

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY
HIST*1010: Europe and the Early Modern World
Fall 2026

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CALENDAR DESCRIPTION

This course will deal with the evolution and expansion of European society during the pre-industrial era. Commencing with the Renaissance and Reformation it will survey such themes as the voyages of exploration, the impact of western culture on indigenous societies, the development of commercial capitalism, the transformation of science and technology and the conflict between imperial powers in Europe and overseas.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

History 1010 is an introductory-level course about Europe and its interactions outside of Europe from the fifteenth to the end of the eighteenth century. The course covers many of the major events and movements that influenced the development of so-called Western culture including: the Italian Renaissance; the Protestant and Catholic Reformations; the overseas expansion and global imperialism; the emergence of scientific culture; the rise of liberalism during the Enlightenment and the political revolutions which rocked Europe at the close of the eighteenth century.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOK

The following textbook will be used in the class: John Merriman, *History of Modern Europe, 4th edition* volume 1, W.W. Norton, 2019. The publisher's list price for this item is \$85.50 in print and \$43.25 for digital access. If you are looking for a less expensive used copy of the book, the third edition (2009) can also be used. All other readings for the class are posted on Courselink.

COURSE OBJECTIVES

By the end of the course students in History 1010 should have gained a broad sense of historical development and an understanding of how key elements of Western culture (e.g., beliefs in liberalism and rationalism) were shaped by key events in early modern European history.

Through the critical reading of primary documents, students should develop an informed historical perspective by reading in context and analyzing the bias and limitations of sources of historical information. Those students who opt to complete the Primary Source Assignment should improve their written communication and time management skills; and learn how to effectively use the collections of an academic library.

ASSESSMENT AND DUE DATES

Participation and Attendance	15%	Classes marked with* (see lecture schedule)
Midterm Exam 01	20%	22 October 2026
Midterm Exam 02	30%	19 November 2026
or		
Primary Source Assignment	30%	19 November 2026
Final Exam	35%	TBA

Attendance is critical to your success in this class. **Participation and Attendance** will be assessed at each class marked with an asterisk (*). You are expected to participate in small group discussions related to primary documents (document studies) and complete weekly reading quizzes which will be evaluated for completion only. This portion of the grade reflects the consistency of your attendance and engagement with the course. Therefore, these discussions and quizzes cannot be made up unless there is serious, ongoing illness or an unforeseen issue impacting your ability to attend lectures (i.e. an unforeseeable reason requiring you to miss three or more weeks of class). Further information on how participation and attendance will be graded is posted on Courselink.

Midterm Exam 01 will focus on course content and will be written in class on Thursday, 22 October 2026. **Midterm Exam 02** will focus on reading a primary source document in context and will be written in class on Thursday, 19 November 2026. Both midterms will take place in our classroom during regular class time. If you require extra time as part of an accommodation granted by Student Accessibility Services, you must book an exam with them as soon as possible.

Instead of writing Midterm Exam 02, students may choose to write a **Primary Source Assignment**. This assignment should be between 1000 and 1500 words in length and draw on a minimum of five scholarly sources from the University of Guelph Library. Further instructions and requirements for this assignment are posted on Courselink.

If you choose to write the Primary Source Assignment, you must select a primary source from the collection of documents posted on Courselink and compose a short proposal based on a given template. You must then book a meeting to discuss your proposal with a Teaching Assistant who will decide whether to approve your topic. All proposals must be submitted to the Courselink Dropbox for approval by **Friday 09 October 2026**. Students who have not received approval to write the Primary Source Assignment are required to write Midterm Exam 02. Any student wishing to switch from the Primary Source Assignment to the Midterm 02 may

do so at any time before **Thursday 19 November 2026**, which is both the due date of the paper and the date of Midterm Exam 02.

This course uses Turnitin Software to check for originality. Students are encouraged to check originality scores prior to submission. Please see me if you need further assistance.

All submissions must be original work and reflect the ideas and research conducted by the student. Use of AI software (e. g. ChatGPT) may result in charges of academic misconduct. Please see the instructor if you are unsure as to what tools may be used.

The **Final Exam** will be written in person during the exam period. The time and location of the exam will be announced on Web Advisor at a later date.

