Western Civilization II

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| **Credit level:** 4 |
| **Length:** semester 2 |
| **ECTS credit value:** 8 |
| **College and School:** Lazarski University in Warsaw, Faculty of Economics and Management |
| **Module Leader:** Prof. Christopher Lazarski |
| **Host Course:** BA in International Relations |
| **Pre-requisites:** Western Civilization I |
| **Co-requisites:**N/A |
| **Special features:**N/A |
| **Access restrictions:**N/A |
| **Summary of module content:** This is the second part of the survey module on Western Civilization. The class aims to present long-term trends in the development of European and Western world. In particular, it focuses on the impact of the Enlightenment and French Revolution on the moduleof Western history as well as on the triumph of liberalism, nationalism, and communism. Furthermore, it attempts to show the roots of totalitarianism and the post-modern outlook |

**Assessment Methods**

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| Rank | Assessment type | Assessment name | Weighting | Qualifying set (where the minimum mark required applies across multiple assessments) |
| 1 | Coursework | Portfolio | 60% |  |
| 2 | Closed Book Exam | Final exam | 40% |

**Synoptic assessment**

N/A

**Learning outcomes**

By the end of the module the successful student will be able to:

1. Analyse the consequences of the Enlightenment and the French and Industrial Revolutions for the political, social, and economic transformation of Modern Europe.
2. Observe the rise and decline of European power, analysing the geopolitical, economic, and ideological factors that shaped its trajectory.
3. Analyse the World Wars and their consequences for global political structures and international relations.
4. Trace the origins and messages of main intellectual trends in the 19th-21st centuries, analyzing their influence on political and cultural developments.
5. Analyse the collapse of Communism and understand main developments in present Europe with its post-modern outlook.
6. Apply knowledge of European past to the conditions of contemporary world and international politics.
7. Understand the need for further studies and developing the knowledge and skills necessary in professional life.

**Course outcomes the module contributes to:**

* L4.3 Sensitivity to the role of political culture and power in shaping our perceptions of political order within International Relations, understood through different regional, theoretical and cultural frameworks.
* L4.5 The ability to evaluate the role of historical, structural, cultural and ideational dimensions of domestic and international political processes, in theory and in practice.
* L4.6 Awareness of the importance of information literacy and library skills for studying and researching at university.
* L4.8 A successful transition to the demands and expectations of university-level study.

**Indicative syllabus content**

* The Age of Revolutions: American, French and Industrial Revolutions.
* Principal ideologies and their impact: Reaction and Conservatism; Liberalism, Nationalism, and Socialism.
* The European Age: Expansion and New Imperialism.
* The early modern period versus the late modern Europe: disillusionment
* 20th Century: World Wars and totalitarianism
* Cold War and Communism; European integration and Globalization
* 1989 and its Aftermath. Globalization and post-modernism. Is liberalism the end of history?

**Teaching and learning methods**

Teaching combines weekly lectures (module leader) and workshops (led by one or two other teachers, depending on the number of workshop groups). Keeping a more or less chronological order, the lectures present the module content by topics. Each has a separate power point presentation that highlights key points for a given topic (for further study in the textbook). The lecturer encourages students to engages in discussion to ensure they are following and understanding the reviewed material, especially as it relates to the evolution of such fundamental ideas as citizenship, government, liberty, equality, power, etc. Workshops review assigned readings, explore historical case study and scenario individually or in small groups, encourage research using IT tools, and provides opportunities to clarify more complex issues covered in lectures.

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| Activity type | Category | Student learning and teaching hours\* |
| Lecture | Scheduled | 45 |
| Seminar | Scheduled |  |
| Tutorial | Scheduled |  |
| Project supervisor | Scheduled |  |
| Demonstration | Scheduled |  |
| Practical classes and workshops | Scheduled | 45 |
| Supervised time in studio/workshop | Scheduled |  |
| Fieldwork | Scheduled |  |
| External visits | Scheduled |  |
| Work based learning | Scheduled |  |
| Scheduled online learning | Scheduled |  |
| Other learning | Scheduled |  |
| Total scheduled |  | 90 |
| Placement | Placement |  |
| Independent study | Independent | 110 |
| Total student learning and teaching hours |  | 200 |

\*hours per activity type are indicative and subject to change.

