

**INSTRUCTOR:** Paul Mazgaj

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**OFFICE HOURS:** Mondays: 11:00-11:30

Fridays: 10:00-11:00

And by Appointment

### **COURSE DESCRIPTION**

This course will begin with an examination of the causes of the war, which include the failure of the Peace of Paris, the Great Depression, the rise of National Socialism, and the successive diplomatic crises of the late 1930s. Next we will focus on the narrative history of the war. This section will include the great battles that punctuate the war as well as the mobilization of the material and human resources of the home front needed to fight a war on this scale. We will also consider the attempt by Hitler to construct his "New Order," an "order" which included the forced labor of millions and the mass murder of millions more, including six million Jews. Finally, we will attempt to evaluate the impact of the war. This last section will include an attempt to measure the socio-economic, political, and cultural impact of the war, an examination of the debates on such Allied war practices as the bombing of civilian populations and the use of the atomic bomb, and a brief description of the Cold War that emerged from the breakdown of the "Grand Alliance."

### **REQUIRED READINGS:**

#### **To be purchased:**

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

**To be downloaded** (Selections from the following books can be found on Blackboard, e-reserves; for specific chapters, see "Lecture and Reading Schedule" below) :

Brendon, Piers. *The Dark Valley* (Vintage Books, 2000)

Browning, Christopher. *Ordinary Men* (Harper, 1992)

Crossman, Richard. *The God that Failed* (Harper Colophon Books, 1949)

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

Eubank, Keith, *World War II: Roots and Causes*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Ed. (Heath, 1992)

Fussell, Paul. *Wartime* (Oxford University Press, 1989)

Gilbert, Felix and David Large. *The End of the European Era*, 5<sup>th</sup> ed. (Norton, 2002)

Keegan, John. *The Second World War* (Penguin, 1989)

Kennedy, David. *Freedom from Fear* (Oxford, 2005)

Kershaw, Ian. *Fateful Choices* (Penguin, 2007)

Knoebel, Edgar (ed). *Classics of Western Thought: The Modern World*, Vol. III, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1988)

- Lyons, Michael. *World War Two*, 3<sup>rd</sup> Ed. (Pearson Prentice Hall, 2004)
- Merridale, Catherine. *Ivan's War: Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945* (Picador, 2006)
- Overy, Richard. *Why the Allies Won* (Norton, 1996)
- Paxton, Robert. *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, 4<sup>th</sup> Ed. (Thomson Wadsworth, 2005)
- Sledge, E. B. *With the Old Breed* (Oxford, 1990)
- Stoler, Mark and Melanie Gustafson (eds). *Major Problems in the History of World War II* (Houghton Mifflin, 2003)
- Stromberg, Roland. *Europe in the Twentieth Century* (Prentice Hall, 1997)
- Terkel, Studs (ed). "*The Good War*" (Pantheon Books, 1984)
- Wilkinson, James and H. Stuart Hughes. *Contemporary Europe* (Pearson, Prentice Hall, 2004)

### **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 seriously affected. 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 three examinations: two hour exams and a final. All three exams will have the same format: one part short essay, one part long essay. See Class Schedule below for dates.

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

- first exam: 25%
- second exam: 25%
- final exam: 25%
- discussion grade: 25%

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

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		

**Discussion Sections.** Every Wednesday you will attend a discussion section, which, as the name suggests, will entail a discussion of the reading assignment for that day. It will also allow you to ask questions about lectures (and the readings assigned for the "lecture" days). The word "discussion," of course, implies participation on your part. Your discussion grade (25%) will be determined by the *frequency* and *quality* of your contribution to class discussion. *Therefore, please note: your participation--and the frequency and quality of that participation--will seriously affect your grade.*

**Informal Writing Exercises.** On a regular basis throughout the semester there will be unannounced writing exercises at the beginning of the discussion class on Wednesdays.

They will be short (maximum two paragraphs) commentaries on a particular aspect of the reading assignments since the last discussion. 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 discussion 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, and 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; *like absences, they will 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.

**Plagiarism and the Academic Integrity Policy.** Plagiarism is a serious academic crime 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."

