

The Watershed Community School

2007-2008 Academic Year

Myth, Logic, Covenant and Consequences: Western History to 1648 **William M. Galloway**

Course Description:

In this course we will explore the history of secularism and religious faith in Europe and the Near East from ancient times through the early modern era. An underlying theme is the significance of covenants in human history. During the first trimester, we will examine the humanism of ancient Greece and Rome, the rise of monotheism- Judaism, Christianity and Islam- during classical and medieval times, and the convergence of these secular and religious impulses during the Crusades of the High Middle Ages. We will then investigate the resulting transformation of Western society, exemplified in turning points ranging from the Magna Carta to Luther's 95 Theses. During the Winter, you will each write a major research paper in which you will be carefully guided through the various stages, from writing note cards through the crafting of a formal bibliography and footnotes. In the Spring, we will study the explosion of secular and religious movements during the Renaissance and the Reformation up through the age of exploration. Skills stressed throughout the year include critical thought, development and articulation of thesis statements in formal essays, primary source analysis and discussion. Emphasis is placed on summarizing, analyzing and reacting to key documents as a lens through which we come to know world views of the past in an effort to better understand the world view we hold today.

Course Objectives: Students will

- Gain a clear understanding of major historical developments in Western Europe from
- Demonstrate an ability to summarize , analyze and react to primary source documents.
- Research, write, revise and footnote a major research paper.
- Make connections between historical events and modern day.
- Acquire communications skills that support learning through discussion, deliberation

Course Expectations

This course has no textbook. You will be receiving many handouts and it is imperative that you keep these handouts in a carefully organized, three-ring binder throughout the year. Keep them in order, and do not throw anything out, so that you can use them easily to review for tests and exams.

Students are responsible for meeting the History Department's "Requirements and Policies". All tests, essays, the term paper, an oral presentation, any special or independent projects, homework and the final exam must be submitted to receive course credit. Assignments submitted late will not receive full credit value unless excused. It is also the student's responsibility to secure class notes from a friend when you are absent. Be sure to check with me concerning any lost handouts, questions or problems. Feel free to schedule an appointment to meet with me outside of class.

Homework assignments must be completed prior to class with "How to do Homework" process complete and ready to turn in. Students will be expected to complete written homework assignments on three-holed paper and kept in their binder, ready to be removed easily if requested by the teacher.

Classroom discussion and participation will be essential throughout the year. The purpose of conversation is not to debate, but to enter into meaningful dialogue with others to enhance learning. Each student should bring an awareness that living with differences is as important as reaching agreement. Students will sign up to lead/facilitate a class at least one time per trimester.

Testing will take various formats. Full period tests may consist of one essay question or short-answer, multiple choice, fill-ins, either as part of a test or on their own. At times, in-class quizzes will be given covering specific material which has been assigned. These quizzes may be announced or unannounced. Some very short quizzes will be given during the first five minutes of class. Students are encouraged, therefore, to get to class on time as no extra time will be given to complete the quiz, unless a note from a parent or the Director is presented. If a major test is missed, it should be made up within three school days of the student's return to class, unless special arrangements have been made in advance.

If more than three classes are missed, additional work will be assigned and must be completed by a time designated by your teacher.

Course Requirements for Credit:

Preparation: Complete all homework assignments. Each student must come to class having completed the assignment listed on the syllabus. Because life is sometimes unpredictable, however, students are permitted three excused assignments with an understanding that students must turn in the missing work at the beginning of the next class.

Participation: Engage in classroom discussions on a regular basis- at least once or twice each class period

Presentation: Lead a 15 minute discussion on a related topic of your choice.

Summative Assessments: Complete all papers, tests, quizzes and the final exam.

Revisions: Make revisions on written work as requested by your teacher.