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# History 1121 B – Introduction

## James O. Richards

- 8:00 - 9:15 AM, Monday - Wednesday
  - Russell Hall 327
  - Please print your name on the index card I give you
  - (Also tell me your personal interests, hobbies, etc.)
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# History 1121 – Introduction

## I. Course Policies

- I have a Gordon Web Page:  
[http://www.gdn.edu/pt\\_faculty/j\\_richards/](http://www.gdn.edu/pt_faculty/j_richards/).
  - You need a home computer or access at the college.
  - Course Policies-Refer to Course outline.
  - **3 Exams over Lectures/Text-100 pts each. Essays.**
  - **3 Special Reading Exams-20 pts each. Essays.**
  - Attendance/make-up policies.
  - How to contact me. Telephone/e-mail. Preferred-  
**jor@charter.net**
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# History 1121 – Introduction

## II. What May I Expect To Learn?

You may well ask this question. You may expect to learn:

1. Some of the basic questions every person asks about life and its meaning.
2. How others before have answered these questions and how you answer them.
3. Whether you read with discernment, write effectively and critically analyze arguments and theories.

Fifteen weeks will not produce miracles if you have problems with #3 above, but with work you can still pick up some skills you can use in other courses and in coping with life's challenges (e.g., in telling truth from fiction when you need to).

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# History 1121 – Introduction

## III. How Difficult is this Course?

During Fall 2008 30 students took my History 1121.

6 dropped with a W.

3 earned a WF or an F by not attending or by not taking all the exams.

21 attended more or less regularly and passed the course.

15 earned an A or B. Most of these had perfect attendance.

A good bit of reading is required. Writing of essays is required.

But you will know what questions I will ask. And you may try your essays on me before the exams and get my reaction.

Also, you will know exactly how I will figure your final grade. [Link to a spreadsheet which will calculate your final grade for you.](#)

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# Introduction to the Course

## **IV. What is Culture?**

- Culture as used in this course means values, beliefs, ideas, ideals, standards, norms shared by a given people in a given period. Using this definition, what are some everyday examples of culture? In the United States? In the southern United States?
  - Examples: from the U.S.; the South; World Cultures such as Confucianism, Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam.
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# Introduction to the Course

- Confucianism: tradition, past, rituals, attaining of virtue by self-control, decorum, proper behavior.
  - Hinduism: rebirth, Karma, cycle of births, ultimately absorption into All (Soul)
  - Buddhism: self-annihilation into Nirvana. Immediately, inner holiness; right conduct, speech, views, aspirations, livelihood, rapture.
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# Questions

- 1. Do ideas drive people? What does motivate behavior?
  - 2. Does man rule and decide his own destiny or does some outside force? Providence? Scientific determinism?
  - 3. What makes something (an idea, institution, common practice) valid? Reason? Custom? Nature? What? Why?
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# Introduction to the Course

## ■ V. What is Europe as a Culture?

- 1. Man is a being of worth and dignity.**
  - 2. The universe is orderly and purposeful and man can know it is so as well as believe it is so.**
  - 3. There is an ethical, transcendent deity overseeing the universe and human affairs.**
  - 4. Institutions and the social order should reflect the ideal order underlying the universe.**
  - 5. The future can be and will be better for man than the present and the past.**
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# Introduction to the Course

## ■ VI. The Study of History as a Study of Culture

“Europe” itself was a synthesis of elements from earlier Mediterranean cultures-Judaic, Greek, Roman, Christian-and from Germanic influences. From each of these came important contributions which were blended into a new culture “Europe”, expressed in distinctive social structures, thought, manners, art, instruments, and skills.

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# Introduction to the Course

## ■ VII. The Study of History as a Study of Culture

1. “Above I use the phrase “a core of recurring basic ideas...” quite deliberately. Europe as a culture possesses unity but not unanimity. What is the difference?
  2. Let’s talk about my preconceptions and assumptions.
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# Introduction to the Course

## ■ VIII. Preview of the Course

### A. The Origins of Europe in Ancient Cultures

1. Judaic contributions: four of Europe's elements
  2. Greek contributions: three of Europe's elements
  3. Roman contributions: preserving, expanding Greek culture; enabling Christianity to spread.
  4. Christian contributions: blending Greco-Roman with Judaeo-Christian elements.
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# Introduction to the Course

B. These blended into the First Europe-the medieval West, 900-1350.

C. At the end of the course, a Search for a Second Europe 1350-1650.

D. In History 1122 (when I teach it) we look at the Second Europe, the Enlightenment; challenges to it in the 19th and 20th centuries and conclude with “Is there to be a Third Europe?”

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