is a fellowship of the good." The class is Confucian in the sense that it believes that looking back into history helps row the boat of civilization forward into the future. Deep in ancient books are the foundations of modern and world-wide discussions about the concentration, distribution, and proper limits of power, the best method of educating a bureaucracy that facilitates good governance, the importance of incorporating "the consent of the governed" into government so as to avoid tyranny, the responsibilities of the strong/rich to the weak/poor, and the tensions between war and peace, slavery and freedom, property and debt. Notions of households, citizenship, and gender along with spiritual matters—monotheism, *logos*, *dao*, *dharma*, and *laws of nature*—are essential to the story. This class does not believe that modern people are smarter than people in the past and in many ways will try to show that, in "the pursuit of happiness," modern people think best about civil society when they think in ancient and traditional ways.

GE Learning Outcome #2c

Students who complete this GE course will demonstrate an understanding of the complex issues faced by diverse groups in global and/or cross-cultural contexts. Assessed with a signature assignment (essay question).

Course Learning Outcomes for HIS 1010: Students who complete this course will be able to...

- analyze significant primary texts concerning early world civilizations.
- evaluate political, geographic, economic, social, cultural, religious, and intellectual institutions, structures, and processes across a range of historical periods and cultures.
- identify and analyze traditions of citizenship and governmental responsibilities to citizens.
- develop effective communication skills by sharing their interpretations of the past in a variety of written and/or oral assignments.

-examine historical developments with a particular emphasis on values and ethical choices, in light of being responsible citizens.

Required Texts and Recommended Study Resources*

Students are responsible for having the required course textbooks prior to the first day of class.

Herodotus, *The Histories*, trans. Robin Waterfield (Oxford UP) 0192824252

John Wills, *Mountain of Fame*

Old Testament and New Testament (any translation)

Aristotle, *Politics* (Dover) 0486414248

The Edicts of Asoka (University of Chicago UP) 0226586111

Rick Kennedy, *Jesus, History, and Mount Darwin* (Wipf & Stock) 978-1-55635-655-2

All supplemental materials posted on this course site (including articles, book excerpts, or other documents) are provided for your personal academic use. These materials may be protected by copyright law and should not be duplicated or distributed without permission of the copyright owner.

Assessment and Grading⊕

Attendance 25%

Reading Assignments 25%

Midterms 25%

Final 25%

Course Credit Hour Information⊕

Note: In the interest of providing sufficient time to accomplish the stated Course Learning Outcomes, this class meets the PLNU credit hour policy for a 3 unit class delivered over 14 weeks. It is anticipated that students will spend a minimum of 37.5 participation hours per credit hour on their coursework. For this course, students will spend an estimated 112.5 total hours meeting the course learning outcomes. The time estimations are provided in the Canvas modules.

Classes:

The Deep Past—Written Evidence from West Asia and the Eastern Mediterranean

1. Course Introduction: General education courses v. major courses. “Liberal arts and professional studies” in the PLNU Mission Statement. The name “World Civilizations” rather than “World History.”

Tradition of civics. Greek: *polis & politis & politiki*, Roman: *urbs & civis & civilitas*. Suffixes: “ization” “ics” in “civilization,” and “politics.”

2. People, Places, Geography, and Memory; Sarah and Hagar; Tomb at Hebron; Joseph and Oppression of the People. Discuss Genesis chapters 12, 16, 23, 41, and 47:13-26.

3. Writing, Archives and Farsighted Laws: Alphabets; Moses’ education? Judges; The Ark of the Testimonies/Covenants; Debt and Slavery. Discuss Exodus 1-2, 18, 25:10-22, Deuteronomy 15, Leviticus 25, Joshua 20.