LATE PENALTIES

All assignments should be submitted to the Courselink Dropbox by 11:59 pm on the day they are due. Late assignments will receive a late penalty of 2% per weekday, calculated on the calendar day. Late penalties are capped at 15%, but papers will not be accepted after the last day of classes: **4 December 2026** at 11:59 pm when the drop box closes. Emails asking for further extensions will not be answered and assignments submitted via email will not be graded. If a student is experiencing exceptional difficulties (e.g., long term illness, a death in the family) or needs accommodations related to a learning disability, they should contact the instructor as soon as possible, and prior to the assignment due date.

REWEIGHTING OF ASSIGNMENTS

The value of the various components for this course will **not** be reweighted, except in very exceptional cases (such as severe and prolonged illness or serious health circumstances). Each component of the course is designed to contribute to and assess different aspects of the course's learning objectives, and you are expected to complete all of them.

USE OF EXTERNAL COMMERCIAL EDUCATIONAL WEBSITES

Course slides, sample assignments, rubrics and templates are the intellectual property of the instructor. These are freely given to registered students in the course as part of their education. I do not give my permission for students to post these materials on any external commercial website or platform (e.g., CourseHero). If you are struggling in the course, arrange to meet with me and I can either help you or point you in the right direction.

LECTURE & READING SCHEDULE

Orientation Week

10 Sep. Introduction to the Course

No Readings

Week 01

15 Sep. *The Crises of the Late Middle Ages & Chapter 01 Quiz

17 Sep. The Portuguese Overseas Expansion

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 01: Medieval Legacies and Transforming Discoveries," pp. 3-43; Document 01 [Courselink] "Columbus, Extracts from a Journal."

Week 02

22 Sep. *The Renaissance & Chapter 02 Quiz

24 Sep. *Document Study #01: Columbus, Extracts from a Journal

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 02: The Renaissance," pp. 45-81; Document 01 [Courselink] "Columbus, Extracts from a Journal"

Week 03

29 Sep. *Protestant & Catholic Reformations & Chapter 03 Quiz

01 Oct. *Document Study #02: The Spiritual Exercises

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 03: The Two Reformations," pp. 83-127. Document 02 [Courselink] "Spiritual Exercises"

Week 04

06 Oct. *French Wars of Religion & Chapter 04 Quiz

08 Oct. The Spanish and Portuguese Seaborne Empires

09 Oct. Any student opting to complete the Primary Source Assignment must have met with their TA and submitted their proposal for approval by this date.

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 04: The Wars of Religion," pp. 129-65.

Week 05

13 Oct. Fall Break

15 Oct. Sugar and the Atlantic Slave Trade

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 05: The Rise of the Atlantic Economy: Spain and England," pp. 169-211; Document 03 [Courselink] "Observations of Slavery"

Week 06

20 Oct. *Document Study #03 "Observations of Slavery"

22 Oct. ***Midterm Exam 01** (In Class)

No Readings

Week 07

27 Oct. ***Eighty Years' War and the Dutch Republic & Chapter 06 Quiz**

29 Oct. Military Revolution

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 06: England and the Dutch Republic in the Seventeenth Century," pp. 213-49.

Week 08

03 Nov. ***Absolutism and Constitutional Monarchies & Chapter 07 Quiz**

05 Nov. Coal Mining and Energy Consumption in the Early Modern Period

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 07: The Age of Absolutism: 1650-1720," pp. 251-93.

Week 09

10 Nov. ***Natural Philosophers and the Scientific Revolution & Chapter 08 Quiz**

12 Nov. ***Document Study #04 "The Witch Persecution at Bamberg"**

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 08: The New Philosophy of Science," pp. 297-323; Document 04 [Courselink] "The Witch Persecution at Bamberg"

Week 10

17 Nov. ***The Enlightenment & Chapter 09 Quiz**

19 Nov. ***Midterm Exam 02 (In Class) or Primary Source Assignment due**

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 09: Enlightened Thought and the Republic of Letters," pp. 325-59; [Courselink] Primary Source Reading Passage (for Midterm 02)

Week 11

24 Nov. ***Agricultural and Industrial Change & Chapter 10 Quiz**

26 Nov. Road to the French Revolution

Readings: Merriman, *A History of Modern Europe*, vol. 1, "Chapter 10: Eighteenth Century Economic and Social Change," pp. 361-97.

