

HIS 217 – 02 – The World of the Twentieth Century (1900 – 1945)

MW 3:30 – 4:45, MHRA 1214

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Office Hours: MW 1:30 – 3:00 or by appointment (MHRA 2102)

This syllabus is subject to change

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 five 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. Laptop computers may be used for note-taking until it becomes a distraction.

Students are expected to complete the reading assignments in time to participate in class discussion. Participation is vital to your success in this class. 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.

Grading Policies:

Students earn grades based on the work they submit. A common student misconception is that anyone can earn an A just by following instructions and doing the work. However, just following instructions is the same thing as doing the minimum. Most people do the minimum, and that makes their work Average (i.e. a C). Doing less than the minimum is either a D (“Below Average”) or an F (“Unsatisfactory”). Doing more than the minimum is worth either a B (“Above Average”) or, in rare cases, an A (“Excellent”). Therefore, students must submit work that proves their performance is better than the majority of their peers in order to earn the highest letter grades.

Assignments:

While there are no exams that require you to memorize dates, there will be periodic “pop quizzes” at the beginning of class covering the assigned reading for the day. Quizzes will be given

on an “as needed” basis. If participation in the class is lively and students can demonstrate that they have read for each class, there will be fewer quizzes.

This course has a heavy reading load, and students are expected to have completed the assigned reading prior to class. Additionally, students will be assigned three short papers due on the following dates: **September 24th, October 29th, and November 24th**. Papers should be a minimum of three pages (maximum of five) and will be turned in using the SafeAssign feature on Blackboard. Paper topics will be assigned several weeks before the assignment is due. Your assignments will be weighted as follows:

Paper 1 – 20%
Paper 2 – 20%
Paper 3 – 20%
Quizzes – 10%
Final Exam – 20%
Participation – 10%

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/>

Required Texts: (available online or at the UNCG Bookstore): Chinua Achebe, *Things Fall Apart*; Helen Zenna Smith, *Not so Quiet*; Robert G. Moeller, *The Nazi State and German Society*

Course Schedule: (Note: the assigned readings are due on the date they are listed on the syllabus. Please view the syllabus prior to each class).

Monday, August 18th - Introductions

Wednesday, August 20th – Nationalism

Monday, August 25th – Expansion into Africa

Wednesday, August 27th – Expansion into Africa

Reading: *Things Fall Apart* – Part One, Articles from BBC, *The Guardian* (Blackboard)

Monday, September 1st – LABOR DAY

Wednesday, September 3rd – Race and Genocide

Reading: *Things Fall Apart* – Part Two

Monday, September 8th –Pan-Africanism

Reading: *Things Fall Apart* – Part Three

Wednesday, September 10th – Africa and the World

Reading: *The Declaration of Rights of the Negro Peoples of the World* (Garvey); Article from *The Crisis* (DuBois) (Blackboard)

Monday, September 15th – Gandhi and Indian Nationalism

Wednesday, September 17th – Nationalistic movements in the Middle East

Reading: Orwell's "Shooting an Elephant" (Blackboard)

Monday, September 22nd – American Imperialism (Latin America)

Wednesday, September 24th – American Imperialism (Philippines) Paper One Due

Reading: NONE! Make sure your proofread your paper!

Monday, September 29th – Unrest in Europe (Lead up to WWI)

Wednesday, October 1st – WWI

Reading: *Not So Quiet*, Chapters 1 – 8

Monday, October 6th – WWI

Wednesday, October 8th – Post War Nationalism and the Wilsonian Moment

Reading: *Not So Quiet*, Chapters 9 – 12, Selection from *The Wilsonian Moment* (Blackboard)

Monday, October 13th – FALL BREAK

Wednesday, October 15th – New Ideologies – The Legacy of Versailles

Monday, October 20th – Russian Revolution

Reading: Selected Documents <http://www.fordham.edu/Halsall/mod/modsbook39.asp> (Blackboard)

Wednesday, October 22nd – Global Suffrage

Reading: Emmeline Pankhurst's "Freedom or death" (Blackboard)

Monday, October 27th – Women and the World in the 1920s

Wednesday, October 29th – Global Depression, Paper Two Due

Reading: NONE! Work on your paper!

Monday, November 3rd – Rise of Fascism

Reading: *The Nazi State and German Society*, p.1-16, 29 – 109

Wednesday, November 5th – WWII in Europe

Reading: *The Nazi State and German Society*, p. 16-25, 110 – 128, 160-183

Monday, November 10th – WWII and the Holocaust

Reading: *The Nazi State and German Society*, p. 129 - 159

Wednesday, November 12th – WWII and the Pacific

Reading: Lynn, “The Merciless Fight” (Blackboard)

Monday, November 17th – Nuclear Age Begins

Reading: Truman Diary, Segments from *Hiroshima* (Blackboard)

Wednesday, November 19th – The Postwar World

Reading: NONE! Finish your papers!

Monday, November 24th – Human Rights, Paper Three Due

Reading: The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (Blackboard)

Wednesday, November 26th – THANKSGIVING BREAK

Monday, December 1st – Wrap-up

Final Exam – Friday, December 5th, 3:30 – 6:30