

# Syllabus, 20th Century Europe

Rutgers University, Newark

## 1. Course and Instructor Information

- Semester:** Fall 2018  
**Time:** Thursdays, 6:00pm to 9:00pm  
**Location:** Conklin 342  
**Identifiers:** Unit 21, Subject 510, Course 358, Section 63  
**Credits/Hours:** 3  
**Instructor:** Ray Ojserkis, PhD  
**Contact:** ray.ojserkis@gmail.com  
**Office:** Conklin 326, Tuesdays 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 20<sup>th</sup> century Europe, and the revolutions of 1989. For more details, please see the calendar below.

## 3. Goals

Our goals include

- A. basic knowledge of 20<sup>th</sup> 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. You will access the primary sources through hyperlinks in the schedule below.

Be prepared to discuss primary sources in class.

## 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 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018, and the last date to withdraw from a course with a "W" grade is November 5<sup>th</sup>, 2018.

## **9. Academic Integrity Agreement and Honor Pledge**

On all examinations and major course assignments submitted for grading, 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](mailto:odsnewark@newark.rutgers.edu).

## 11. Schedule

CLASS	DATE	TOPIC	ASSIGNED READING
1	Sep 6	Origins of First World War	<i>n/a</i>
2	Sep 13	First World War and Peace Treaties	<a href="#">Erich Maria Remarque, <i>All Quiet on the Western Front</i>, excerpt</a> <a href="#">Douglas Haig, final dispatch, 1919</a> <a href="#">Clemenceau, response to German delegations objections to proposed peace, 1919</a> <a href="#">Excerpts, Treaty of Versailles, 1919</a>
3	Sep 20	Russian Revolution, Russian Civil War	<a href="#">Intelligence Reports of Unrest in Russian Army, 1917</a> <a href="#">Lenin, <i>State &amp; Revolution</i> (read only section 4 in chapter 5: “Higher Phase of . . .”)</a> <a href="#">Central Executive Committee, Fundamental Law of Land Socialization, 1918</a> <a href="#">Lenin, letter to Penza communists, 1918</a>
4	Sep 27	Fascism, Ruhr Crisis, Locarno Treaties, Start of Depression	<a href="#">Excerpt, Spengler, <i>Decline of the West</i>, 1922</a> <a href="#">Constitution of Fiume, 1920</a> <a href="#">Benito Mussolini, <i>What is Fascism?</i>, 1932</a> <a href="#">Personal Accounts of Inflation Years [in Germany]</a>
5	Oct 4	Stalinism	<a href="#">Stalin, <i>Industrialization of the Country</i> speech, 1928</a> <a href="#">Stalin, <i>New Methods of Work, New Methods of Management</i>, 1931</a> <a href="#">Evening Post, Famine Grips Russia, Idle on Rise, Says Briton, 1933</a> <a href="#">Samadoghlu, <i>Three Times I Changed My Mind</i>, 1999</a>
6	Oct 11	Nazism and Failure of Collective Security	<a href="#">Hitler, confidential memo on autarky, 1936</a> <a href="#">Munich Agreement, 1938</a> <a href="#">Chamberlain, “peace in our time” statements, 1938</a> <a href="#">Hitler, Obersalzberg speech, 1939</a>
7	Oct 18	<b>Midterm Exam</b>	<i>n/a</i>
8	Oct 25	World War Two in Europe and Nazi “New Order”	<a href="#">Secret Additional Protocol to Ribbentrop-Molotov Pact, 1939</a> <a href="#">Rosenberg, letter to Wilhelm Keitel, 1942</a> <a href="#">Himmler, speech to SS on Final Solution, 1943</a> <a href="#">Raab, interview, 1992</a>
9	Nov 1	Division of Europe, 1944-46 Also, <b>pick debate teams.</b>	<a href="#">conversation between deGaulle and Stalin, 1944</a> <a href="#">Stalin, “campaign speech” 1946</a> <a href="#">Churchill, “Iron Curtain” speech, 1946</a> <a href="#">Marshall’s speech announcing ERP, 1947</a>
10	Nov 8	Western Europe: Decolonization, EEC, <i>Wirtschaftswunder</i>	<a href="#">Orwell, <i>Shooting an Elephant</i>, 1936</a> <a href="#">Nehru, speech at Bandung Conference, 1955</a> <a href="#">MacMillan, <i>The Wind of Change</i>, 1960</a> <a href="#">deGaulle, <i>Europe and Its Role in World Affairs</i>, 1964</a>
11	Nov 15	Eastern Europe and Détente	<a href="#">Khrushchev, <i>Speech to the XXth Congress of the CPSU.</i>, excerpts, 1956</a> “Brezhnev Doctrine” 1968 <a href="#">Brandt, acceptance speech for 1971 Nobel Peace Prize</a> <a href="#">Rules of the Thalmann Pioneers, 1980s</a>
12	Nov 20	<b>Debate (start)</b> <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 22	<b>Thanksgiving: No Class</b>	Enjoy the day.
13	Nov 29	<b>Debate (finish)</b>	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 6	1989 Revolutions, Soviet Collapse	<a href="#">D. Hoffman, <i>Oligarchs</i>, Chapter 1 only (pages 11 through 30)</a> <a href="#">Gorbachev's speech to UN, 1988</a> <a href="#">Conversation Between Gorbachev and Thatcher, 1989</a> <a href="#">Transcript of the Closed 'Trial' of Nicolae and Elena Ceausescu, 1989</a>
	Dec 12	<b>Research Essay Due (no class – email your essay)</b>	<a href="#">Wikipedia, <i>Plagiarism</i></a> <a href="#">Rutgers University Academic Integrity Policy</a>
	Dec 20	<b>Final Exam (@ 6:20pm in our regular classroom)</b>	<i>n/a</i>