

SYLLABUS

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

Fall 2017

Instructor: Timothy Reagin

Email: tmreagin@uncg.edu

Office hours: TR 9:30 – 10:30 and by appt.

Office: MHRA 2104

History Department Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/UNCGDepartmentofHistory/>

History Department Website: <https://his.uncg.edu/>

Course Description

This course provides a historical survey of events in world history from 1900-1945. The first half of the twentieth century witnessed significant global conflicts and concerted efforts to both reimagine and reorder the world. Specific themes include both world wars and their repercussions including the experiences of African and Asian soldiers; the growth of nationalism in Europe, Japan, India, and China; the rise and fall of European, Near Eastern, and Asian empires; and global depression. Students will examine these large scale events from a variety of historical perspectives, and particular emphasis will be placed on the analysis of primary source documents.

Our overall goal here is to investigate major events, people, movements, and ideas that shaped the first half of the twentieth century. It is also my goal to introduce you to historical thinking skills. Regardless of your major, learning history and the skills of an historian can be valuable to you at UNCG and in your future career. History is not, to the surprise of many, simply the memorization of facts and dates. Rather, history teaches us all transferable skills that apply to every major and career path. Skills that we will learn this semester include: evaluating evidence, evaluating significance, analysis of documents, and synthesizing ideas.

Course Objectives

General Education Historical Perspectives (GHP) Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Use a historical approach to analyze and contextualize primary and secondary sources representing divergent perspectives. (GHP 1)
2. Use evidence to interpret the past coherently, orally and/or in writing. (GHP 2)

General Education Global Non-Western Perspectives Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Find, interpret, and evaluate information on diverse cultures. (GN 1)
2. Describe interconnections among regions of the world. (Must include substantial focus on cultures, nations or sub-nationalities in the Caribbean, Latin America, Middle East/North Africa, Asia, Africa, Pacific Islands, or indigenous peoples around the world). (GN 2)
3. Use diverse cultural frames of reference and alternative perspectives to analyze issues. (GN 3)

Instructor's Student Learning Outcomes:

1. Use contemporary film depictions of history to investigate popular views of history.
2. Foster collegiality through small group discussions of primary sources and historical thinking skills.
3. Introduce students to history and historical thinking skills including:
Evaluating evidence, determining significance, and synthesizing an argument

Teaching Methods

History 217 will be taught through a variety of methods. The most common method will be lecture presentations. Additionally, we will read primary documents, secondary materials, and watch documentaries to promote classroom discussion. Supplemental readings will play a key role in classroom discussion and work throughout the semester. We will reserve time at the end of classes to discuss any weekly readings. The class will also be divided into three broad units in which we will address wide-ranging historical questions.

Required Readings

Books:

Howard, Michael. *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction*. ISBN: 9780199205592

Weinberg, Gerhard. *World War II: A Very Short Introduction*. ISBN: 9780199688777

Any editions of these books are acceptable. These are available in the bookstore but I encourage you to search online (amazon, thriftbooks, or other) for the best available price.

Additional primary readings noted on the syllabus are available on canvas – you must read these ahead of the class in which they are required and either print these out and bring them to class or download them to your laptop or tablet (not on your cell phone telephone).

Examinations

There will be three total exams in this course. They will consist of short answers, identifications, and primary source analyses. Answers will be judged on accuracy and abundance of historical information. The final examination is not cumulative. The term “exam” should not overwhelm you here. These exams are my way of ensuring that all students are keeping up content-wise and mastering the historical thinking skills.

If you have an extremely substantial and documented reason for missing an exam, contact me at the earliest possible time to schedule a make-up. It is your responsibility to notify me to schedule the make-up. There will be no make-up time available for the final. I strongly encourage you to begin looking at your notes days or weeks before the examinations. I will give you a study guide before every exam. Students who wait until the night before and try to "cram" will achieve nothing except a headache. Study early, study often.

Writing

You will need to write a little in this class and nearly every class you take at UNCG. Please see the assignments sections for more information. Write early, write often. Writing assistance is available at the University Writing Center (in MHRA). See me if you need directions. Your tuition pays for it, so use it!

Historical Thinking Matters

It should be no surprise to all of you that I think history matters. One of my goals in this course will be to convince you of the same thing. I do not accept it when students say that they hate history because that would mean that they hate thinking critically, evaluating information, determining significance, analyzing information, and synthesizing their thoughts coherently. When I tell you that the history department wants to teach you transferable skills, I mean that we want to teach you how to do these skills, which can be applied to any major and any career that you choose.

History is not simply the memorization of facts and dates, nor is it just the story of kings and generals. It is some of that, but historians care more about the ability to perform historical thinking skills (such as determining the significance of any document). In short, to “do history” is to become a more well informed citizen of the world with the ability to communicate effectively with your fellow citizens.

Assignments and Grading Breakdown:

Movie Analysis: 100 Points

Students will select and watch a movie from the list that I provide you. Students will then complete a 3-4-page paper on their thoughts of the film and respond to a prompt provided by the instructor. It is important to employ what you learn in the class and readings to determine if the movie is accurate or not.

