

**INSTRUCTOR:** Paul Mazgaj

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**OFFICE HOURS:** Mondays: 8:30-9:00 & 11:00-11:30

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 almost 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

Bloch, Marc. *Strange Defeat* (Norton, 1968)

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

Conklin, Alice. et al., *France and Its Empire Since 1870* (Oxford, 2011)

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. *End of the European Era* (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* (Picador, 2006)

O'Neill, William. *Democracy at War* (Harvard, 1993)

Overy, Richard. *Why the Allies Won* (Norton, 1996)

- Paxton, Robert. *Europe in the Twentieth Century*, (Thomson, 2005)  
 Pyle, Ernie. *Brave Men* (University of Nebraska Press, 2001)  
 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)  
 Wilkinson, James and H. Stuart Hughes. *Contemporary Europe*, 10<sup>th</sup> ed. (Pearson,

### **LEARNING GOALS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES**

Upon successful completion of this course you should be able to:

1. describe the political, social, military, and cultural history of Europe during (and just before and after) the Second World War;
2. explain the impact of the Second World War on both the European and non-European world;
3. interpret primary source material and integrate such interpretations into a larger understanding of the history of the period of the Second World War;
4. appraise and evaluate historical arguments concerning the origins, progress, and impact of the Second World War.

### **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. 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: 30%
- second exam: 30%
- final exam: 30 %
- abstract exercise and discussion: 10 %

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		

**Historical Abstract Exercise.** Each student must select a topic from the course syllabus, find three articles or book chapters (in addition to the required readings), and write a short abstract of each. The abstracts should be of paragraph length and summarize the thesis or essential thrust of each article or book chapter.

To find scholarly articles, use “Historical Abstracts” (on the Library’s “Database”); please attach a print-out of each article used. Be sure any chapters are taken from books are scholarly rather than popular history (scholarly books, unlike most popular history, are documented, i.e., they have footnotes or endnotes). The abstract exercise is due Monday, April 4. Barring certified medical emergencies or family sickness, late exercises will be marked down at the discretion of the instructor.

**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

#### **Week 1 (January 10-14):**

**M: Introduction**

**W: The Great War: An Overview**

**Readings:** Gilbert and Large, “First World War” (A&B) **ER**

**F: The Peace of Paris**

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

#### **Week 2 (January 17-21):**

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

**W: Hitler’s Climb to Power**

**Readings:** Eatwell, “Germany The Rise of Nazism” **ER**

**F: Hitler’s Worldview**

**Readings:** Hitler, “My Struggle” **ER**

#### **Week 3 (January 24-28):**

**M: The Nazi State**

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

**W: The Soviet State**

**Readings:** Wilkinson and Hughes, “The Stalinist System” **ER**

**F: The Popular Front**

**Readings:** Conklin, “Republic in Peril,” **ER**

**Week 4 (January 31-February 4):**

**M:** The Origins of World War II (1)

**Readings:** Paxton, “Paris Peace Settlement Dismantled” **ER**

**W:** The Origins of World War II (2)

**Readings:** Eubank, “Intelligence Muddle” **ER**

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

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

**Week 5 (February 7-11):**

**M:** The Fall of France (1)

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

**W:** The Fall of France (2)

**Readings:** Bloch, “Frenchman Examines his Conscience” **ER**

**F:** Rumbblings in the Far East

**Readings:** Kershaw, “Tokyo, Summer and Autumn 1940” **ER**

**Week 6 (February 14-18):**

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

**W:** The Battle of Britain

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 44-59 **T**

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

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 60-71 **T**; Merridale, “Disaster Beats Its Wings” **ER**

**Week 7 (February 21-25):**

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

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

**W:** The “New Order” in Europe

**Readings:** Lyons, “Hitler’s New Order in Europe” **ER**

**F:** The Allies Respond: The “Big Three” and Strategy (1)

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 115-130 **T**

**Week 8: (February 28-March 4):**

**M:** The Allies Respond: The “Big Three” and Strategy (2)

**Readings:** Stoler and Gustafson, “Creating a Global Strategy”

**W:** The Tide Turns: The Battle for the Atlantic and North Africa

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 95-114 **T**; Lyons, “War in the Atlantic” **ER**

**F:** The Tide Turns: The Eastern Front

**Readings:** Overy, “Stalingrad and Kursk” **ER**

**Week 9 (March 7-11):** Spring Break

**Week 10 (March 14-18):****M:** The Other Side of the Moon: The War in the East**No Readings:** Film**W:** Mobilizing for Total War (1)**Readings:** Parker, pp. 131-150 **T****F:** Mobilizing for Total War (2)**Readings:** O'Neill, "The Transformation of Everyday Life" **ER****Week 11 (March 21-25):****M:** The US Home Front**Readings:** Kennedy, "The Cauldron of the Home Front" **ER****W:** "Strategic" Bombing**Readings:** Parker, pp. 151-176 **T**; Terkel, "Bombers and the Bombed" **ER****F:** **SECOND EXAM** (bring blue book)**Week 12 (March 28-April 1):****M:** Eastern and Southern Fronts: The Soviets Advance, The Anglo-Americans Stall**Readings:** Parker, pp. 177-194 **T****W:** The Second Front in Normandy: D-Day**Readings:** Parker, pp. 195-223 **T****F:** The Experience of Battle: The Anglo-Americans and the Soviets**Readings:** Pyle, "Hedgerow Fighting" **ER**; Merridale, "Exulting, Grieving, and Sweating Blood" **ER****Week 13 (April 4-8):****M:** Victory in Europe: D-Day to V-E Day**Readings:** Lyons, "End of the Thousand-Year Reich" **ER****Due:** Historical Abstract Exercise**W:** The War in the Pacific**Readings:** Lyons, "Island Hopping in the Pacific" **ER****F:** The Experience of Battle: The Americans and the Japanese**Readings:** Sledge, "On to Peleliu" (A&B) **ER****Week 14 (April 11-15):****M:** Victory in the Pacific: From Island Hopping to V-J Day**Readings:** Parker, pp. 222-242 **T****W:** The War Against Civilians (1): From Firebombing to Atomic Warfare**Readings:** Stoler and Guftason, "Atomic Bomb and the End of World War II" **ER****F:** The War Against Civilians (2): The Holocaust and "Ordinary Germans"**Readings:** Parker, pp. 264-80 **T**; Browning, "Reserve Police Battalion 101" **ER****Week 15 (April 18-22):****M:** The Legacy of World War II: From the Grand Alliance to the Cold War**Readings:** Stromberg, "Europe and the Cold War, 1945-1956" **ER**

**W:** The Legacy of World War II: From Despair to the New Europe

**Readings:** Parker, pp. 281-304 **T**

**F:** Spring Holiday: No Class

**Week 16 (April 25-29)**

**M:** Evaluations and Loose Ends

**TUESDAY, April 26: THIRD EXAM** (bring blue book)