Week 12

1 Dec. Conclusion

3 Dec. Optional Review Session

No Readings

UNIVERSITY POLICY STATEMENTS

Academic Integrity

The University of Guelph is committed to upholding the highest standards of academic integrity and it is the responsibility of all members of the University community – faculty, staff, and students – to be aware of what constitutes academic misconduct and to do as much as possible to prevent academic offences from occurring. University of Guelph students have the responsibility of abiding by the University's policy on academic misconduct regardless of their location of study; faculty, staff and students have the responsibility of supporting an environment that discourages misconduct. Students need to remain aware that instructors have access to and the right to use electronic and other means of detection.

Please note: Whether or not a student intended to commit academic misconduct is not relevant for a finding of guilt. Hurried or careless submission of assignments does not excuse students from responsibility for verifying the academic integrity of their work before submitting it. Students who are in any doubt as to whether an action on their part could be construed as an academic offence should consult with a faculty member or faculty advisor.

The [Academic Misconduct Policy](#) is outlined in the Undergraduate Calendar.

Accessibility

The University promotes the full participation of students who experience disabilities in their academic programs. To that end, the provision of academic accommodation is a shared responsibility between the University and the student.

When accommodations are needed, the student is required to first register with Student Accessibility Services (SAS). Documentation to substantiate the existence of a disability is required; however, interim accommodations may be possible while that process is underway.

Accommodations are available for both permanent and temporary disabilities. It should be noted that common illnesses such as a cold or the flu do not constitute a disability. Use of the SAS Exam Centre requires students to make a booking at least 10 business days in advance, and no later than November 1 (fall), March 1 (winter) or July 1 (summer). For students at the Guelph campus, information can be found on the [SAS website](#).

Accommodation of Religious Obligations

If you are unable to meet an in-course requirement due to religious obligations, please email the course instructor within two weeks of the start of the semester to make alternate arrangements. See the Academic calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Accommodations of Religious Obligations](#).

Copies of Out-of-class Assignments

Keep paper and/or other reliable back-up copies of all out-of-class assignments: you may be asked to resubmit work at any time.

Drop Date

Students will have until the last day of classes to drop courses without academic penalty. The deadline to drop two-semester courses will be the last day of classes in the second semester. This applies to all undergraduate students except for Doctor of Veterinary Medicine and Associate Diploma in Veterinary Technology (conventional and alternative delivery) students. The regulations and procedures for course registration are available in the [Undergraduate Calendar - Dropping Courses](#).

Email Communication

As per university regulations, all students are required to check their <uoguelph.ca> e-mail account regularly: e-mail is the official route of communication between the University and its students.

Health and Wellbeing

The University of Guelph provides a wide range of health and wellbeing services at the [Vaccarino Centre for Student Wellness](#). If you are concerned about your mental health and not sure where to start, connect with a [Student Wellness Navigator](#) who can help develop a plan to manage and support your mental health or check out our [mental wellbeing resources](#). The Student Wellness team are here to help and welcome the opportunity to connect with you.

Illness

Medical notes will not normally be required for singular instances of academic consideration, although students may be required to provide supporting documentation for multiple missed assessments or when involving a large part of a course (e.g., final exam or major assignment).

Recording of Materials

Presentations that are made in relation to course work—including lectures—cannot be recorded or copied without the permission of the presenter, whether the instructor, a student, or guest lecturer. Material recorded with permission is restricted to use for that course unless further permission is granted.

Resources

The [Academic Calendars](#) are the source of information about the University of Guelph's procedures, policies and regulations which apply to undergraduate, graduate and diploma programs.

When You Cannot Meet a Course Requirement

When you find yourself unable to meet an in-course requirement because of illness or compassionate reasons please advise the course instructor (or designated person, such as a teaching assistant) in writing, with your name, id#, and e-mail contact. See the Undergraduate Calendar for information on regulations and procedures for [Academic Consideration](#).