

INSTRUCTOR: Paul Mazgaj
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OFFICE HOURS:

Tuesday & Thursday: 10:00-11:00

Tuesday: 1:45-2:30

And by appointment (see me after class to make an appointment)

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The period between 1914 and 1945 marked one of the most catastrophic in world history. It encompassed not only the First and Second World Wars, but the Great Depression, the rise of fascism and communism, the crisis of Western democracy, and, finally, the Holocaust. An effort will be made to look at the period as a whole and measure its impact on both European and World history.

LEARNING GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

At the successful completion of this course, a student should expect:

- to acquire general knowledge of the political, social, and cultural history of Europe from 1900 to 1945
- to acquire general knowledge of the impact of the two wars, which began in Europe, on the non-European world
- to learn how to interpret primary source material and integrate such interpretations into a larger understanding of history
- to learn how to analyze and synthesize historical material by writing essay examinations

REQUIRED READINGS

Howard, Michael. *The First World War* (Oxford University Press, 2002). This book is temporarily out of print, but has been placed on electronic reserve (ER)

Browning, Christopher R. *Ordinary Men: The Reserve Police Battalion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland* (Harper Perrenial, 1998)

Parker, R.A.C. *The Second World War: A Short History* (Oxford University Press, 2001)

Most of the required readings are on electronic reserve. They can be downloaded from Blackboard.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

Attendance is required, not optional. Only officially certified absences will be

accepted. All unexcused absences will affect your grade; beyond three, your grade will be lowered by one letter. 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 (March 1) and a final (April 26—the last day of class). Both exams will have the same format: one part short essay, one part long essay.

Informal Writing Exercises. On a regular basis 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 get you mentally pump-primed for the class that will follow; 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*. 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." More than a few check minuses will begin to affect your 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.

Participation. Though the number of the students in this course will probably be large, it is not so large as to prohibit *some* discussion. As a matter of pedagogical principle, I try to avoid a strictly lecture format, which, I believe, induces passivity on the part of the student. To avoid this, I will try not just to present information but to pose some questions through the course of the semester. Even if the size of the class precludes *everyone participating all of the time*, I trust that you will at least *think* about the questions that I present. I believe the process of trying to address those questions (rather than simply transcribing everything I say into notes) will help you to better understand the material. This is important because the point of the course is not to memorize names of individual trees but to see the larger forest of historical concerns.

Grading.

Your final grade will be composed of the following elements:

- midterm exam: 40%
- final exam: 40%
- writing exercise grade: 20%

LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE

Week 1

Jan. 9: Introduction

Jan. 11: Europe on the Eve of World War I

Reading: Howard, "Europe in 1914," in *First World War*, 1-17 ER
Paxton, "Europe at the Zenith, 1914," in *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 1-32, ER

Week 2

Jan. 16: Origins of World War I

Reading: Howard, "The Coming of War," in *First World War*, 18-31 ER
Lafore, "The Austrian Anomaly," in *The Long Fuse*, 55-82 ER

Jan. 18: World War I: From War of Movement to Stalemate

Reading: Howard, "The Opening Campaigns," in *First World War*, 32-43 ER
Eksteins, "In Flanders Field," *Rites of Spring*, 95-135 ER
Brittain, *Testament of Youth* in Hannah, *Great War Reader*, 239-57 ER

Week 3

Jan. 23: World War I: 1915: No Way Out

Reading: Howard, "1915: The War Continues," in *First World War*, 44-66 ER
Eksteins, "Rites of War," in *Rites of Spring*, 139-69 ER
Stevenson, "The Widening War," in *Cataclysm*, 87-102 ER

Jan. 25: World War I: 1916: The Great Bloodlettings of Verdun and the Somme

Reading: Howard, "1916: The War of Attrition," in *First World War*, 67-80 ER
Alistair Horne, "Fort Vaux" in Hannah, *Great War Reader*, 31-43 ER
Graves, *Good-bye to All That* in Hannah, *Great War Reader*, 269-86 ER

