

# Perspectives in History: Post-1945 Europe

Svanur Pétursson

[svanurp@gmail.com](mailto:svanurp@gmail.com)

Office: Conklin Hall 337

Office Hours: Thursdays 3-5pm and by appointment

21:510:392

Tuesdays/Thursdays 11:30-12:50

Conklin Hall 424

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## Course Description:

By 1945 the European continent had been embroiled in a six-year long world war that left the majority of its nations socially and economically devastated. Most histories that describe the decades after World War II focus on the division between the east and the west in a Cold War that would last until 1989. The story of the western part of Europe therefore often becomes a triumphalist story of greater peace, democratization and economic growth (at least until the mid 1970s). This course, however, will focus on the problems of such a story, as the international peace that was maintained within Europe throughout the Cold War stood in stark contrast to many of the national problems that plagued the majority of the countries trying to wrest themselves from a history of participation or complicity with the fascist regimes of the previous decades. At the same time, several European powers were losing their colonies to independence movements, which only further disrupted the weak sense of economical or social stability that was so sought after in the aftermath of World War II.

In this course we will focus on a number of separate yet interrelated themes in order to better understand the upheavals that took place from the 1950s to the 1970s, with a slightly greater focus on Western Europe rather than the Eastern part. Student protest, feminism, decolonization, terrorism, sexual revolution, and Marxist class politics might not seem related at first sight. However, through reading and analyzing a large variety of primary sources, from essays, books, speeches, interviews, news reports, comic illustrations to contemporary films, music, and documentaries, we will try to gain a deeper understanding of these upheavals and the motivations of the people at the forefront of them.

## Learning Objectives:

In this Writing Intensive course, students will practice the following skills:

- Analyzing evidence with a critical mind: in class, students will analyze the primary source readings, building on each others' insights to ask relevant questions about how to evaluate different types of sources.
- Writing clear and concise summaries of evidence: in homework assignments, students will write summations and opinions about the evidence they are presented, and learn to craft persuasive arguments supported by facts and evidence.
- Learning how to find relevant evidence: over the course of the semester, students will take on the investigative work of finding their own original newspaper sources, with guidance from the course instructor.
- Writing a college-level paper: along with several other writing assignments, students will practice

writing a formal college-level that is: 1. clearly-argued; 2. persuasive; 3. based on solid evidence; 4. significant in its findings and conclusions. Students will have guidance from the instructor on how to achieve these goals, with in-class exercises on how to craft a strong essay argument.

### **Course Requirements:**

Students are required to attend lectures and take notes. They are also required to read the assigned texts before the start of the lecture for which they are assigned. Student participation in the discussion makes up 20% of the grade. Aside from course participation, there are multiple shorter written homework assignments, one midterm paper, and a final paper.

1. Participation in class discussion. Students are expected to read the assigned texts before the class (by the date indicated on the syllabus). Simple attendance in class is not factored into the participation grade – students are required to come to class ready with questions or observations about the readings and to take part in the discussion to earn a good participation grade. We will devote much of our class time to interpreting the primary source readings; this in-depth analysis will compose the participation grade.

Students must print out the readings from Blackboard for each session and bring them to class, having read and made notes on them. I will be checking whether students have brought the readings to class and include that in the participation grade.

2. Discussion Notes. To aid students in preparing for the class discussion, students are required to bring a page of Discussion Notes on the readings for individual sessions – notes that they have taken on the readings for that session to answer the discussion prompt (as outlined on the syllabus below). Students can use the notes during the class discussion, and then hand them in at the end of class. I will only accept typed notes, not handwritten ones. **Discussion Notes may not be handed in at a later date.** There are nine discussion notes while only the best eight are factored into the final grade.

3. Short Assignments, 2-3 pages in length each. There are three homework assignments, due dates marked on the syllabus. Assignments **MUST** be handed in at the beginning of class. I will only accept late written assignments in case of emergency, but proof of emergency is required. If students know they will not be able to attend class for non-emergency reasons (for instance for religious holiday observance), they must submit the assignment in advance. I also understand that we all sometimes face unforeseen circumstances: to take this into account, I will provide one make-up assignment opportunity at the end of the semester, which can be used to fill in a missing assignment grade or to substitute for a lower grade.

