

Course: **FROM MESOPOTAMIA TO MACHIAVELLI: WORLD HISTORY TO 1500**
Instructor: Kyle E. David
Course level: Lower-level undergraduate survey
Enrollment: 20 – 30+

In what ways have societies organized themselves since modern humans evolved hundreds of thousands of years ago? How have humans explained the natural world and their place in it? What technological innovations have shaped these societies? This course analyzes the developments of social organization, religion, and technology from the origins of farming to the great world convergence of the fifteenth century. Over the semester, students will examine topics such as: the legacy of evolution, human migration across Afroeurasia and the spread of complex societies in the Americas, empire and state building, cultural and religious exchange, and technological development.

This course emphasizes the evaluation of historical documents, through which students will learn to think about change over time. Assigned readings include: creation epics, weather omens, oracle bones, legal codes, imperial court records, religious sermons, hagiographies, merchant diaries, cargo manifests, and more. The textbook assigned for this course is Ross E. Dunn and Laura J. Mitchell's *Panorama: A World History*, which will be supplemented with archaeological and textual sources from other texts. At the start of the semester, students will be assigned to a study group, with which they will work throughout the course. In week one, each group will choose a symposium project topic. Students are expected to become experts on this topic, noting its various developments that occur throughout the course. At the end of the semester, students will present their findings alongside original research they have carried out during the term. Topics include: urban development, warfare, state power, gender, age and the family, religion, environment, disease, and public health.

- Week 1: The Peopling of the World, 7,000,000 – 10,000 BCE
- Week 2: Farms, Cities, and the New Agrarian Age, 10,000 – 2,000 BCE
- Week 3: Afroeurasia's Moving Frontiers: Farmers and Charioteers, 3,000 – 1,000 BCE
- Week 4: Early Odysseys in the Americas, Australia, and Oceania, 8000 – 500 BCE
- Week 5: Afroeurasia: Centers of Power, Trade, and New Ideas, 1200 – 600 BCE
- Week 6: Empire Building and Cultural Exchange, India to the Mediterranean, 600 – 200 BCE
- Week 7: An Age of Giant Empires, 300 BCE – 300 CE
- Week 8: Review and Mid-term Exam
- Week 9: American Complexities, 900 BCE – 900 CE
- Week 10: Turbulent Centuries, 200 – 600 CE
- Week 11: Afroeurasia in the Era of Arab Empire, 500-800 CE
- Week 12: State Power and Expanding Networks of Exchange, 750 – 1000 CE
- Week 13: Dynamic Centuries across Afroeurasia, 1000 – 1250
- Week 14: Afroeurasia in the Era of Mongol Power, 1200 – 1350
- Week 15: Cities and Empires in the Americas, 900 – 1500
- Week 16: Calamities and Recoveries across Afroeurasia, 1300 – 1500