Reading Quizzes: 160 Points (8 x 20 points each)

Students will complete short reading quizzes, noted on the schedule below, online on our canvas webpage. These quizzes are intended to be sure that all students are keeping up with the reading assignments. Please check the dates on the schedule below for accurate due dates and times.

Primary Source Analyses: 120 Points (6 x 20 points each)

Students will complete, over the course of the semester, seven primary source exercises. We will work together in small groups and individually during class with primary sources in order to practice, and master, historical thinking skills including: evaluating evidence, historical significance, and analysis and synthesis.

Exam I: 100 Points

Students will complete an exam covering the first third of the course content and historical thinking skills: evaluation of evidence. Questions will include, short answer identifications and primary source analysis of historical thinking skills.

Exam II: 100 Points

Students will complete an exam covering the second third of the course content and historical thinking skills: historical significance. Questions will include, short answer identifications and primary source analysis of historical thinking skills.

Final Exam: 100 Points

Students will complete an exam covering the final third of the course content and historical thinking skills: analysis and synthesis. Questions will include, short answer identifications and primary source analysis of historical thinking skills.

Attendance: 100 points

I will pass around a daily attendance sheet that you must sign. I expect every student to attend every class session. Attendance and participation will count towards a portion of your grade. Please note that I do not distinguish between excused or unexcused absences. You can miss 3 classes before I begin deducting points. That gives you a week and a half if you get sick or have a family emergency. Don't abuse this.

I expect every student to participate in classroom discussion when appropriate.

Students are expected to attend every class, be attentive, and act in an adult manner. The correlation between class attendance and student grades is strongly related. If you absolutely have to miss a class for a serious reason, I suggest you get the class notes from a classmate. It is your responsibility to keep up with the class notes. Do not be late to class. Two tardies will equal one absence. Class begins when I close the door.

Total: 780 Points

No weighted grades here. Divide your total earned points by 780 and you will arrive at your percentage. I adhere to UNCG's standard grading scale.

Late Work:

I will accept late work at a 10% per day, including weekends, grade reduction. For example: This class ends at 9:15am. If I don't have your assignment in my hand at that time the clock will start. This does not mean that you will earn a 9 out of 10 if you turn it in one day late, it means you will earn whatever grade you do and then I will take 10% off. If you hand me a subpar assignment and it earned 7 out of 10 points, the lateness will turn it into a 6 out of 10 and so on.

Code of proper classroom conduct

The classroom is a learning environment and requires appropriate behavior. A higher degree of maturity and consideration for others is expected of you now that you are in college. Students will NOT: 1.) talk to neighbors or whisper during class, 2.) arrive or depart as they please, 3.) eat in class, 4.) use cell phone telephones, I know when you are texting, TURN IT OFF, I can hear vibrations and so can everyone else - it's distracting and annoying. Students WILL: 1.) raise your hand if you have a question, 2.) attend to bathroom needs before or after class, 3.) eat before or after class - I'm okay with drinks. I take all of this very seriously and I expect you to take it seriously too.

I encourage, and love, questions and comments. Raise your hand during class, see me before or after class, or during my office hours. At the first sign of trouble - come to me and I will help you. I may not know you are having problems if you don't come to me.

Academic Integrity

The best learning environment is one based on mutual respect and trust. However, the desire to achieve a good grade without doing the necessary work may tempt some students to cheat on exams or to represent the work of others as their own. As should be obvious to anyone at UNCG, plagiarism and cheating are wrong and are acts of "academic dishonesty." The term "academic dishonesty" means a deliberate and deceptive misrepresentation of one's own work. Instances of academic dishonesty include all, but are not limited to, the following:

- 1.) Plagiarism: presenting as one's own work, whether literally or in paraphrase, the work of another author.
- 2.) Turning in the same paper for multiple courses.
- 3.) Cheating on exams, tests, and quizzes; the wrongful giving or accepting of unauthorized exam material; and the use of illegitimate sources of information.
- 4.) Unsanctioned collaboration with other individuals in the completion of course assignments.
- 5.) Falsifying data and use of fraudulent methods in laboratory, fieldwork, and COMPUTER WORK.
- 6.) Falsifying excuses for non-attendance or completion of assignments.

There are no mitigating circumstances to justify academic dishonesty. If you are unclear about what constitutes academic dishonesty or plagiarism, please ask - Ignorance is no excuse. Discovery of academic dishonesty will bring stiff penalties, including a failing grade for the assignment in question and possibly a grade of F for the course. The maximum penalty at UNCG for plagiarism is possible expulsion from the entire UNC system, so for your own sakes, DO NOT PLAGIARIZE.

Don't think you can fool me. I have been reading and writing history for many years now. You will be caught if you plagiarize. This is not a challenge; this is a plea. Don't do it, it will ruin your career as a student at UNCG.