4. Midterm Paper, 6-7 pages. Due November 3rd.

5. Final Paper, 7-9 pages. Due date TBD based on final exam schedule.

### **Submitting Assignments, Papers and Essay:**

-- All short assignments and the midterm and final papers have to be submitted in two forms: a paper copy handed in at the beginning of class and an electronic copy submitted to Turnitin on Blackboard. The two copies must be identical.

-- Pdfs of newspaper articles can't be submitted to Turnitin, so they only need to be attached to the paper copy handed in at class.

-- Discussion Notes do not need to be submitted to Turnitin. They only need to be handed in as a

paper copy at the end of the relevant class session.

-- All students need to put the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge, with their signature, on the paper copies of the Assignments, Papers and Essays. (For the wording of the Pledge, see below.)

**Grading:**

In-class participation: 20%

Discussion Notes (8 in total, up to 2 points each): 16%

Homework Assignments (3 in total worth 8% each): 24%

Midterm Essay: 20%

Final Paper: 20%

**Grading Rubric:**

A: Outstanding

A-: Outstanding, with one or two areas of improvement

B+: Very good

B: Good

B-: Good overall, with some significant weaknesses

C+: Satisfactory, with some potential for improvement

C: Satisfactory, but needs significant development

C-: Barely satisfactory

D: Poor: overwhelming flaws

F: Failing: doesn't complete assignment

The grades are applied to your work in the class: at the college level, this means the final product of your work – what you hand in to me – not simply the amount of effort you put into the work. (In other words, students don't get an "A for effort" at the college level.) "Outstanding" is not defined as how the final product compares to your own previous work, but how it compares to other students' work. All of this is a reflection of the real world: in the professional working world that you will soon be entering, you will succeed based on how effective you are compared to other people.

I am happy to talk to you about your assignments, strategies for writing papers, rough drafts, etc. at any time during the semester – but I will only do so in office hours. I will not review paper drafts or answer in-depth questions via email, since email is not an effective tool for this kind of review. You can send me short informational questions via email, but for an evaluation of your work (including rough drafts) you must make the effort to come to my office hours in person. If you have a scheduling conflict with my regular office hours, email me to make an appointment at another time.

**Class Rules:**

Any behavior that might be disruptive to other students, making it difficult for them to hear or distracting them from the lecture, or in any way intimidates them from participating in class, is detrimental and will be counted against the participation grade.

This means, in concrete terms:-- no talking in private conversations (even in whispers), -- no cell

phone use or any other form of texting, -- no use of computers or laptops, -- no working on other course homework.

Arriving at class late or leaving early is extraordinarily disruptive to other students, and is only acceptable in an emergency situation. More than anything else, though, private conversations draw attention away from the common work and conversations we are trying to achieve.

### **Attendance policy:**

Attendance is required. There will be no make-up opportunities for missed classes. Excused vs. Unexcused absences: The Rutgers-Newark Undergraduate catalog ([http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug\\_current/pg576.html](http://catalogs.rutgers.edu/generated/nwk-ug_current/pg576.html)) states: "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."

If you plan to claim a religious holiday as an excused absence, you must inform me of this fact within the first two weeks of class.

After four unexcused absences, your overall course grade will be lowered by a partial grade (from B+ to B, for example) for every further unexcused absence. With eight absences, the stakes change: Any student who misses eight or more sessions through any combination of excused and unexcused absences will have missed more than a quarter of the class time and will not earn credit in this class. Such students should withdraw from the course to avoid an F.

### **Late papers and exams:**

Homework Assignments: I will not accept late homework assignments or discussion notes, except in cases of proven emergency. The homework assignments and discussion notes are designed to help you keep up with the readings and to prompt participation in class discussion. This is why they cannot be handed in later than the class session for which they were assigned. But: You can always hand an assignment in early. If you know that you will be absent on a particular day, plan ahead and email the assignment to me early. (Remember to submit a second copy to Turnitin as well in the case of short assignments and other papers.)

