



HIST 417: World War Two in Europe

Instructor: Prof. Joshua Arthurs

Location: Woodburn 102, MW 3:30-4:45

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Course Description:

This course examines the impact of the most devastating war in human history on the political, cultural and social fabric of European societies. Although we will cover the basic political and military history of the war in Europe, the emphasis will be on such themes as occupation, collaboration, resistance and retribution. Each of these broad themes, moreover, will be connected to the Holocaust and the many wars within the European war. We will also explore the interplay of myth and memory of the war from a variety of national perspectives.

Course Structure:

While there is a loose chronological structure, each week of the course is dedicated to a specific theme or problem. Unless otherwise noted, the Monday session will be devoted to a lecture on key events and concepts; the second session (Wednesday) will be a workshop-style discussion in which students engage more directly with the readings.

Undergraduate Assignments:

Papers (45%): A midterm and a final paper, worth 20% and 25% of your grade respectively. Each paper is approximately 6-8 pages double-spaced. Assignment prompts will be distributed in class, and will assess your ability to understand and respond to the arguments made in the readings, lectures and class discussion. Papers must use the Chicago style of citation; see eCampus for the style guide. On eCampus you can also find a paper grading rubric and an explanation of grading criteria.

Students have the option of rewriting the midterm paper. When submitting a rewrite, you must also submit the original version of the paper, with my comments included. I strongly encourage

you to consult with me in revising papers. Rewrites will be accepted up to one week after graded papers are returned.

Online Discussion (20%): Unless otherwise indicated by the professor, students will write a brief response to questions regarding the week's readings; these must be posted on the eCampus Discussion Board by **5 PM every Tuesday**. Each week's response will be graded. Students will be divided into online discussion groups to facilitate conversation; please check your group's page regularly, as you can earn additional points by commenting on your peers' posts.

Film Analysis (5%): We will be watching *The Eye of Vichy* in late September; students will complete a worksheet on the documentary's themes.

Reflection Assignment (10%): At the beginning of the semester, you will write a brief (approximately two pages double-spaced) reflection on the broad themes of the course; you will then revisit this paper at the end of term and write a further two pages reflecting on how your ideas have changed over the semester. The two pieces will then be turned in and graded together.

Participation and Attendance (20%): Students are expected to attend class, to come prepared and to contribute constructively to our discussions. Be prepared to dissect the texts and ask questions. I do not distinguish between excused and unexcused absences; however, I understand that illness and problems can arise, so you will be allowed **TWO** "free" absences over the course of the semester. Be judicious about how you use these absences. If you use up your absences early in the semester, I will not be sympathetic when you need to miss class later in the term. Perfect attendance will raise your participation grade; multiple absences will lower it.

Extra Credit: Students may earn up to 5% extra credit by writing an analysis of a film that is relevant to the themes of the course; see the course website for a list of approved films. The paper should be approximately 3-4 pages double-spaced. Students are encouraged to consult with me ahead of time. You may only hand in one extra credit assignment per semester.

Graduate Assignments:

Term Paper (45%): Graduate students will write a 15-20 page historiography paper on a subject of their choice, chosen in consultation with me and relevant to the themes of the course. In addition to assigned readings, they must choose 4-6 works of scholarly literature (books, journal articles, etc.) on their topic. As indicated on the schedule, students must submit a **2-3 page proposal and preliminary bibliography and meet with me individually** to discuss their project.

Film Analysis (5%): We will be watching *The Eye of Vichy* in late September; students will complete a worksheet on the documentary's themes.

Reflection Assignment (10%): At the beginning of the semester, you will write a brief (approximately two pages) reflection on the broad themes of the course; you will then revisit this paper at the end of term and write a further two pages reflecting on how your ideas have developed over the semester. The two pieces will then be turned in and graded together.

Online Discussion (20%): Unless otherwise indicated by the professor, students will write a brief response to questions regarding the week's readings; these must be posted on the eCampus Discussion Board by **5 PM every Tuesday**. Each week's response will be graded. Students will be divided into online discussion groups to facilitate conversation; please check your group's page regularly, as you can earn additional points by commenting on your peers' posts.

Participation and Attendance (20%): See above for attendance policies. I expect graduate students to be active participants in class, especially given the importance of intellectual debate to your program of study. At the same time, please be inclusive and respectful of undergraduates in your contributions.

