

Syllabus, 20th Century Europe

Rutgers University, Newark

1. Course and Instructor Information

- Semester:** Fall 2017
Time: Thursdays, 2:30pm to 5:20pm
Location: Conklin 424
Identifiers: Unit 21, Subject 510, Course 358, Section 01
Credits/Hours: 3
Instructor: Ray Ojserkis, PhD
Contact: ray.ojserkis@gmail.com
Office: Conklin 326, Fridays, 1:00pm to 2:00pm, and by appointment

2. Synopsis

We will survey a wide array of topics, including (but not limited to) origins, nature, and consequences of World War I and World War II, the Russian Revolution and Soviet domestic policies, Nazism, the Holocaust, the Marshall Plan and the origins of the Cold War, the origins and development of European Union, social change in late 20th century Europe, and the revolutions of 1989. For more details, please see the calendar below.

3. Goals

Our goals include

- A. basic knowledge of 20th century European history, especially its broad patterns
- B. familiarity with some common interpretations of European history
- C. ability to engage critically with others who often do not share the same interpretations of events
- D. familiarity with use of primary sources, especially the connections between the author's goals and his or her arguments and his or her method of argumentation
- E. improved skills in synthesizing and communicating historical information, and constructing sound arguments

4. Grading Policy

Your course grade will be determined by weighting the graded components as follows:

- Unannounced Reading Quizzes:** 25%
Debate Notes: Cancels two lowest reading quiz grades.
Midterm Exam: 25%
Final (non-cumulative) Exam: 25%
Research Essay: 25%

Any student who misses four or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw to avoid getting an F.

If you are absent or tardy your score for a quiz or exam will be an F unless the absence is excusable. According to the Rutgers catalog, "The recognized grounds for absence are illness requiring medical attention, curricular or extracurricular activities approved by the faculty, personal obligations claimed by the student and recognized as valid, recognized religious holidays, and severe inclement weather causing dangerous traveling conditions." Documentation will be required.

5. Classes

Class sessions will be used for quizzes, examinations, debates, and lectures. Each lecture will detail a historic topic, as listed in the schedule below, and for each of these topics I will post a handout to Blackboard listing key points we'll discuss. Some of these handouts will include primary reading in addition to that assigned below.

Learning can be a collaborative process, and I will involve the class in discussions. Never feel that your comments or questions aren't appreciated.

6. Primary Sources

Primary sources are first-hand accounts, often created by participants or witnesses of events, and sometimes created by first-recorders of events. Examples include, but aren't limited to, memoirs, speeches, documents, data, polls, and contemporary newspaper accounts. Secondary sources are sources created by people who didn't participate or witness events, but often have the benefit of perspective, and typically draw from a variety of sources to create a nuanced and complex history that can account for multiple interpretations. Examples include history books and lectures.

We'll try to balance the lectures by reading primary sources in our out-of-class reading. An electronic copy of this syllabus is on Blackboard, and you will need to access the primary sources through hyperlinks in the schedule.

As we will discuss the primary sources in class, it will help to bring printed copies with you, or a laptop that is Internet-accessible.

7. Research Essay

You will answer **one** of the following questions:

- a. To what extent did German fear of Russian expansionism contribute to the start of the First World War?
- b. To what extent did the First World War affect women's roles in European economies?
- c. Was the Dawes Plan a reasonable settlement of the Ruhr Crisis?
- d. If the Great Depression had not occurred, would the "Spirit of Locarno" prevailed? Would the Second World War have been avoided?
- e. What were the costs and benefits of Soviet industrialization in the first Five Year Plan?
- f. If you were in Spain at the start of the Spanish Civil War, would you wish for a victory by the Republicans or by the Nationalists? Why? (Assume that you could know the future.)
- g. What factors led to the victory of the Soviet Union over Germany in the Eastern Front during World War Two?
- h. In what ways were the regimes led by Mussolini, Hitler, Franco, and Antonescu similar? In what ways were they different?
- i. Explain the *Wirtschaftswunder* ("economic miracle") in West Germany, from 1949-69.
- j. Explain the relatively slow economic growth in the European areas of the COMECON compared to the rest of Europe, from 1949 to 1991.
- k. In total, did Britain and France benefit from colonization in Asia and Africa from 1880 to 1975?
- l. If you were a student in France in May 1968, would you have joined the student protests? If you were employed in France at that time, would you have favored the general strike? Why? (Assume that you could know the future.)
- m. To what extent was détente a success?

- n. What effects has the decrease in family size in Europe in the past half-century had on women? What have been the effects on economies and politics?
- o. If you lived in the United Kingdom at the time of the general election of 1979, would you wish that the Conservative Party, led by Margaret Thatcher, would win? Why? (Assume that you could know the future.)
- p. Why did NATO expand in the 1990s? What have been the consequences?
- q. In total, has the European Union been a success?

Write your essays using MS Word, and email them to me at the address above. I will not accept printed copies of your essay.

I will submit the essay to plagiarism software, and mark essays using Track Changes in MS Word. If you're not sure what plagiarism is, consider this: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Plagiarism>. Cite a source every time your essay makes use of an idea, quote, anecdote, study, or fact that you found in someone's work.

I call the essay a "research essay" to emphasize that the quality of your essay is largely dependent upon the quality of your research. Use at least four scholarly articles or published books. The phrase "at least" means you are allowed and encouraged to use more than four sources. The length of the essay should be 1,500 to 2,500 words.