Midterm and Final Papers: Unless you have express permission from me, discussed with me IN ADVANCE, and based on an acknowledged reason, late papers will have their grades lowered one full grade every day that they are late.

### **Disabilities:**

Students with disabilities, including learning disabilities, requiring assistance and/or accommodation should speak with Disability Services in a timely manner to set up appropriate accommodations.

### **Policy on Academic Integrity (Cheating and Plagiarism):**

Rutgers University treats cheating and plagiarism as serious offenses. Cheating is both a moral and

an ethical offense. It violates both your own integrity and the ethics of group commitment: when you cut corners and cheat, you undermine those students who took the time to work on the assignment honestly. The standard minimum penalties for students who cheat or plagiarize include failure of the course, disciplinary probation, and a formal warning that further cheating will be grounds for expulsion from the University.

All students are required to sign the Rutgers Honor Code Pledge. To receive credit, every assignment must have your signature under the following phrase: “On my honor, I have neither received nor given any unauthorized assistance on this assignment.

You may only use the texts assigned in this syllabus to complete the homework assignments, discussion notes, midterm essay, and argument papers. Resist the urge to cut and paste, either literally or figuratively by using other people’s ideas. If I find that you have used other people’s ideas (ex: Wikipedia, Amazon reviews, book jacket descriptions, etc.), I will not accept the assignment because I will not be able to consider it your own work. You will get a failing grade (0 points) for that assignment and will not be able to make it up.

### **Required Readings:**

The Required Readings are on Blackboard under ‘Course Documents.’ You will need to print out the readings and bring them to class, since we will be working intensively in class with the documents. If you don’t bring them to class, you will not be able to participate adequately in the discussion. I will check each session that students have brought the readings with them.

Aside from the online readings, we will also be reading one novel, Heinrich Böll’s *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*. You can either purchase the book in bookstores or online, or you can secure a copy through the library.

### **Schedule of Topics and Readings:**

#### **Week 1**

September 1<sup>st</sup>: Introduction

### **The Historical Overview**

September 3<sup>rd</sup>: East versus West; Communism and anti-Communism  
Readings: BB: Tony Judt: Postwar (“Culture Wars”)

#### **Week 2**

September 10<sup>th</sup>: Decolonization  
Readings: BB: Tony Judt: Postwar (“Lost Illusions”)

#### **Discussion Notes 1**

#### **Week 3**

September 15<sup>th</sup>: The Economic Boom  
Readings: BB: Tony Judt: Postwar (“The Age of Affluence”)

September 17<sup>th</sup>: 1960s Revolutions

Readings: BB: Tony Judt: Postwar (“The Spectre of Revolution”)

**Short Assignment 1**

**Week 4**

September 22<sup>nd</sup>: 1970s Terrorism

Readings: BB: Tony Judt: Postwar (“Diminished Expectations”)

**Discussion Notes 2**

**Theories of Oppression and Decolonization**

September 24<sup>th</sup>: Rights of the Oppressed

Readings: BB: Ho Chi Minh (“Declaration of Independence of the Republic of Vietnam”); Frantz Fanon (“Concerning Violence”)

**Week 5**

September 29<sup>th</sup>: Sexual Oppression

Readings: BB: Simone de Beauvoir (Excerpt from *The Second Sex*); Frantz Fanon (Excerpt from *The Wretched of the Earth*)

**Discussion Notes 3**

October 1<sup>st</sup>: The Battle of Algiers

Viewing: The Battle of Algiers (Available to watch on Hulu.com)

**Discussion Notes 4**

**Week 6**

October 6<sup>th</sup>: Communism in Asia

Readings: BB: National Liberation Front for South Vietnam: (“Ten-Point Manifesto”); Deng Tuo: (“The Kingly Way and the Tyrannical Way”); Mao Zedong (“Talk to the Leaders of the Centre”)

