

Spring 2012
History 218 – 02
T/R – 2:00-3:15pm
MHRA 1215

The World in the Twentieth Century

Instructor: Kevin Greene - kdgreen2@uncg.edu

Office: 2103 MHRA

Office Hours: 11:00am – 1:00pm Thursdays

Course Description

This class examines global issues in the contemporary world, focusing mainly on the post-World War II period, from the dropping of atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945, to the complex, high-tech, evolving world of today. We will view this history from the point of view of those living it, including students from this class. We all have an understanding of the way the world became what it is today, and the main purpose of this class is to introduce students to alternative ways of interpreting and analyzing history through an evaluation of differing points of view. We will examine the world by regions with a number of themes in mind: the Cold War; the rise & fall of communism; nationalism; the rise of terrorism; de-colonization/neo-colonialism; the international economy; racial, ethnic, & religious conflict; gender; class; & environmental issues.

Course Goals:

Students should be able to:

- analyze historical duration, succession, and change in terms of human agency and larger systems or structures in U.S. history since 1865.
- conduct original research by investigating and interpreting primary and secondary sources.
- use historical thinking to contextualize and analyze primary and secondary sources representing different points of view.
- use evidence-based reasoning to interpret the past coherently while developing and presenting an original argument in writing.
- use historical knowledge and interpretations to understand current events.
- critically write and discuss about the issues and themes presented in this course.

Course Readings:

1. Michael H. Hunt, *The World Transformed: 1945 to the Present*
2. Michael H. Hunt, *The World Transformed, 1945 to the Present: A Documentary Reader*
3. Ishmael Beah, *The Long Way Home* (Available on Amazon)
4. Blackboard Readings as indicated on Calendar

Grading:

Your final grade will be determined as follows:

Class Participation-25%

Mid-Term Exam -15%

Final Exam -25%

2 brief Writing Assignments-15% each; 15X2=30%

Map Quiz - 5%

Letter grades on papers and exams will be assigned after the instructor's evaluation. Evaluations will be based on three major, closely related criteria:

- command of the relevant class material (**evidence**);
- development of an argument or point of view that is pertinent to the issue at hand and that has breadth, coherence, and insight (**interpretation**); and
- expression of ideas in clear, concise, even engaging prose (**presentation**).

These criteria will translate into grades as follows:

A work = **excellent**. Outstanding in all three areas. Offers integrated, insightful coverage based on ample, sound evidence.

B work = **good**. Strong in all three areas or notable strengths in one balanced by significant weakness in another.

C work = **average**. Adequate performance in one or more areas offset by serious weakness in others that leaves the presentation fragmented, murky, or narrow.

D work = **poor**. Notable problems in all three areas. Remedial work needed to improve substantive understanding or basic communication.

F work = **unacceptable**. Serious flaws in all three areas. No evident engagement in the assignment.

Grading Scale:

A: 93-100 A-: 90-92
B+: 87-89 B: 83-86
B-: 80-82 C+: 77-79
C: 73-76 C-: 70-72
D+: 67-69 D: 63-66
D+: 60-62 F: 59 and lower

Papers: There are two papers for the course (3-4 pages, double-spaced, 12-point font) that are worth 15% each. The first is a set topic at the beginning of the semester (see the assignment below), while the second will be based on Beah's *The Long Way Home*.

Exams:

Your mid-term and final exams will be a combination of identification and essay questions. The final exam will also contain a comprehensive essay question. The exams will be given in the lecture classroom.

Map Quiz:

Since an understanding of world history requires some basic knowledge about world geography, you are required to take a map quiz for this class. You need to make at least 90 percent on this quiz to pass this class. If you do not succeed on your first attempt, you will have additional opportunities to take the map quiz.

Make-up exams:

If you cannot take an exam on the scheduled dates, you must, if at all possible, contact me within forty-eight hours of the exam to schedule a makeup. You will also need to document your illness or emergency.

Class attendance:

Regular attendance at all lectures and discussion sections is expected. You are allowed three unexcused absences in this class. Excused absences, such as for illness or emergency, require documentation. Every unexcused absence after three will lower the student's final grade by one letter grade. More than five unexcused absences may result in the student being dropped from the course. Frequent tardiness is not allowed. Two tardies will count as one unexcused absence.

