

HIS 217 - The World of the Twentieth Century (1900-1945)

Professor Mark Elliott

Office: 2125 MHRA

Office Hours: Tues. 2:00-4:00
or by appointment

E-mail: mark.elliott@uncg.edu

Teaching Assistant:

Mr. Brian Suttell

Monday and Wednesday Lectures:

10:00-10:50 FERGUSON 100

Dr. Elliott

Friday Discussion Sections:

Section 02 10:00-10:50

Curry 244

Brian Suttell

Section 04 11:00-11:50

Curry 244

Brian Suttell

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course surveys major developments in world history from 1900 to 1945. Because of its broad sweep of historical events, the variety of topics covered in this course make no claim to be comprehensive. No single course can examine all of the important events in world history over a half-century. Instead, this course focuses on a selection of important events, historical figures, and international issues that have had global significance. One major theme of this course will be the evolution and worldwide spread of nationalism in this period and its impact on the global politics. Another major theme will be the frequent occurrence of genocide and mass killings around the globe as new technologies, combined with harsh ideologies, led to the attempted extermination of various nations, colonial peoples and ethnic minorities by powerful nation states and their agents. Relatedly, the brutalities of war reached new extremes in the modern phenomenon of “total war” during this period which saw two world wars of unprecedented destruction. Resistance to these brutalities will provide a final theme of the course. In response to these horrors, the period also witnessed the formation of new international treaties and institutions to restrain nations from aggressive actions, crimes against humanity, and violations of human rights.

This course also serves as an introduction to world history as an approach. World history is about understanding the interconnectedness of history across national borders, and thinking comparatively about events around the globe. Students will be trained to think as historians by analyzing evidence and learning to place evidence in historical context. Students will learn to analyze different types of evidence and make arguments based on such evidence. Fiction and films will be studied as sources for historical understanding. Articles and books written by historians will also be read and critically analyzed. It is hoped that the material explored in this course will provide the student with a springboard to further study in history in upper level courses.

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

- Students will examine the role of human agency in historical change, as well as understand the larger economic, political and social structures that shape human experience.
- Students will examine interconnections between different parts of the globe, and think comparatively about different cultures and peoples studied.
- Students will be able to historically contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.
- Students will be able to use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument.
- Students will improve their writing and verbal skills.

COURSE POLICIES:

Attendance:

A student who is not present to sign the attendance sheet when it circulates at beginning of class will be marked “absent.” **Once the sheet has circulated the room, no late students will be allowed to sign it.** Students who leave class early without permission will be marked absent. More than five absences will lower your **Final Grade** by one-third of a grade for each subsequent absence (that is, your sixth absence will cause a “B” to become a “B-,” your seventh will make it a “C+,” your eighth will make it a “C,” etc.). Missing a total of 14 or more classes for any reason (one-third of the semester) will result in an automatic “F” for the course. No exceptions. Please use your 5 un-penalized absences wisely by saving them for emergencies or severe illness. Students are responsible to complete on time all work assigned or due on days in which they are absent.

If you suffer from a chronic illness, or have special needs that make the attendance policy burdensome, you **MUST** inform the instructor in the first week of class, and provide proof of your condition to the Dean of Students. We will do our best to accommodate any legitimate, documented, special needs.

Participation:

You must take notes during class lectures and be attentive and awake during class. Sleeping in class will cause you to be marked “absent.” Cell phones should be muted or turned off and stored away. No talking, texting, twittering, e-mailing or internet surfing during class. No laptop computers may be used for note-taking.

Students are expected to complete the reading assignments in time to participate in their weekly discussion sections with their assigned Teaching Assistant. It is important that

you participate actively in your discussion section. Your participation grade will be based on the overall *quality* of your contributions in the discussion sections—not the quantity of contributions you make. Please make your contributions informed, intelligent, and constructive. There will be regular quizzes on the readings and films in the Friday discussion sections.

Term Paper:

There will be one term paper of 1600-1850 words in length. You will write your term paper based on one of four assigned topics that will be distributed in Friday discussion sections. You will be assigned ONE of the topics. Paper due dates are as follows:

- Topic #1:** Sept. 25
- Topic #2:** Oct. 2
- Topic #3:** Oct. 30
- Topic #4** Nov. 20

Late papers will be marked down one grade for each day they are late. An assignment sheet with the term paper topic questions will be distributed in class. In order to pass this course you must hand in all written work and complete all assignments. You will be required to take your paper to the Writing Center at least 3 days in advance of the due date for help revising it before the due date. You will have the option of revising your paper a second time after it is graded.

Academic Integrity Policy:

All work submitted in your name must be your own original work for this class with proper citation or credit given to all sources. All papers will be turned in using the “Safe Assignment” function on Blackboard which automatically scans your paper for plagiarism. Each student should be familiar with the Academic Integrity Policy, and the penalties for plagiarism. Refer to this address on the UNCG website for more details:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/>

Grading Breakdown:

- 100 Points: Participation in class discussion at TA sections (13 sessions)
- 100 Points: Quizzes
- 100 Points: Term Paper
- 100 Points: Midterm
- 100 Points: Final Exam.