4. The Distribution of Power: The “Hebrew Republic.” Deborah’s authority? Samuel and the problem with monarchy. Theseus and Athenian democracy. Discuss Numbers 11:16, Joshua 23-24, Judges 2:16-20, 4; I Samuel 8; and Plutarch’s “Theseus”

5. Lycurgas, Solon, and the Political Experiments at Sparta and Athens. Discuss Plutarch’s “Lycurgas” and “Solon.”

6. Jews in Babylon; Scribal Culture and the Power of Written Law. Discuss *Daniel* 1, 5, 6, and *Ezra* 1, 4, 5

7. Midterm 1 and Review

Herodotus and the influence of the Persian Empire

8. The Persian Empire in the Book of Esther. Discuss *Esther*.

9. History: Greek Rationalism of a Lower Type. Herodotus, “The Father of History.” Eye and ear witnesses, hear-say reports, authorities. Historical inquiry into War, Peace, Freedom, Happiness, Tyranny, and Politics. Discuss *Herodotus* Bk. 1: sections 1-13, 29-33, 56-66, 86-94.

10. Herodotus: Cyrus, Deioces, Harpagus, Nitocris, Tomyris. The Conquest of Babylon and the Persian Empire. Discuss Old Testament *Isaiah* 44:28-45:4, and *Herodotus* Bk 1: 94-140, 177-215.

11. Herodotus: Ancient Egyptians and Ethiopians, Geography, Rationality, and Politics. Discuss *Herodotus* Bk 2: sections 1-37, 77, 99-110, 124-159 and Bk 3: 17, 19-20, and 114.

12. Herodotus and what to learn from Cambyses, Nitetis, Otanes, Phaidime/Phaedymia, Megabysus, and Darius. Discuss *Herodotus*, Bk 3: 1-3, 21, 29-31, 36-38, 61-89, 127-134; bk 4:36-46.

13. Brutus and the Creation of the Roman Republic during the time of Darius in Persia. Discuss: *Livy*, *History of Rome*; *Polybius*, *The Rise of Rome* bks. 1.59-2.2, 6: 11-18.

14. Gendered Power and Wisdom in Persian History: Abigail, Bathsheba, Attosa, Phaidime, Artemisia, and the Amazons. Discuss 1 Samuel 25; 1 Kings 1-2, and *Herodotus* bk 3: 132-134; bk 4: 110-116; bk 7: 1-3 bk 8:67-70; 87-88, 93; 101-103.

15. Midterm 2 and Review.

Confucius, Mencius, Ashoka, and Aristotle: Civic Happiness and Political Responsibilities

16. Confucius and Mencius. *Chun tzu (junzi)* and the relationship between monarchy and scholars. "The Mandate of Heaven (*tien*)" and the *tao (dao)* "the way." Discuss John Wills' *Mountain of Fame* chapters 1 & 2.
17. Ashoka (King Priyadarsi), Buddhist Politics, Dharma Bureaucrats, Dharma Missionaries. Discuss *The Edicts of Asoka* (You don't have to read the intro).
18. Aristotle's *Politics*: Household v. State, family, property, slavery. Discuss: *Politics* bk 1 (pp. 24-53).
19. Aristotle's *Politics*: Citizenship, Friendship, Popular Sovereignty, and the Ends of Government. Discuss: *Politics* bk 3 (pp. 100-144).
20. Aristotle's *Politics*: The happy life of middleness; Public education in the liberal arts. Discuss *Politics* bk. 4.11 (p. 167-171); bk. 7.1 (pp. 257-259); bk. 7.4 (pp. 265-268); bk. 8 (300-317).
21. Midterm 3 and Review