**Assessment rationale: why has this assessment been used for this module?**

The assessment structure for the 2nd semester module at Level 4 has two main aims: firstly, to understand module content and secondly, to develop effective study habits, essential for level 4 and beyond. Brief reactive notes on issues discussed in class or in assigned readings, along with in-class exams, help track progress, reinforce regular learning, and distribute the assessment load more evenly throughout the semester.

Portfolio: The portfolio grade worth 60% is made up of four reactive notes (600-700 words) Feedback on both reflective notes helps students improve their analytical and writing skills. This approach ensures student engagement and consistent progress by requiring regular reading and active participation (module LOs 1, 3, 5 and 7).

The reactive notes are submitted collectively as a single portfolio assessment, which constitutes 60% of the total module grade. Students are required to complete these notes regularly, following the schedule provided by the instructor at the beginning of the semester. This ongoing process enables students to receive continuous feedback and remain actively engaged throughout the module. Each individual note carries equal weight within the overall portfolio mark.

**Final exam** (90 minutes, 40% of the total grade) usually consists of three broad, essay-type questions evaluating a thorough comprehension of European tradition. This assessment method tests students' knowledge and understanding of Europe’s evolving past, while challenging their analytical skills. The final exam aligns with LOs 2, 4, and 6.

**Assessment criteria: what criteria will be used to assess my work on this module?**

Reactive notes will assess students' knowledge and understanding of assigned readings and class materials, specifically evaluating their consistency in studying module content. The evaluation criteria, each carrying equal weight, are as follows: (1) Accuracy and understanding; (2) Relevance; (3) Background knowledge; (4) Clarity and coherence; (5) Quality of analysis.

The final exam features much broader and more challenging questions; therefore, its assessment is based on the following criteria: (1) Relevance and precision—demonstrating the ability to directly address exam questions with concise, well-structured responses: (2) Analytical depth and critical thinking; (3) Background knowledge and the ability to compare and contrast (4) Clarity and coherence—ensuring logical structure, readability, and effective communication. While writing quality is also considered, it holds less weight in the overall assessment.

The assessments will examine to what extent the student has demonstrated ability to:

* Understand the political, social, and economic impact of the Enlightenment and the French and Industrial Revolutions
* Grasping the long-term impact of the French Revolution on the course of Western Civilisation.
* Knowing and understanding the geopolitical, economic, and ideological factors that contributed to the rise and decline of European power.
* Examine the causes, progression, and consequences of the World Wars
* Identify and explain the origins and influence of key intellectual movements from the 19th to the 21st centuries.
* Analysing the collapse of Communism and the events of the recent past, such as globalization, European integration and its crisis, and threats to peace and liberty.
* Demonstrate independent research skills and the ability to engage in continuous learning.

**Sources**

**Essential Reading**

McKay, J.P., et all (2008, or earlier editions; later editions only for the recent past). *A History of Western Society* (§ 19, 21-31). New York: Houghton Mifflin. (or any other textbook on Western Civilization – our library has a rich choice of such textbooks – but McKay is strongly recommended).

**Recommended Reading**

Ortega y Gasset (1930 or subsequent editions), *The Revolt of the Masses*, New York, London, § 1, 6, 7, 9, 11.

Christopher Lazarski (2023), *Lord Acton for Our Times,* Ithaca & London: Cornell University Press, 94-114, 135-142.

James Scott (1998), *Seeing Like a State*, New Haven, London, Introduction, § 1, 3.

Timothy Snyder (2010), *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*, New York, Preface, Introduction, § 4, Conclusions.