Week 4

Jan. 30: World War I: Total War

Reading: Lyons, "Total War and the Home Fronts," in *World War I*, 198-210 ER
Eksteins, "Reason in Madness," *Rites of Spring*, 171-91 ER

Feb. 1: World War I: 1917-1918: The Allies Perseveres, Germany Gambles

Reading: Howard, "The US Enters the War" (also two following chapters to p. 135) *First World War*, 81-135 ER

Week 5

- Feb. 6: From War to Revolution
Reading: Paxton, "Revolution, 1917-1920," *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 119-52 ER
- Feb. 8: The Attempt to Recreate Order: The Peace of Paris
Reading: Hughes, "The Settlement of 1919-1923," in *Contemporary Europe*, 104-125 ER

Week 6

- Feb. 13: World War I and European Culture: "An Old Bitch, Gone in the Teeth"
Reading: Hynes, "A Botched Civilization," in *A War Imagined*, 237-52 ER
War Poetry, ER
- Feb. 15: More Consequences: Fascism in Italy
Reading: Eatwell, "Italy: The Rise of Fascism," in *Fascism*, 43-88 ER

Week 7

- Feb. 20: The Rise of Nazism
Reading: Eatwell, "Germany: The Rise of Nazism," in *Fascism*, 114-40 ER
- Feb. 22: The Nazi State
Reading: Eatwell, "Germany: The Consolidation of the Dictatorship," in *Fascism*, 141-67 ER

Week 8

- Feb. 27: Darkness at Noon: The Stalinist State
Reading: Hughes, "The Stalinist System," in *Contemporary Europe*, 242-60 ER
- Mar. 1: **Mid-Term Examination** (bring blue book)

Week 9

- Mar. 6-8 **Spring Break**

Week 10

- Mar. 13: Against the Tide: The Popular Front
Reading: "André Gide," in Crossman, ed., *The God that Failed*, 165-95 ER
Brendon, "Léon Blum and the Popular Front," in *The Dark Valley*, 332-56 ER
- Mar. 15: The Shadow of War: Hitler Revises Versailles
Reading: Paxton, "The Paris Peace Settlement Dismantled," in *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 380-407 ER

Week 11

- Mar. 20: World War II: From the Fall of Poland to the Fall of France
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 21-43
Larkin, "The Road to Compiègne: Diplomacy and War, 1936-1940," *France Since the Popular Front*, 63-81 ER

Mar. 22: World War II: From the Battle of Britain to Operation Barbarossa
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 44-71

Week 12

Mar. 27: World War II: The Japanese Offensive in the Pacific
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 72-94

Mar. 29: World War II: Hitler's "New Order" and the Holocaust
Reading: Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 1-120

Week 13

Apr. 3: World War II: The Allies Respond: Strategy and the "Big Three"
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 115-30
Browning, *Ordinary Men*, 121-223

Apr. 5: World War II: The Allies Respond: Total War, Total Mobilization, and "Strategic Bombing"
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 131-176

Week 14

Apr. 10: World War II: The Tide Turns
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 95-114
Kennedy, "The Struggle for a Second Front," in *Freedom from Fear*, 669-708 ER

Apr. 12: World War II: Victory in Europe
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 177-223
Special Event: Dr. Christopher Browning, author of *Ordinary Men*, will reconsider his book fifteen years after its original publication. His lecture will be held in 225 Curry Auditorium on Thursday, April 12, at 7:30. Students will receive "extra credit" (added to their discussion grade) for attending and writing a one-page summary of Dr. Browning's lecture.

Week 15

Apr. 17: World War II: Victory in the Pacific
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 224-42

Apr. 19: From Hot War to Cold War
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 243-63

Week 16

Apr. 24: Summing Up
Reading: Parker, *Second World War*, 264-304

Apr. 26: **Final Examination** (bring blue book)