**Problems in the Eastern Bloc**

October 8<sup>th</sup>: Problems Within the Eastern Bloc

Readings: BB: Nikita Khrushchev (“20<sup>th</sup> Party Congress Speech”); Brezhnev/Dubcek (“Memorandum of Conversation Between Leonid Brezhnev and Alexander Dubcek”)

**Week 7**

October 13<sup>th</sup>: Dissidents

Readings: BB: Andrei Sakharov (“Excerpt from *Memoirs*”)

**Discussion Notes 5**

**Student Revolts**

October 15<sup>th</sup>: Politics and Eros

Readings: BB: Herbert Marcuse (“Political Preface”)

### **Week 8**

October 20<sup>th</sup>: Education, Revolution, and the Universities

Readings: BB: Rudi Dutschke (“The Students and the Revolution”)

October 22<sup>nd</sup>: May 1968 in Paris

Readings: BB: Daniel Cohn-Bendit (Interview by Jean-Paul Sartre”)

### **Short Assignment 2**

### **Week 9**

October 27<sup>th</sup>: Sexuality and Class Struggle

Readings: BB: Reimut Reiche (Excerpt from *Sexuality and Class Struggle*)

### **Discussion Notes 5**

October 29<sup>th</sup>: What Sexual Revolution?

Readings: BB: Ejlersen (“I Accuse”); Comics from Student Magazines; David Reuben (Excerpt from *Everything You Always Wanted to Know About Sex but Were Afraid to Ask*)

## **The Radicalization of the Left**

### **Week 10**

November 3<sup>rd</sup>: From Mao’s Red Book to Terrorism

In class viewing: Jean Luc Godard’s *La Chinoise*

### **MIDTERM PAPER DUE**

November 5<sup>th</sup>: “Everybody Talks about the Weather...”

Readings: BB: Ulrike Meinhof (Various Columns from *Konkret*)

### **Week 11**

November 10<sup>th</sup>: The Rise of Domestic Terrorism

Readings: BB: Statements by the *Red Army Faction* and *The Red Brigade*

### **Discussion Notes 6**

November 12<sup>th</sup>: Police/State Repression?

Readings: BB: Derek Humphry (Excerpt from *Police Power and Black People*)

Online viewing: The Mangrove Nine (on YouTube)

### **Week 12**

November 17<sup>th</sup>: The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum

Readings: Heinrich Böll: *The Lost Honor of Katharina Blum*

### **Discussion Notes 7**

## **Coming to Terms With the 1960s**

November 19<sup>th</sup>: The Legacy of the Prague Spring  
Readings: Vaclav Havel (“The Greengrocer”); plus more TBD

**Week 13**

November 24<sup>th</sup>: Terrorism in the news  
Readings: BB: A variety of contemporary news articles on terrorism in the 1970s

**Discussion Notes 8**

November 26<sup>th</sup>: **THANKSGIVING**

**Week 14**

December 1<sup>st</sup>: Contemporary films as sources  
In this class we will discuss the findings of students as they hand in their assignment on one of the following films: Elio Petri’s *Investigation of a Citizen Above Suspicion*; Costa Gavras’s *Z*;

**Short Assignment 3**

December 3<sup>rd</sup>: 1978 and the Height of Terrorism

In class viewing: *Germany in Autumn*

**Final Paper Topics distributed**

**Week 15**

December 8<sup>th</sup>: Revisiting Historical Understanding of the Period. Revolution? Summer of Love? Terror?

Readings: BB: Statements by Cohn-Bendit, Negri etc.

In class viewing: Interview with Bernardo Bertolucci

**Discussion Notes 9**

December 10<sup>th</sup>: The Continuing Importance of the 1960s.

Readings: BB: News Reports of the Paris and London Riots; Ian Buruma (Excerpt from *Murder in Amsterdam*)

**Make-up short assignment**

**FINAL PAPER:** Due date to be decided based on final exam schedule