Cite your sources wherever you rely on them, using footnotes, parenthetical notes or end notes. Be very specific when citing a source, using either the Chicago, APA, or MLA format throughout. For details, please consult the [Rutgers Library Guide](#). Cite a source every time you make use of someone's ideas.

8. Drop and Withdrawal Deadlines

The last date for students to drop a course with no penalty is September 12th, 2017, and the last date to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade is November 6th, 2017.

9. Academic Integrity Agreement and Honor Pledge

On each examination, you will be required to sign the following statement:

On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).

10. Information for Students with Disabilities

Rutgers University welcomes students with disabilities into all of the University's educational programs. In order to receive consideration for reasonable accommodations, a student with a disability must contact the appropriate disability services office at the campus where you are officially enrolled, participate in an intake interview, and provide documentation: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/documentation-guidelines>. If the documentation supports your request for reasonable accommodations, your campus's disability services office will provide you with a Letter of Accommodations. Please share this letter with your instructors and discuss the accommodations with them as early in your courses as possible. To begin this process, please complete the Registration form on the ODS web site at: <https://ods.rutgers.edu/students/registration-form>. For more information, please contact the Office of Disability Services in the Paul Robeson Campus Center, in suite 219, by phone at [973-353-5375](tel:973-353-5375) or by email at odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu.

11. Schedule

CLASS	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READING
1	Sep 7	Origins of First World War	<i>n/a</i>
2	Sep 14	First World War and Peace Treaties	Erich Maria Remarque, <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>, excerpt Douglas Haig, final dispatch, 1919 Clemenceau, response to German delegations objections to proposed peace, 1919 Excerpts, Treaty of Versailles, 1919
3	Sep 21	Russian Revolution, Russian Civil War	Lenin, <i>State & Revolution</i> (read only chapter 4: “Higher Phase . . .”) Central Executive Committee, Fundamental Law of Land Socialization, 1918 Lenin, letter to Penza communists, 1918 Lenin, letter to M Gorky (novelist), 1919
4	Sep 28	Fascism, Ruhr Crisis, Locarno Treaties, Start of Depression	Excerpt, Spengler, <i>Decline of the West</i>, 1922 Constitution of Fiume, 1920 Benito Mussolini, <i>What is Fascism?</i>, 1932 Personal Accounts of Inflation Years [in Germany]
5	Oct 5	Stalinism	Stalin, <i>Industrialization of the Country</i> speech, 1928 letter about conditions on the Kolkhozes (collective farms), 1932 Evening Post, <i>Famine Grips Russia, Idle on Rise, Says Briton</i>, 1933 Samadoghlu, <i>Three Times I Changed My Mind</i>, 1999
6	Oct 12	Nazism and Failure of Collective Security	Hitler, confidential memo on autarky, 1936 Munich Agreement, 1938 Chamberlain, “peace in our time” statements, 1938 Hitler, Obersalzberg speech, 1939
7	Oct 19	Midterm Exam	<i>n/a</i>
8	Oct 26	World War Two in Europe and Nazi “New Order”	Secret Additional Protocol to Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, 1939 Rosenberg, letter to Wilhelm Keitel, 1942 Himmler, speech to SS on Final Solution, 1943 Raab, interview, 1992
9	Nov 2	Division of Europe, 1944-46 Also, pick debate teams.	conversation between deGaulle and Stalin, 1944 Stalin, “campaign speech” 1946 Churchill, “Iron Curtain” speech, 1946 Marshall’s speech announcing ERP, 1947
10	Nov 9	Western Europe: Decolonization, EEC, <i>Wirtschaftswunder</i>	Orwell, <i>Shooting an Elephant</i>, 1936 Nehru, speech at Bandung Conference, 1955 MacMillan, <i>The Wind of Change</i>, 1960 deGaulle, <i>Europe and Its Role in World Affairs</i>, 1964
11	Nov 16	Eastern Europe and Détente	Khrushchev, <i>Speech to the XXth Congress of the CPSU.</i>, excerpts, 1956 “Brezhnev Doctrine” 1968 Brandt, acceptance speech for 1971 Nobel Peace Prize Rules of the Thalmann Pioneers, 1980s
12	Nov 21	Debate (start) <i>(on a Tuesday)</i>	If you are on a team debating today, email your notes by midnight today (after the debate). The notes must have citations – a list of sources does not constitute citations. Use footnotes each time you make use of an idea or fact that you read.

	Nov 23	Thanksgiving: No Class	Enjoy the day.
13	Nov 30	Debate (finish)	If you didn't debate last class, you will debate in this class. Email your notes by midnight today (after the debate). The notes must have citations – a list of sources does not constitute citations. Use footnotes each time you make use of an idea or fact that you read.
14	Dec 7	1989 Revolutions, Soviet Collapse	D. Hoffman, <i>Oligarchs</i>, Chapter 1 only (pages 11 through 30) Gorbachev's speech to UN, 1988 Conversation Between Gorbachev and Thatcher, 1989 Selvidge, <i>My Memories of the Berlin Wall</i>, 2009 (Guardian article)
	Dec 13	Research Essay Due (no class – email your essay)	Wikipedia, <i>Plagiarism</i> Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy
	Dec 21	Final Exam <i>(11:45am in our regular classroom)</i>	<i>n/a</i>