Additional Information

All of that said, I want you to succeed in this class and in college. I did not start teaching history because I dislike working with students. Please come see me if you are having trouble, or if you want to talk history! Ask questions, read often, study often.

The course schedule on the following page will change as circumstances dictate. Considering the breadth of material that we have to cover in a short period of time, do not be surprised if I have to revise the schedule. I will announce in class and by email if I need to make changes.

If you need to contact me outside of class, email me. I check it several times daily. Please begin and end every email in a professional manner and I will extend the same courtesy to you.

If class is cancelled for any reason - snow, hurricanes, or a sick instructor - you will be notified on your UNCG issued email address, so check it often.

Course Schedule [Assignments as assigned]

UNIT 1: The Road to the Great War

Questions: What did the world look like in 1900? What factors led the world to war in the mid-1910s? How did Europeans drag Africans, Indians, and others into a war? What made the First World War a global war?

Week 1 (8/15 – 8/17) [Reading on “What is Eurocentricism?” From Strayer]

Course introduction, Syllabus, What is history?, The World in the Nineteenth Century,

Week 2 (8/22 – 8/24) [Historical thinking skill: Evaluating Evidence]

[Primary Source exercise # 1 Sourcing]

European Empires in the early 20th Century, The Russo-Japanese War,

Week 3 (8/29 – 8/31) [Historical thinking skill: Evaluating Evidence]

[Read *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 1-4] [Reading Quiz #1 due 8/31 by 5 pm]

Beginning of the War, The Great War in Europe

Week 4 (9/5 – 9/7) [Historical thinking skill: Evaluating Evidence]

[Primary Source exercise # 2 Contextualizing]

[Read *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 5-7] [Reading Quiz #2 due 9/7 by 5 pm]

The Great War in the Africa, The Great War in Asia, American Entry

Week 5 (9/12 – 9/14) [Historical thinking skill: Evaluating Evidence]

[Read *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 8-9] [Reading Quiz #3 due 9/14 by 5 pm]

End of the War and Paris Peace Conference

Week 6 (9/19 – 9/21) [Historical thinking skill: Evaluating Evidence]

[Primary Source exercise # 3 Corroborating]

[Group Discussion *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* 9/21] [Reading Quiz #4 due 9/21 by 5 pm]

Paris 1919, Reshaping the Near East and Asia Minor

UNIT II: The Interwar Years

Questions: How did nationalism develop around the world and what differences were there in different regions? How did Japan become a superpower on a continent dominated by Europeans? What did the Great Depression mean outside of the United States? Why did independence movements in Asia and Africa fail after WWI?

Week 7 (9/26 – 9/28) [Exam I 9/28]

Fall of the Romanovs and the Russian Revolution

Week 8 (10/3 – 10/5) [Historical thinking skill: Significance]

[Primary Source exercise # 4 Identifying significance]

The Interwar Years in Asia, Indian Nationalism, Chinese Civil War

T 10/10 – Campus Closed – Fall Break

Week 9 (10/12) [Historical thinking skill: Significance]

Japan in the Early 20th Century

Week 10 (10/17 – 10/19) [Historical thinking skill: Significance]

[Primary Source exercise # 5 Identifying the period]

[Read *World War II: A Very Short Introduction* Intro, Chapters 1-2]

Global Depression, Rise of Totalitarianism in Europe, Military Imperialism in Japan

Week 11 (10/24 – 10/26) [Historical thinking skill: Significance]

[Movie Analysis Due 10/24] [Reading Quiz #5 due 10/26 by 5 pm]

The United States between the Wars,

Week 12 (10/31 – 11/2) [Exam II 11/2]

[Read *World War II: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 3-4] [Reading Quiz #6 due FRIDAY 11/3 by 5 pm]

The Road to WWII

UNIT III: The Road to the Second World War

Questions: In what ways was WWII a global war? What factors drove much of East Asia to war in the 1930s and 40s? How was the end of the Second World War different for African and Asian colonies from the end of WWI?

Week 13 (11/7 – 11/9) [Historical thinking skill: Synthesis]

[Read *World War II: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 5-6] [Reading Quiz #7 due 11/9 by 5 pm]

WWII in Europe

Week 14 (11/14 – 11/16) [Historical thinking skill: Synthesis]

[Read *World War II: A Very Short Introduction* Chapters 7-8, Conclusion] [Reading Quiz #8 due 11/16 by 5 pm]

WWII in the Pacific

Week 15 (11/21) [Historical thinking skill: Synthesis]

[Primary Source exercise # 6 Synthesizing]

The Holocaust

Week 16 (11/28) [Historical thinking skill: Synthesis]

End of WWII, dawn of the Nuclear Age, The coming of anti-colonial movements in Africa and Asia, Creating the United Nations

11/30 Thursday – Reading Day. Optional review for exam and wrap up of class.

Our final is on Tuesday December 5th from 8am to 11am outlined by the University's final exam schedule.

-Keep in mind that this schedule is a general outline and may change but I will let you know well in advance of any due dates if I have to change it-