Final Grade Scale: A 465-500; A- 450-464; B+ 435-449; B 415-434; B- 400-414; C+ 385-399; C 365-384; C- 350-364; D+ 335-349; D 315-334; D- 300-314; F 299 or less.

REQUIRED READING (available at UNCG’s Bookstore):

Adam Hochschild, *King Leopold's Ghost*
Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment: Self-Determination and the International Origins of Anticolonial Nationalism*
Helen Zenna Smith, *Not So Quiet...*
Robert Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and Germany Society: A Brief History with Documents*

Week 1. INTRODUCTION

Reading: From Bosworth, *Nationalism*

Aug. 19 Studying World History
Aug. 21 Nationalism and Nation-States
Aug. 23 Discussion Section

Week 2. IDEOLOGIES: PROGRESSIVISM, SOCIALISM, COMMUNISM

Film: From *Harmony to Revolution: The Birth and Growth of Socialism*

Aug. 26 Industrialism and the Liberal-Capitalist Order
Aug. 28 Challenges to Liberalism
Aug. 30 Discussion Section.

Week 3. EUROPEAN EXPANSION INTO AFRICA

Reading: *King Leopold's Ghost* 1-166.

Sept. 2 **LABOR DAY (NO CLASS)**
Sept. 4 The Scramble for Africa
Sept. 6 Discussion Section

Week 4. AFRICAN EMPIRES AND IMPERIALISM

Reading: *King Leopold's Ghost*, 167-318.

Film: *Namibia: Genocide and the Second Reich*

Sept. 9 The "New" Imperialism
Sept. 11 "Racial" Regimes Around the World
Sept. 13 Discussion Section

Week 5. THE GREAT WAR, 1914-1919

Reading: Smith, *Not So Quiet...*

Sept. 16 Causes of the First World War

Sept. 18 The Experience of Total War
Sept. 20 Discussion Section

Week 6. TOTAL WAR AND GENOCIDE

Reading: Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment*, iv-117.

Film: *The Armenian Genocide*

Sept. 23 The Balkans and Armenia
Sept. 25 The Middle East and the Colonies [Paper Topic #1 Due]
Sept. 27 Discussion Section

Week 7. VICTORY OR PEACE?

Reading: Erez Manela, *The Wilsonian Moment*, 118-225.

Film: *Manifest Destiny: Making the World Safe for Democracy, Part 1.*

Sept. 30 Impact of the Russian Revolution
Oct. 2 Redefining Europe [Paper topic #2 due]
Oct. 4 Discussion Section

Week 8. THE POSTWAR WORLD

Reading: No reading. You have a midterm to study for!

Oct. 7 Legacies of Versailles in International Politics
Oct. 9 Nationalist Movements in India and the Middle East
Oct. 11 **Midterm Exam**

FALL BREAK OCT 14-15

Week 9. HUMAN RIGHTS AND COLONIAL INDEPENDENCE

Film: *Gandhi* (1982)

Reading: Excerpts from Hardiman, *Gandhi in His Time and Ours* and *Autobiography*

Oct. 14 **FALL BREAK (NO CLASS)**
Oct. 16 Gandhi and Indian Nationalism
Oct. 18 Discussion

Week 10. THE CHALLENGE OF COMMUNISM

Reading: **TBA**

- Oct. 21** Russian Civil War
- Oct. 23** Stalin and the Soviet Regime of the 1930s
- Oct. 25** Discussion Section

Week 11. FACISM AND NAZISM

Reading: Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*, vii-100.

Film: *Schindler's List*

- Oct. 28** 1920s Culture: Radio, Movies, and Rebellion
- Oct. 30** Fascism in Italy and Germany [Paper Topic #3 Due]
- Nov. 1** Discussion Section

Week 12. THE PATH TO GLOBAL CATASTROPHE

Reading: Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*, 110-186.

Film: *Schindler's List*

- Nov. 4** The Road to World War II
- Nov. 6** Germany and the Holocaust
- Nov. 8** Discussion Section

Week 13. TOTAL WAR RETURNS

Film: *The Rape of Nanking (2007)*

Reading: Roosevelt's 1941 State of the Union Address; the Atlantic Charter

- Nov. 11** Imperial Japan in the 1930s
- Nov. 13** The United States Assumes Leadership
- Nov. 15** Discussion Section

Week 14. WORLD WAR II: BRUTAL VICTORY

Reading: Lynn, "The Merciless Fight: Race and Military Culture in the Pacific War."

Film: *Letters from Iwo Jima*

- Nov. 18** Victory in Europe
- Nov. 20** The Nuclear Age Begins at Hiroshima and Nagasaki [Topic #4]
- Nov. 22** Discussion Sections

Week 15. THE MAKING OF A NEW WORLD ORDER

Film: *Judgment at Nuremberg*

Nov. 25 The United Nations and the New World Order

Nov. 27 **THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)**

Nov. 29 **THANKSGIVING BREAK (NO CLASS)**

Week 15. WRAP-UP

Reading: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1949).

Dec. 2 The Cold War and the Future of Human Rights internationalism

Dec. 3 Reading Day

Week 17 FINAL EXAM

Dec. TBA in FERG 100