

HISTORY 348

THE WORLD AT WAR, 1914-1918

FALL 2011

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OFFICE HOURS: Tuesdays 9:30-10:30

And by Appointment

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Few events in world history have had as profound an impact on political institutions, society, and culture as the “Great War.” This course will begin with an examination of prewar European society and an analysis of the stress zones--diplomatic, political, and cultural--that brought Europe to war in 1914. Next we will examine the course of the war, focusing not only on the battlefield but on the mobilization of the enormous human and material resources that were required to fight a “total war.” Attention will be paid to the impact of total war on society, an impact that included challenging gender traditional roles, rapid technological changes, an increased role for the state, and an intensification of ideological conflicts. Finally, we will attempt to evaluate the consequences of the war for Western societies. These consequences extended beyond the peace treaties--which ratified the breakup of empires and reconfigured European power relations--to world historic events such as the Russian Revolution, the rise of Fascism, a misfired attempt to bring a new order to the Middle East, and, not least, a major sea change in Western intellectual and cultural attitudes.

READING LIST

Texts (to be purchased):

Neiberg, Michael. *Fighting the Great War* (Harvard University Press, 2005)

Remarque, Eric. *All Quiet on the Western Front* (originally published, 1929)

Selections from the following books on Electronic Reserve (indicated “ER” on class schedule and can be downloaded through Blackboard):

Blinkhorn, Martin. *Fascism and the Right in Europe, 1919-1945* (2000)

Brittain, Vera. *Testament of Youth* (originally published, 1933)

Eatwell, Roger. *Fascism* (Penguin, 1995)

Eksteins, Modris. *Rites of Spring* (Houghton Mifflin, 1989)

Graves, Robert. *Good-Bye to All That* (originally published, 1929)

Habeck, Mary. “Technology in the First World War: The View from Below” in Jay Winter et al. *The Great War and the Twentieth Century* (Yale University Press, 2000)

Hynes, Samuel. *A War Imagined: The First World War and English Culture* (Antheneum, 1991)

Keylor, William. *Twentieth Century World: An International History* (Oxford University Press, Fourth Edition, 2001)

- Laurence Lafore. *The Long Fuse* (Lippicott, 1965)
- Lyons, Michael. *World War I: A Short History* (Prentice Hall, 2000)
- MacMillan, Margaret. *Paris 1919* (Random House, 2001)
- Paxton, Robert. *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Thomson-Wadsworth, Fourth Edition, 2005)
- Schmitt, Bernadotte and Harold Vedeler. *The World in the Crucible, 1914-1919* (Harper & Row, 1984)
- Stevenson, David. *Cataclysm: The First World War as Political Tragedy* (Basic Books, 2004)
- Tzara, Tristan. "Dada" in Eugen Weber, *Movements, Currents, Trends: Aspects of Thought in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Heath, 1992)
- Valéry, Paul. "The Intellectual Crisis" in Eugen Weber, *Movements, Currents, Trends: Aspects of Thought in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries* (Heath, 1992)
- Wilkinson, James and Hughes, H. Stuart. *Contemporary Europe* (10th ed., Pearson, 2004)
- Williams, Oscar. *Little Treasury of Modern Poetry* (Scribner's, 1952)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance is required, not optional. Only officially certified absences will be accepted. All unexcused absences will affect your grade. Also, as a courtesy to both the instructor and your fellow students, please be on time and turn off all cell phones before class starts.

Examinations. There will be two examinations: a mid-term and a final (see class schedule below for dates). Both exams will have the same format: one part short essays, one part long essay.

Informal Writing Exercises. Periodically throughout the semester there will be *unannounced* writing exercises at the beginning of class. They will be short (maximum one page) commentaries on a particular aspect of the day's reading assignment. These writing exercises are designed to serve three purposes: first, to give you regular practice in written expression; second, to allow you to gauge how well you are absorbing the reading assignments; finally, and not least, to keep you on track with your reading. Given the fact that these exercises will be unannounced, you need to have completed the day's reading assignment *before every class*; and since they will be given at the beginning of class, you need to be on time. These short, informal writing exercises will not be "graded" in the ordinary sense. Instead, they will receive one of the following marks: a check (indicating satisfactory performance); a check plus (indicating a performance which is especially thoughtful, complete, or well-conceived); a check minus (indicating unsatisfactory performance). *A check minus cannot be redone.* It will signal to me that either you have not done the reading or you have not done it carefully enough. Better than average performance on these informal writing exercises will be counted positively in your "discussion grade." *A number of check minuses will, like*

absences, have serious consequences for your grade. If you are not in class on a particular day (or if you miss the exercise by coming late), you will receive a check minus.