"Classic" Empires and the Silk Road Connection

22. Roman Republic to Roman Empire. Pilate as a "Friend of Caesar" and Trial of Jesus. Discuss *Gospel of John* 18:28-19:27
23. The *Pax Romana* (Roman Peace); Citizenship, religious toleration, and mob control. Discuss New Testament: *Acts* 16:35-17:9, 17:16-18:17, 19:23-41, 21:27-40, 22:22-29, 23:12-28:31
24. Constantine, Scholar Bishops, Eusebius, and the Bible. Discuss Theodoret's *Ecclesiastical History* bk I, chapters 9, 11, 14, and 15.
25. Qin (Chin) and Han Empires in China. The example of Sima Qian as Confucian scholar-bureaucrat. Discuss *Mountain of Fame* chapters 3 & 4.
26. Wang Mang and Ban Zhou. Radical and Female Confucianism in the Han Empire. Obedience, Humility, and Households. Discuss *Mountain of Fame* chapters 5 & 6 and from the New Testament *Philippians 2* and *Colossians 3*
27. After Aristotle: Alexandria, Libraries, and Liberal Arts. Santa Paula, Santa Catalina, and Hypatia. Discuss "Educating Bees: The Craft of Humility in Classical and Christian Liberal Arts."

The Rise of the Three Great Civilizations: Western/Christian, Islamic, East Asian

28. Zhuge Liang and Daoism, Hui Neng and the spread of Buddhism Discuss *Mountain of Fame* chapters 7 & 8.
29. The Latin West: Augustine, Liberal Arts, and the Lowered Expectations of Church and State. Discuss Augustine's *On Christian Doctrine (On Christian Education)*
30. The Birth of Europe: Gregory, Charlemagne, and Bishop Alcuin. Read assigned article on

Charlemagne and Alcuin.

31. Separation of Church and State, Elective Monarchy. Electing Popes and Holy Roman Emperors. Begin reading Kennedy's *Jesus, History, and Mt. Darwin*.

32. The Founding of Medieval Universities; Curriculum, Human history v. Natural history. Discuss Kennedy's *Jesus, History, and Mt. Darwin*.

33. Muhammad's life and Last Sermon. Discuss "Muhammad's Last Sermon"

34. Abbasids, Baghdad, and the House of Wisdom. Discuss Gaston Wiet on "The Golden Age"

35. The Mongol influence throughout Asia. Discuss *Mountain of Fame* chapter 12.

Civilization's Traditions

36. East Asian Civilization, the Ming Navy, and Neo-Confucianism. Discuss *Mountain of Fame* chapter 13 on Wang Yangming

37. The British revival of Roman republicanism. Discuss Brutus story in Monmouth's *History of the Kings of Britain*.

38. The Ethiopian Tradition

39. *Pax Hispanica* and Mexico City

Final Examination Policy

Successful completion of this class requires taking the final examination on its scheduled day. The final examination schedule is posted on the [Traditional Undergraduate Records: Final Exam Schedules](#) site. If you find yourself scheduled for three (3) or more final examinations on the same day, you are authorized to contact each professor to arrange a different time for one of those exams. However, unless you have three (3) or more exams on the same day, no requests for alternative final examinations will be granted.

Content Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive various types of information. In [class name], all of the class content, including that which may be intellectually or emotionally challenging, has been intentionally curated to achieve the learning goals for this course. The decision to include such material is not taken lightly. These topics include [list topics]. If you encounter a topic that is intellectually challenging for you, it can manifest in feelings of discomfort and upset. In response, I encourage you to come talk to me or your friends or family about it. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Trigger Warning*

I acknowledge that each of you comes to PLNU with your own unique life experiences. This contributes to the way you perceive several types of information. In [class name], we will cover a variety of topics, some of which you may find triggering. These topics include [list topics]. Each time this topic appears in a reading or unit, it is marked on the syllabus. The experience of being triggered versus intellectually challenged are different. The main difference is that an individual must have experienced trauma to experience being triggered, whereas an intellectual challenge has nothing to do with trauma. If you are a trauma survivor and encounter a topic in this class that is triggering for you, you may feel overwhelmed or panicked and find it difficult to concentrate. In response, I encourage you to take the necessary steps for your emotional safety. This may include leaving class while the topic is discussed or talking to a therapist at the Counseling Center. Should you choose to sit out on discussion of a certain topic, know that you are still responsible for the material; but we can discuss if there are other methods for accessing that material, and for assessing your learning on that material. Class topics are discussed for the sole purpose of expanding your intellectual engagement in the area of [subject/major], and I will support you throughout your learning in this course.

