

**Honors Seminar in World History:
Postwar Comparative Reconstruction**

Instructor: Jeff Jones	jwjones@uncg.edu
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Office Hours: M 2-3:00; W 10-11:00; Th. 11-12:00 and by appointment	

Course Description: This course will compare the experience of postwar reconstruction in a variety of contexts, including different countries and time periods, though the primary focus is Eurasia in the post-World War II period. The course is a disciplinary honors course for history majors but is open to all Honors College students and history majors who meet minimum GPA requirements, and is recommended particularly for those students who are considering pursuing graduate-level study in history.

Student Learning Outcomes: Upon successful completion of this course students will be able to ...

- Think critically and comprehend that history is not just the memorization of dates and facts, but rather the *interpretation* of the past
- Demonstrate the ability to write clearly, coherently and effectively while incorporating constructive feedback to improve their written work
- Speak clearly, coherently, and effectively as well as to adapt modes of communication to the audience
- Analyze the key terms, facts, and events in modern world history and thereby exhibit an informed historical perspective
- Critically appraise varying historical arguments and clearly express their own interpretations
- Critically read and distinguish between different types of historical sources and “read between the lines” of differing points of view
- Analyze primary source material and gain insight on how to interpret history through such sources
- Apply principles and generalizations learned in this class to other problems and situations

Teaching Methods/Course Activities: To achieve student learning outcomes the course will utilize a mix of in-class discussion, lecture, audio/visual material, book reviews and written assignments. The course will be taught in a seminar style format with weekly discussions of assigned readings and films. Students will write and report on book reports of monographs and anthologies dealing with a host issues involved in the postwar reconstruction of societies in the 20th century following major conflicts. The bulk of the required readings will focus on the aftermath of World War II in Europe and Japan, but students are free to concentrate on any of the major conflicts of the 20th century for their individual course projects, which will be in the form of a written assignment and oral presentation.

- ❖ **Participation:** 30%; in-class discussion of the readings and films is essential and will account for a substantial portion of the overall grade for the course; this part of the grade will mainly be comprised of student participation in discussion as well as in-class oral reports on their book reviews (3 worth 5% each). These oral reports should be 5-8 minutes in length (an additional 3-5 minutes will be allotted for questions) and should identify the author’s thesis, source material/evidence, methodology, where the work fits into the historiography of the field, and the strengths/weaknesses of the book. The remaining 15 points will be rewarded on the basis of the student’s participation in class discussion.
- ❖ **Book Reviews:** 3 for 15% each; students will write three book reviews based on readings from the course bibliography, although they can also identify their own titles with approval from the instructor. Students should feel free to consult published reviews with the clear understanding that their review shall be their own work. The book reviews should be concise (2-3 pages; 12-point font; double-spaced) and should convey the author(s)’ argument and methodology, as well as the source base(s) on which the work(s) are based. The reviews should also assess the strengths and weaknesses of the works under consideration.

- ❖ **Written Assignment/Oral Presentation:** 25%; the major project for the course is a written assignment and **oral presentation** to the course based on it. The written assignment (10-15 pages; 12-point font; double-spaced) can be either an **historiographical essay** or a **research paper** on any topic relevant to modern postwar reconstruction and is worth 15% of the overall course grade, while the oral presentation is worth 10%. **The first draft of the written assignment is due April 27.** We will assign times for the oral presentations toward the end of the semester, whereas **the revised final draft of the written assignment will be due** at the time of the final exam for the course, **Tuesday, May 11**, 3:30-6:20.
 - In their **oral presentation** to the class students will report on the findings of their historiographical essay or research paper. The Oral Reports should be 8-10 minutes in length (an additional 5-10 minutes will be added for questions). Students are *strongly* encouraged to consult the Speaking Center at 3211 MHRA Bldg. about their oral presentations. Students will be evaluated on their ability to sum up the main points of their research/reading, with a clearly stated thesis at the outset and 3-4 examples to illustrate/support that thesis. The conclusion should consider broad, comparative issues based on the course material beyond their own topic.
 - An **historiographical essay** should identify the major works, trends, and issues in the secondary literature of any topic of the student's interest relevant to the course. The essay should convey the major themes covered in the works examined as well as differences between varying treatments of similar topics, highlighting issues of debate. For each work discussed in the essay students should consider the following questions: What is the author's thesis? What sources/evidence does the author rely on? Where does the book fit with historiographical trends in the field? What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book, i.e. how convincing is the author's interpretation and the book's overall argument? Finally, a strong essay will relate the works examined to each other in a clear and logical manner.
 - A **research paper** utilizes primary research material to make an historical argument on a topic of historiographical significance; preferably a research paper should be about a topic that has not been extensively studied, but it can aspire to make a new contribution to our understanding of a much-studied topic. A research paper should have a clear-cut argumentative thesis statement supported by primary source evidence. Students should address the following questions: What is significant or important about this topic (the "so what" question)? What sources/evidence will the study rely on? Where does one's argument fit with historiographical trends in the field? Finally, a strong research paper will draw broad, comparative conclusions based on other cases of postwar reconstruction covered in the course.

Evaluation and Grading: The written assignment/oral presentation for the course will be graded on the basis of these specific criteria:

- 1) Level of analysis/argumentation. Present a clear-cut argumentative thesis statement supported by evidence from the readings/primary source material;
- 2) Historiographical context. Place your study in a broad comparative context in the secondary literature of the topic but also clearly within the time period and culture/society under scrutiny;
- 3) Clarity of communication. You must present the evidence and express your argument in a clear, comprehensible manner, whether in written or oral form.

