Syllabus: "New World History, Global History, and Big History”
10946

Professor David Christian
Room: 622, Ewha-Samsung Education & Culture Building; Phone: 82-2-3277-6925
Email: David.Christian@ewha.ac.kr

Dates & Times: This class will meet for two 75 minute sessions (with a 15 minute break) each
day on Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday from June 22 to July 16.

Introduction: In this course, you will learn about a new form of “world history” called “big
history”. Like all forms of world history, big history tries to move beyond the nation-centered
perspectives that dominate history teaching in most Universities. Instead, it offers a more
human-centered global approach to history. I hope you will find it exciting. Big History surveys
the past at all scales, beginning with the origins of the Universe and ending in today’s global
world, before looking into the future. So it is like a modern Creation Story. This is a form of
world history that helps us understand the place of human beings within our Universe, using the
best scientific information available to us early in the 21st century.

Teaching Language: The main teaching language of the course will be English. However, I am
aware that for many of you this will be your first course in English, so I will go through the
material carefully and slowly, and will make extensive use of PowerPoint presentations. The
PowerPoint presentations and lectures will be recorded and will be available on-line.

Text: The main text is available in English and Korean versions:
2) 데이비드 크리스찬, 세계사의 새로운 대안: 거대사, 2009

A more detailed text, David Christian, Maps of Time: An Introduction to Big History, is available
only in English, though a Korean translation is being prepared. I encourage you to use internet
sources, but it is important to make sure that they can be trusted to provide accurate information.

Assessment:
- Attendance: 10%
- Participation: 10% [judged on preparation for classes and participation]
- Term Paper: 30% [1,000-2,000 words, with bibliography]
- Mid-Term: 20% [1 hour; 4 short identification questions; wide choice of questions]
- Final: 30% [2 hours; 4 ID questions; 2 short essays; wide choice of questions]

Consultation: I will be available throughout the course for private consultation about any aspect
of the course.
Content, Class by Class:

WEEK 1: June 22-June 25
Class 1: Introduction: I will explain what subjects we will cover in the course, and what work you will be expected to complete. We will also introduce ourselves; I want to learn something about your backgrounds, and you will want to learn something about my background
Class 2: World History and Big History. How was everything in the Universe Created?
Class 3: How were Stars and Galaxies Created? How was our Solar System Created?
Class 4: Origins and history of our earth. Consultation on Term Paper

WEEK 2: June 29-July 2 (Mid-Term Exam)
Class 5: Life, evolution and the origins of life on earth. How has life evolved over 4 billion years?
Class 6: The evolution of human beings. What makes human beings so different?
Class 7: The oldest period of human history: the Paleolithic era.
Class 8: MID-TERM EXAM: on the course so far

WEEK 3: July 6-9
Class 9: The Origins of Agriculture: a fundamental turning point in history
Class 10: The Creation of the First States and Empires
Class 11: The Evolution of Agrarian Civilizations
Class 12: Modernity and the Industrial Revolution

WEEK 4: July 13-16
Class 13: The Twentieth Century and Today’s World: SUBMIT TERM PAPER
Class 14: Humans and the Environment
Class 15: Review of course and preparation for exam
Class 16: FINAL EXAM: on the entire course

Calendar:

June/July 2009