Spiritual Care*

Please be aware PLNU strives to be a place where you grow as whole persons. To this end, we provide resources for our students to encounter God and grow in their Christian faith.

If you have questions, a desire to meet with the chaplain or have prayer requests you can contact your professor or the [Office of Spiritual Life and Formation](#).

State Authorization*

State authorization is a formal determination by a state that Point Loma Nazarene University is approved to conduct activities regulated by that state. In certain states outside California, Point Loma Nazarene University is not authorized to enroll online (distance education) students. If a student moves to another state after admission to the program and/or enrollment in an online course, continuation within the program and/or course will depend on whether Point Loma Nazarene University is authorized to offer distance education courses in that state. It is the student's responsibility to notify the institution of any change in his or her physical location. **Refer to the map on [State Authorization](#) to view which states allow distance education outside California.**

PLNU Copyright Policy*

Point Loma Nazarene University, as a non-profit educational institution, is entitled by law to use materials protected by the US Copyright Act for classroom education. Any use of those materials outside the class may violate the law.]

PLNU Recording NotificationⓈ

In order to enhance the learning experience, please be advised that this course may be recorded by the professor for educational purposes, and access to these recordings will be limited to enrolled students and authorized personnel.

Note that all recordings are subject to copyright protection. Any unauthorized distribution or publication of these recordings without written approval from the University (refer to the Dean) is strictly prohibited.

PLNU Academic Honesty PolicyⓈ

Students should demonstrate academic honesty by doing original work and by giving appropriate credit to the ideas of others. Academic dishonesty is the act of presenting information, ideas, and/or concepts as one's own when in reality they are the results of another person's creativity and effort. A faculty member who believes a situation involving academic dishonesty has been detected may assign a failing grade for that assignment or examination, or, depending on the seriousness of the offense, for the course. For all student appeals, faculty and students should follow the procedures outlined in the University Catalog. See [Academic Policies](#) for definitions of kinds of academic dishonesty and for further policy information.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) PolicyⓈ

Note: Point Loma Nazarene University supports academic integrity and the thoughtful integration of emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence (AI), in the learning process. Below are three sample statements reflecting varying levels of AI use permitted in this course. Faculty may select, adapt, or delete as appropriate.

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc) to generate ideas, but you are not allowed to use AI tools to generate content (text, video, audio, images) that will end up in any work submitted to be graded for this course. If you have any doubts about using AI, please gain permission from the instructor.

You are allowed to use Artificial Intelligence (AI) tools (e.g., ChatGPT, Gemini Pro 1.5, GrammarlyGo, Perplexity, etc.) in this course. Any work that utilizes AI-based tools must be clearly identified as such, including the specific tool(s) used. Please use the following sources to guide your citations when using AI.

[MLA Style Center: Citing Generative AI](#)

[APA Style: How to Cite ChatGPT](#)

[Chicago Manual of Style: Citing Content Developed or Generated by AI](#)

PLNU Academic Accommodations PolicyⓈ

PLNU is committed to providing equal opportunity for participation in all its programs, services, and activities in accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA). Students with disabilities may request course-related accommodations by contacting the Educational Access Center (EAC), located in

the Bond Academic Center (EAC@pointloma.edu or 619-849-2533). Once a student's eligibility for an accommodation has been determined, the EAC will work with the student to create an Accommodation Plan (AP) that outlines allowed accommodations. Professors are able to view a student's approved accommodations through Accommodate.

PLNU highly recommends that students speak with their professors during the first two weeks of each semester/term about the implementation of their AP in that particular course. Accommodations are not retroactive so clarifying with the professor at the outset is one of the best ways to promote positive academic outcomes.