Other things you should know about this class

1. Please turn off all cell phones, pagers, beepers, or any other items that make noise before entering the classroom.

2. You can use a laptop in class to take notes or to access a website if directed by the instructor. Other uses of your laptop are not approved. Anyone caught violating this policy will have the privilege of bringing a laptop to class revoked for the remainder of the semester.

3. Anyone caught cheating or plagiarizing will receive an “F” for the course. The out-of-class writing assignments do not require that you consult any outside materials. If you do consult outside materials, make sure that you use them only for deep background understanding, not as the basis for your essays. Your essays should be based on your own ideas, and written in your own words. For more on the University’s Academic Integrity Policy, go to the following website:

<http://studentconduct.uncg.edu/policy/academicintegrity/>
<http://academicintegrity.uncg.edu/complete/>

4. No incompletes will be allowed as final grades for this course, except in the most dire, unavoidable, and tragic of circumstances.

Course Calendar: Subject to change in the event of inclement weather.

* - Indicates Readings available on Blackboard

Tuesday, January 10th: Course Introduction

***Thursday, January 12th:** 1945: A Watershed
Readings: Blackboard: *Discovering*, ch. 3

Tuesday January 17th: The Origins of the Cold War & Truman’s Decision to Bomb Japan

Thursday January 19th: The Cold War
Readings: Hunt Chapter 1; *Documentary Reader* 46-51.

Tuesday January 24th: The Cold War at Home

*** Response Paper Due: In your opinion, what were the main reasons US President Harry Truman decided to use two atomic bombs on Japan in August 1945? Do you agree or disagree with his decision? Required Sources available on Blackboard:** “Thank God for the Atomic Bomb” by Paul Fussell; “Hiroshima: Needless Slaughter, Useful Terror” by William Blum; *Extra!* Update, “Media to Smithsonian: History is Bunk”; Government documents (Stimson’s diary entry and President Truman’s meeting with advisers); and *Basic Information on the Bomb*; “Second Guessing Hiroshima”; “Hiroshima: Was it Necessary?” by Doug Long; A Petition to the President of the United States; and “The Decision That Launched the *Enola Gay*” by John Correll.

Thursday January 26th: The International Economy
Readings: Hunt Chapter 2; *Documentary Reader*. 317-326.

Tuesday January 31st: Revolution in China
Readings: Hunt 111-122

Thursday February 2nd: Revolution in China
Readings: Hunt 240-247, 130-144; *Documentary Reader*
117-130.
Map Quiz

Tuesday February 7th: Indian Independence

Thursday February 9th: The Vietnam Wars
Readings: Hunt 122-129, 170-175, 247-251;
Documentary Reader 155-165

***Tuesday February 14th:** Decolonization in Africa
Readings: Hunt 266-278, 395-403; Blackboard Readings:
“Are Multi-Party Democratic Traditions Taking Hold in
Africa”

Thursday February 16th: South Africa

Begin Reading Beah’s *The Long Way Home*

Tuesday February 21st: Midterm

Thursday February 23rd: The Iranian Revolution
Readings: Hunt 388-395; *Documentary Reader*
364-371.

***Tuesday February 28th:** The Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Conflict
Readings: *A Documentary Reader* 386-398. “Israel’s
Proclamation of Independence”; “The Palestinian Declaration
of Independence”; Chasteen, “Neoliberalism.”

Thursday March 1st: The Arab-Israeli-Palestinian Conflict Contd.

March 3rd—March 12th: Spring Break—No Class

Tuesday March 13th: Civil Rights and Feminism Readings: *Documentary Reader*:
216-230

***Thursday March 15th:** Globalization
Readings: *Documentary Reader* 327-350, 399-408;

Blackboard Readings: *Discovering*, ch. 12;

Tuesday March 20th: Globalization Continued

Thursday March 22nd: Latin America

Readings: Hunt 251-266; *Documentary Reader*: 375-386

Tuesday March 27th: Latin America

Thursday April 29th: The End of the Cold War

Readings: Hunt 303-333

Tuesday April 3rd: The United States in the Middle East

***Thursday April 5th:** The United States in the Middle East

Readings: *Documentary Reader*: 257-267 Blackboard Readings:
"The United States and the Middle East"

Tuesday April 10th: Genocide in the 20th Century

Thursday April 13th: Discussion of Beah's *The Long Way Home* and "Where are we
Headed?"/Evaluations

Paper Due: Response to *The Long Way Home*

Thursday April 26th: Final Exam (3:30 – 6:30pm)