### **LECTURE AND READING SCHEDULE**

ER= Electronic Reserve (available on Blackboard)

T=Text (Parker, *The Second World War*, to be purchased)

M=Monday; W=Wednesday; F=Friday

All Wednesdays are discussion (meet in assigned room)

#### **Week 1 (January 19-23):**

**M:** Martin Luther King Day: No Class

**W:** Introduction

**F:** The "Great War": An Overview

**Readings:** Gilbert and Large, "First World War" **ER**

#### **Week 2 (January 26-30):**

**M:** The Peace of Paris

**Readings:** Wilkinson and Hughes, "Settlement of 1919-1923" **ER**

**W:** Hitler's Worldview

**Readings:** Hitler, "My Struggle" **ER**

**F:** Hitler's Climb to Power

**Readings:** Eatwell, "Germany The Rise of Nazism" **ER**

**Week 3 (February 2-6):**

**M:** The Nazi State

**Readings:** Eatwell, "Germany: The Consolidation of the Nazi Dictatorship" **ER**

**W:** Explaining Hitler

**Readings:** Eubank, "Hitler Enigma" **ER**

**F:** The Soviet State

**Readings:** Wilkinson and Hughes, "The Stalinist System" **ER**

**Week 4 (February 9-13):**

**M:** The Popular Front

**Readings:** Brendon, "Léon Blum and the Popular Front" **ER**

**W:** The Origins of World War II: The Czech Crisis

**Readings:** Eubank, "Czechoslovakia and Munich" **ER**

**F:** The Origins of World War II: The Path to War

**Readings:** Paxton, "Paris Peace Settlement Dismantled" **ER**

**Week 5 (February 16-20):**

**M:** The Fall of Poland and the Phoney War

**Readings:** Lyons, "Blitzkrieg in the East, Sitzkrieg in the West" **ER**

**W:** Rumbblings in the Far East

**Readings:** Kershaw, "Tokyo, Summer and Autumn 1940" **ER**

**F:** The Fall of France

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 21-43 **T**

**Week 6 (February 23-27):**

**M:** The Battle of Britain

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 44-49 **T**

**W:** **FIRST EXAM** (bring blue book)

**F:** Barbarossa: The Nazi War Machine Turns East

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 60-71  
Merridale, "Disaster Beats Its Wings" **ER**

**Week 7 ( March 2-6):**

**M:** The Japanese Offensive in the Pacific

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 72-94 **T**

**W:** A Necessary War?

**Readings:** Stoler and Gustafson, "US Entry into World War II" **ER**

**F:** The Nazi Empire

**Readings:** Lyons, "Hitler's New Order in Europe" **ER**

**Week 8 (March 9-13): SPRING BREAK****Week 9 (March 16-20):****M:** The Allies Respond: The “Big Three” and Strategy I**Readings:** Parker, pp. 115-130 **T****W:** The Allies Respond: The “Big Three” and Strategy II**Readings:** Stoler and Gustafson, “Creating a Global Strategy” **ER****F:** The Tide Turns: The Battle for the Atlantic and North Africa**Readings:** Parker, pp. 95-114 **T**  
Lyons, “War in the Atlantic” **ER****Week 10 (March 23-27):****M:** The Tide Turns: The Eastern Front**Readings:** Overy, “Stalingrad and Kursk” **ER****W:** The US Home Front**Readings:** Kennedy, “The Cauldron of the Home Front” **ER****F:** Mobilizing for Total War**Readings:** Parker, pp. 131-150 **T****Week 11 (March 30-April 3):****M:** “Strategic” Bombing**Readings:** Parker, pp. 151-176  
Terkel, “Bombers and the Bombed” **ER****W:** **SECOND EXAM** (bring blue book)**F:** Eastern and Southern Fronts: The Soviets Advance, The Anglo-Americans Stall**Readings:** Parker, pp. 177-194 **T****Week 12 (April 6-10):****M:** The Second Front in Northern France: D-Day**Readings:** Parker, pp. 195-223 **T****W:** The Experience of Battle: The Anglo-Americans and the Soviets**Readings:** Terkel, “D-Day and All That” **ER**  
Merridale, “Exulting, Grieving, and Sweating Blood” **ER****F:** **SPRING HOLIDAY****Week 13 (April 13-17):****M:** Victory in Europe**Readings:** Lyons, “End of the Thousand-Year Reich” **ER****W:** The Experience of Battle: The Pacific War**Readings:** Sledge, “On to Peleliu” **ER****F:** The War in the Pacific**Readings:** Lyons, “Island Hopping in the Pacific” **ER****Week 14 (April 13-17):****M:** Victory in the Pacific

- Readings:** Parker, pp. 222-242 **T**
- W:** The Holocaust and “Ordinary Germans”  
**Readings:** Parker, pp. 264-80 **T**  
Browning, “Reserve Police Battalion 101” **ER**
- F:** The Legacy of World War II: From Despair to a New Europe  
**Readings:** Parker, pp. 281-304 **T**

**Week 15 (April 20-24):**

- M:** The Legacy of World War II: From Grand Alliance to the Cold War  
**Readings:** Stromberg, “Europe and the Cold War, 1945-1956” **ER**
- W:** The Controversy over the Atomic Bomb  
**Readings:** Stoler and Gustafson, “Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II” **ER**
- F:** Evaluations and Loose Ends

**Week 16: Tuesday, May 5, FINAL EXAM (bring blue book)**