Class Discussion. Due in large part to the size of the class, most of the course will be in a lecture format. However, I hope we can engage in at least some discussion. From time to time, I'll pose questions and, in turn, I would encourage you to ask questions or offer comments on the material. Also, toward the end of the semester (when we look at the impact of the war), there will be more opportunity for extended discussion.

Grades. Your final grade will be composed of the following components:

mid-term exam: 40%

final exam: 40%

writing exercises and class discussion: 20%

Grading Scale. The undergraduate grading scale cut-offs are as follows:

A+	97	C	73
A	93	C-	70
A-	90	D+	67
B+	87	D	63
B	83	D-	60
B-	80	F	59
C+	77		

Plagiarism and the Academic Honor Code. Plagiarism is a serious academic offence that occurs when someone uses the words or ideas of someone else without giving that person credit in a formal citation. Punishment for violations are outlined in the Academic Integrity Policy. For an explanation see the UNCG website under "Academic Integrity Policy."

CLASS SCHEDULE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS

ER=reading on electronic reserve; can be downloaded from Blackboard (all other readings from Neiberg text or *All Quiet on the Western Front*, which are to be purchased)

Week 1

Aug. 23: Introduction

Aug. 25: Europe in 1914: Society and Politics

Readings: Wilkinson and Hughes, "Europe in 1914" ER

Week 2

Aug. 30: Long-Term Origins of World War I: Great Power Rivalries

Readings: Lafore, "The Austrian Anomaly" ER

Sept. 1: Short-Term Causes of World War I: Crisis in the Balkans

Readings: Paxton, "The Coming of the War" ER

Week 3**Sept. 6:** From War of Movement to Stalemate**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 1 and Brittain, “Testament of Youth” ER**Sept. 8:** The Early War in the East**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 2 and chap. 4, pp. 111-17 (section on Gorlice-Tarnów)**Week 4****Sept. 13:** The Early War in the West**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 3**Sept. 15:** The Experience of Battle**Readings:** Eksteins, “Rites of War” and “Reason in Madness” ER**Week 5****Sept. 20:** The War Widens: The Ottoman Front**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 4, pp. 95-111; 117-22**Sept. 22:** The Great Bloodlettings: Verdun and the Somme**Readings:** Neiberg, chaps. 6 and 7**Week 6****Sept. 27:** Mobilization for Total War**Readings:** Lyons, “Total War and the Home Fronts” ER**Sept. 29:** A War of Machines**Readings:** Habek, “Technology in the First World War” ER**Week 7****Oct. 4:** The War Widens Again: America Joins the Allies**Readings:** Schmitt and Vedeler, “Crisis at Sea and American Involvement” ER**Oct. 6:** The Crises of 1917: The Nivelle Offensive and the French Mutinies**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 9, pp. 229-49**Week 8****Oct. 11:** FALL BREAK**Oct. 13:** FIRST EXAMINATION (bring blue book)**Week 9****Oct. 18:** LIBRARY SESSION (class will meet in Library)**Oct. 20:** The Crises of 1917: Passchendaele and Caporetto**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 9, pp. 250-53 and chap. 10

Week 10**Oct. 25:** The Crises of 1917: The Collapse of Russia**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 8**Oct. 27:** Germany's Great Gamble: The Ludendorff Offensives of 1918**Readings:** Neiberg, chaps. 11-12**Week 11****Nov. 1:** The Allies Counteroffensives and the Collapse of the Central Powers**Readings:** Neiberg, chap. 13 and Conclusion**Nov. 3:** The Peace of Paris I**Readings:** Keylor, "The Peace of Paris and the New International Order"
ER**Week 12****Nov. 8:** The Peace of Paris II**Readings:** MacMillan, "The Middle East Settlement" ER**Nov. 10:** The Specter of Revolution**Readings:** Paxton, "Revolution, 1917-21" ER**Week 13****Nov. 15:** The Counterrevolutionary Contagion**Readings:** Blinkhorn, "Rise of Fascism" ER**Nov. 17:** The Great War in Fiction**Readings:** Remarque, *All Quiet on the Western Front* (complete)**Week 14****Nov. 22:** The War and European Culture: "An Old Bitch Gone in the Teeth"**Readings:** Williams, "War Poetry" ER; Tzara, "Dada" ER; Valéry, "The Intellectual Crisis" ER**Nov. 24:** THANKSGIVING**Week 15****Nov. 29:** The Great War in Memory and Myth**Readings:** Hynes, "The War Becomes Myth" ER**Dec. 1:** SECOND EXAMINATION (bring blue book)