

**MMW 12: Classical and Medieval Traditions (6 credits)**

**Lecturer: Ben Van Overmeire Track [B]**

**Section [B11] and [B12]**

**TA: Rosana Womack**

**Office:** MMW TA Suite, Desk # 32

**Office Hours:** Monday, 9:30-11:30 (also available by appointment)

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**The energy of the mind is the essence of life.**

**--Aristotle**

**Course Objective:**

Covering ca. 100 BCE to 1200 CE, MMW 12 examines the development of classical empires from China to the West, their collapse, and their transformation into distinct medieval forms. It also examines the rise and spread of Christianity, Islam, and Mahayana Buddhism.

This course is the first of two writing-intensive quarters in the MMW sequence and teaches the skill of writing an academic essay that makes an argument based on critical thinking and engagement with sources.

**Section Objective:**

The purpose of section is to improve your understanding of and engagement with the course content by giving you an opportunity to exercise critical thinking, writing, reading, studying, listening, and speaking skills in a small, supportive group led by a knowledgeable guide.

When you successfully complete this course, you will be better able to:

- Articulate how classical empires become medieval ones, how major world religions develop in the process, and how multiple factors shape broad cultural changes
- Interpret and analyze course material in its historical context, developing ideas in dialogue with course readings and lectures
- Write coherent academic argument essays that address a significant issue; ask a specific, open-ended arguable question; answer the question by making a claim and backing it up with sufficient, relevant, specific, compelling evidence; consider and rebut counterarguments; demonstrate significance of the argument; and accurately cite sources in MLA format
- Know the difference between primary and secondary sources and how to use them in academic writing
- Engage in substantive and respectful discussion of course concepts with peers

**Letter Grade Requirement:** You must take MMW courses for a letter grade. If you have selected Pass/No Pass as a grading option for MMW 12, you should immediately change your

option to letter grade, or you will not fulfill the ERC General Education Requirement and will have to take MMW 12 again.

**Attendance, Participation, and Section Requirements:**

Regular attendance and participation in section is mandatory. Students who miss 5 sections—excused or unexcused--will fail section. Students who miss 7 sections—excused or unexcused--will fail the course. Any absence can lower your grade.

You must arrive on time and be prepared to discuss and write about course material. Consistent tardiness will lower your grade.

You are REQUIRED to bring all relevant material (including lecture notes, homework assignments, and readings) to the section each week. We will be working with this material hands-on in the classroom.

In order to participate successfully, you will need to be prepared. Bring your lecture notes and assigned readings to section each week. For each section meeting, you will be responsible for readings and material assigned for all lectures that have already taken place.

Dialogue and even disagreements are encouraged, provided they are done so respectfully. I understand that speaking in a group setting is more difficult and at times uncomfortable for some people. For this reason, this term we will be using Piazza to facilitate and encourage outside class discussion. The system is highly catered to getting you help fast and efficiently from classmates, the instructor, and myself. Although I will give participation points to students who utilize Piazza, I will give considerably more points to students who participate during in-class discussions.

**Homework, Quizzes, In-Class Work:**

I may assign homework to be completed by the beginning of the next section meeting. The purpose of the homework will generally be to prepare for the next class. Therefore, late homework will not be accepted. Homework is generally graded on a credit/no credit basis. All homework and extra credit should be typed and follow the MMW style sheet guidelines, including your name and section number. I will collect your work at the beginning of section.

It is imperative that you keep up with the assigned reading for this course. In order to ensure that you do not fall behind, I will conduct short quizzes--terms to be defined, a short prompt, etc.--at the beginning of section on an (almost) weekly basis, which will constitute roughly half of your section grade. I reserve the right to give pop quizzes if I see that students are not keeping up with class readings.

**Grading:**

Your section counts for 10% of the overall class grade. 5% will be determined by weekly quiz grades, which will push you to keep up with the regular assignments. The final 5% will come from regular attendance and participation, which, along with reading and assignments (done out of class) will not only help your course grade but also ensure your overall success in MMW.

**Writing Assignments and Late Policy:**

In MMW 12, you are required to complete three structured writing assignments that will build your argumentative writing skills. Assignments will be covered in section, along with the MMW “Style Sheet” for guidelines on how to format and submit your papers. Failure to meet ALL criteria for writing assignments will result in the loss of points.

All papers must be turned in **directly** as a **hard copy** to me in section, lecture, or office hours, in addition to an electronic copy uploaded to [www.turnitin.com](http://www.turnitin.com). Papers left in my mailbox or the MMW office **will not be graded**. You will lose one-third of a letter grade for each day a paper is late (including weekends). If you are unable to attend section the day the paper is due, you must make other arrangements to submit your work. In addition to taking the mid-term and final exams and attending section regularly, you must submit **ALL** writing assignments (both as a hard copy to me and to [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com)) **in order to pass the course**.