A = excellent performance on all three criteria.
 B = above average on all three, or excellent on some tempered by flaws in others.
 C = average across the board, or above average in part but with significant flaws.
 D = below average overall performance.

GRADE BREAKDOWN: Participation (including 3 oral book reports worth 5% each)	30%
3 Book Reviews	(15% each) 45%
Written Assignment/Oral Presentation	25%
<i>Written Assignment</i>	15%
<i>Oral Presentation</i>	10%

Required Readings:

- Deak, Istvan, et. al., eds. *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and its Aftermath*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2000.
- Dower, John. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. New York: W. W Norton & Co./New Press, 1999.
- Kovaly, Marqolius and Helen Epstein. *Under a Cruel Star: A Life in Prague, 1941-1968*. Teaneck, N. J.: Holmes & Meier Publishers, 1997.
- Zubkova, Elena. *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945-1957*. Translated by Hugh Ragsdale. Armonk, N. Y.: M. E. Sharpe, 1998.
- Additional material identified below.

Required Films: “The Orphans”; “Divided We Fall”; “Nasty Girl”

Academic Integrity Policy: Each student is required to sign the Academic Integrity Policy on all major work submitted for the course and to uphold the policy throughout the course. For additional information consult <http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>

Attendance Policy: Attendance is required. For each unexcused absence four points will be taken from the overall grade. If you have to miss class, let me know beforehand (and/or provide documentation afterward). Make-up work will only be given if there is a justified reason for the delay and documentation to prove it.

Accommodations for Students with Learning and/or Physical Differences: I will accommodate differently-able students in any way in this class. Students who require accommodations should discuss this with me and/or contact the Office of Disability Services to make any necessary arrangements.

COURSE SCHEDULE

Week 1: January 19. Introduction to the Course.

BEGIN READING: Zubkova, Elena. *Russia After the War: Hopes, Illusions, and Disappointments, 1945-1957*. Discussion on Tuesday, February 10.

Week 2: January 26. Reconstruction in the USSR: In-class viewing of “The Orphans”

- Reading for February 3: [“‘Every Family Has Its Freaks’: Perceptions of Collaboration in Occupied Soviet Russia, 1943-1948”](#) by Jeffrey Jones; [“Collaboration on Trial: New Source Material on Soviet Postwar Trials against Collaborators”](#) by Tanja Penter; [Letter to the Editor by Hiroaki Kuromiya and the Reply by Jones](#)

Week 3: February 3. Collaboration in the USSR: Reports on Book Reviews

- Reading for February 10: [“Postwar Soviet Society: The ‘Return to Normalcy,’ 1945-1953”](#) by Sheila Fitzpatrick; [“‘The Alienated Body’: Gender Identity and the Memory of the Siege of Leningrad”](#) by Lisa Kirschenbaum

Week 4: February 10. Issues of Postwar Soviet Reconstruction: Discussion of *Russia After the War* and Reports on Book Reviews

BEGIN READING: Deak, Istvan, et. al., eds. *The Politics of Retribution in Europe: World War II and its Aftermath*. Discussion Tuesday, March 2.

Week 5: February 17. Issues in Postwar Europe: In-class viewing of “Nasty Girl”

- Reading for February 24: [“Collaboration in a ‘Land without a Quisling’: Patterns of Cooperation with the Nazi German Occupation Regime in Poland during World War II”](#) by Klaus-Peter Friedrich; [“Why the Poles Collaborated So Little—And Why That Is No Reason for Nationalist Hubris”](#) by John Connelly; [“Where Did All the Collaborators Go?”](#) by Martin Dean; [Letters to the Editor by Piotr Wandycz and Anna Cienciala and the Replies by Friedrich and Connelly](#)

Week 6: February 24. Collaboration in Poland (cont’d): Reports on Book Reviews

Week 7: March 2. Issues in Postwar Europe (cont’d): Discussion of *The Politics of Retribution in Europe* and Reports on Book Reviews

BEGIN READING: Kovaly, Marqolius and Helen Epstein. *Under a Cruel Star: A Life in Prague, 1941-1968*. Discussion on Tuesday, March 23.

Week 8: March 16. Postwar Czechoslovakia: In-class Viewing of “Divided We Fall”

- Reading for March 23: [“Dumplings and Domesticity: Women, Collaboration, and Resistance in the Protectorate of Bohemia and Moravia”](#) by Melissa Feinberg; [“Denouncers and Fraternalizers: Gender, Collaboration, and Retribution in Bohemia and Moravia during World War II and After”](#) by Benjamin Frommer

Week 9: March 23. Postwar Czechoslovakia (cont’d): Discussion of *Under a Cruel Star* and Reports on Book Reviews

BEGIN READING: Dower, John. *Embracing Defeat: Japan in the Wake of World War II*. Discussion on Tuesday, April 13.

Week 10: March 30. Postwar Asia: Reports on Book Reviews

Week 11: April 6. Postwar Asia (cont’d): Reports on Book Reviews

Week 12: April 13. Postwar Japan: Discussion of *Embracing Defeat* and Reports on Book Reviews

Week 13: April 20. Oral Presentations

Week 14: April 27. Oral Presentations. **1st Draft of the Written Assignment Due in class.**

WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS DUE Tuesday, May 11 by 6:20