Students who need accommodations for a disability should contact the EAC as early as possible (i.e., ideally before the beginning of the semester) to assure appropriate accommodations can be provided. It is the student's responsibility to make the first contact with the EAC. Students cannot assume that because they had accommodations in the past, their eligibility at PLNU is automatic. All determinations at PLNU must go through the EAC process. This is to protect the privacy of students with disabilities who may not want to disclose this information and are not asking for any accommodations.

Language and Belonging*

Point Loma Nazarene University faculty are committed to helping create a safe and hospitable learning environment for all students. As Christian scholars we are keenly aware of the power of language and believe in treating others with dignity. As such, it is important that our language be equitable, inclusive, and prejudice free. Inclusive/Bias-free language is the standard outlined by all major academic style guides, including MLA, APA, and Chicago, and it is the expected norm in university-level work. Good writing and speaking do not use unsubstantiated or irrelevant generalizations about personal qualities such as age, disability, economic class, ethnicity, marital status, parentage, political or religious beliefs, race, gender, sex, or sexual orientation. Inclusive language also avoids using stereotypes or terminology that demeans persons or groups based on age, disability, class, ethnicity, gender, race, language, or national origin. Respectful use of language is particularly important when referring to those outside of the religious and lifestyle commitments of those in the PLNU community. By working toward precision and clarity of language, we mark ourselves as serious and respectful scholars, and we model the Christ-like quality of hospitality.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/nondiscrimination.

Sexual Misconduct and Discrimination*

In support of a safe learning environment, if you (or someone you know) have experienced any form of sexual discrimination or misconduct, including sexual assault, dating or domestic violence, or stalking, know that accommodations and resources are available through the Title IX Office at pointloma.edu/Title-IX. Please be aware that under Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, faculty and staff are required to disclose information about such misconduct to the Title IX Office.

If you wish to speak to a confidential employee who does not have this reporting responsibility, you can contact Counseling Services at counselingservices@pointloma.edu or find a list of campus pastors at pointloma.edu/Title-IX.

If you (or someone you know) have experienced other forms of discrimination or bias, you can find more information on reporting and resources at www.pointloma.edu/bias

PLNU Attendance and Participation PolicyⓈ

Regular and punctual attendance at all class sessions is considered essential to optimum academic achievement. If the student is absent for more than 10 percent of class sessions, the faculty member will issue a written warning of de-enrollment. If the absences exceed 20 percent, the student may be de-enrolled without notice until the university withdrawal date or, after that date, receive an “F” grade.

Note: The information below must be included under the “PLNU Attendance and Participation Policy” Section if you are teaching an Online or Hybrid course.

Getting feedback from the Loma Writing Center while you’re in the process of working on an assignment is a great way to improve the quality of your writing and develop as a writer. You are encouraged to talk with a trained writing consultant about getting started on an assignment, organizing your ideas, finding and citing sources, revising, editing for grammar and polishing final drafts, and more. For information about how to make in-person or online appointments, see [Loma Writing Center webpage](#) or visit the Loma Writer Center on the first floor of the Ryan Library, room 221.

- [Appointment Calendar](#)
- [Website](#)
- Email: writingcenter@pointloma.edu

Assignments At-A-Glance

Note: Faculty are encouraged to post assignments in Canvas.

Lomabooks Instructions for StudentsⓈ:

Note: For courses using materials available through Lomabooks

For both digital and print materials, please add these student instructions to your syllabus and Canvas Course. Prior to the start of class, the PLNU Bookstore will also be sharing student instructions in a standalone email on how to access their content.

This course is part of our course material delivery program, LomaBooks. The bookstore will provide each student with a convenient package containing all required physical materials; all digitally delivered materials will be integrated into Canvas.

You should have received an email from the bookstore confirming the list of materials that will be provided for each of your courses and asking you to select how you would like to receive any printed

components (in-store pick up or home delivery). If you have not done so already, please confirm your fulfillment preference so the bookstore can prepare your materials.

*For more information about **LomaBooks**, please go: [HERE](#)*