**Classroom Environment:**

Expressing ideas--verbally and in written form--creates a level of academic engagement that develops comprehension and critical thinking skills. During section we will develop your reading, writing, and verbal abilities by exploring topics, issues, and cultures that require discussion and critical debate—skills you will utilize throughout your academic and professional career. My aim is to create a safe and positive environment that promotes thoughtful and critical engagement. During our lively class discussions, I will expect you to engage in a respectful manner with your classmates, with me, and with the course material. A good rule of thumb is to follow the adage “Think before you speak.”

Because our meeting time is limited, I will ask that you please refrain from using your laptops during section—unless I indicate otherwise--and please make sure to turn your cell phones off. Also, please avoid discussions that are unrelated to the course material or section exercises. Failure to do so will result in a deduction of points, or worse, public embarrassment—I have been known to answer disruptive phone calls.

**Communicating with Me/Office Hours/Email/Piazza**

In writing emails to a TA or professor, practice formal communication etiquette at ALL times (otherwise, you are sending a signal that you do not take the course, or their time, seriously). Please use the following format to send courteous emails when communicating with your TAs and professors:

Subject: MMW 12 Section A0\_

Dear/Hello/Greetings [name]

[Text of your message: The text should conform to standard English, meaning you should write in complete sentences with the first letter of each sentence capitalized and with appropriate punctuation to signal the end of a sentence, introduce a new clause, or separate items on a list]

Sincerely, Cheers, Best, Thanks,

Your First and Last name (your name is not always clear from your email address)

Keep it concise! Your teachers are very busy; they will appreciate it if you can get to the point quickly and do not ask vague, open-ended questions. If your email does not follow these guidelines, you can expect to receive this format back as a response (signaling that you must revise and re-send your email).

You may contact me via my designated email address listed above; however, I encourage you to first post your question(s) on the class Piazza site unless your problem is of a personal nature--I will respond within 24 hours of your post or email. I require that you post your question(s) on the Piazza site simply because your classmates may be able to help you sooner than I can. Every 24 hours (sometimes sooner), I will endorse correct answers and good questions and reflections, and I will edit incorrect information. You may even edit each other's questions and answers.

Find our class page at:

[www.piazza.com](http://www.piazza.com)

If you have any problems or feedback for the developers, email [team@piazza.com](mailto:team@piazza.com).

### **Course Resources:**

Course Website:

MMW12 Homepage: <http://roosevelt.ucsd.edu/mmw/courses/mmw12.html>

UCSD Writing Center: <http://writingcenter.ucsd.edu/>

The Cornell Note-taking System (in case you need help with note-taking):

[http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/Sidebars/Study\\_Skills\\_Resources/cornellsystem.pdf](http://lsc.sas.cornell.edu/Sidebars/Study_Skills_Resources/cornellsystem.pdf)

### **Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS):**

College life can be stressful, and it is normal to feel overwhelmed at times. UCSD has a staff of professionals that are available for confidential meetings to discuss any personal concerns you might have. Feel free to contact CAPS at anytime to set up an appointment:

<http://psychservices.ucsd.edu/#students>

**Academic Integrity:** You are responsible for the honesty and integrity of your academic work at UCSD. The University has a strict policy prohibiting cheating of any kind. If you are suspected of cheating, you will be required to meet with an academic coordinator, who will then discuss your case with the professor. If the professor charges you with misconduct, the professor will determine the penalty for your grade in the course, which can range from deductions to failing the paper, section, or the course. Then you will have to meet with the Dean of Student Affairs, who will determine additional penalties, which can range from failing the course and taking an academic integrity seminar to suspension to expulsion.

Throughout this process, a hold will be put on your grade. Even a first offense can result in a quarter's suspension, and the standard sanction for a second offense is suspension or permanent dismissal from the university. Any instance of academic misconduct can be

recorded in a student's file. Such a record might interfere with a student's acceptance into law, medical, or graduate school, or might make that student ineligible for positions requiring a security clearance, such as a government internship.

In brief, the University's ***Policy on Integrity of Scholarship*** states that students are expected to complete the course in compliance with the instructor's standards. No student shall engage in any activity that involves attempting to receive a grade by means other than honest effort; for example:

1. No student shall knowingly procure, provide, or accept any unauthorized material that contains questions, or answers to any examination or assignment to be given at a subsequent time.
2. No student shall complete, in part or in total, any examination nor assignment for another person.
3. No student shall knowingly allow any examination or assignment to be completed, in part or in total, for himself or herself by another person.
4. No student shall plagiarize or copy the work of another person and submit it as his or her own work.
5. No student shall employ aids excluded by the instructor in undertaking course work or in completing any exam or assignment.
6. No student shall alter graded class assignments or examinations and then resubmit them for regrading.
7. No student shall submit substantially the same material in more than one course without prior authorization.

Please read the full Policy: <http://students.ucsd.edu/academics/academic-integrity/policy.html>. If you have any questions, ask me.