Readings:

The following books are available for purchase at the campus bookstore. Other readings, indicated by an asterisk (*), are available on eCampus.

- Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin: Eight Weeks in the Conquered City*
- Frans Coetzee and Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee, *The World in Flames: a World War Two Sourcebook* (indicated in schedule as Sourcebook)
- Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*
- Catherine Merridale, *Life and Death in the Red Army, 1939-1945*
- Richard Overy, *1939: Countdown to War*
- Alexander B. Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland: Blitzkrieg, Ideology, and Atrocity*
- Alexander Swanston and Malcolm Swanston, *A Historical Atlas of World War II*

eCampus:

Important materials – including this syllabus, readings, PowerPoint slides from past lectures, discussion questions and useful links – will be posted on the course website, which can be accessed by logging on to **ecampus.wvu.edu**.

Course Expectations:

Assignments: The papers must be submitted in **HARD COPY** and stapled – not sent via email. They should be double-spaced, with 1-inch margins and in 12-point font. Late papers will be deducted half a grade level (e.g. A to A-, B+ to B) for every day that they are late, beginning at the time at which they are due. No extensions will be given.

Communication: I will often communicate with the class via your WVU email account (MIX). Please be sure to check it regularly. Email is also the best way to contact me. When emailing, please ensure that you are polite and professional; an unpunctuated Blackberry message with no salutation will not be answered. I will work hard to get back to you in a timely manner.

Courtesy during Class: It is disruptive to others to arrive late to class or leave early. Please don't do it. If you know that you will have to leave class early, explain the situation to me

beforehand and sit near the door so that you can exit as quietly as possible. Please turn off all cell phones, beepers, or any other wireless device that may make noise during class. I will confiscate your device if it rings in class. You may use a laptop in class for taking notes, but if you are using it for email, instant-messaging, or any other activity I will ask you to stop using your computer.

Writing Center: Writing is one of the most important skills in this course. You are encouraged to use the WVU Writing Center to help you revise papers. More information on the Writing Center's resources can be found via a link on the course eCampus page.

Academic Integrity: Plagiarism and other forms of academic dishonesty will be dealt with severely. At a minimum, **offenders will fail the course**. Plagiarism means "submitting, without appropriate acknowledgement, a report, notebook, speech, outline, theme, thesis, dissertation, or other written, visual, or oral material that has been copied in whole or in part from the work of others, whether such source is published or not, including (but not limited to) another individual's academic composition, compilation, or other product, or commercially prepared paper" (WVU Undergraduate Catalog, 2003-2005, p. 47). Plagiarism includes not only lifting passages word for word without using quotation marks (even if you cite the author!), but also the substantial use of anyone else's ideas without citing them. **Using material from the World Wide Web without citing it is plagiarism.** Your work is made stronger, not weaker, by showing that you are able to refer to the work of others and comment upon it critically. Whenever you use material word for word, you must use quotation marks and cite the proper author.

WVU Social Justice Statement: West Virginia University is committed to social justice. I concur with that commitment and expect to maintain a positive learning environment based upon open communication, mutual respect, and non-discrimination. Our University does not discriminate on the basis of race, sex, age, disability, veteran status, religion, sexual orientation, color, or national origin. Any suggestions as to how to further such a positive and open environment in this class will be appreciated and given serious consideration. If you are a person with a disability and anticipate needing any type of accommodation in order to participate in this class, please advise me and make appropriate arrangements with Disability Services (293-6700).

Schedule

Aug. 22-24: Introduction

REFLECTION PAPER #1 DUE WED. AUG. 22TH

Aug. 29-Aug. 31: Roots and Causes pt. 1 – the War to End All Wars

Readings:

- *Wolfgang Kruse, “The First World War: the ‘True German Revolution’?” in *The Problem of Revolution in Germany, 1789-1989*, ed. Reinhard Rürup (Oxford: Berg, 2000): 67-92.
- *Stéphane Audoin-Rouzeau and Annette Becker, *14-18: Understanding the Great War* (New York: Hill and Wang, 2002): 226-237.
- *Richard Bessel, *Nazism and War* (New York: Modern Library, 2006), 3-31.

Documents:

- *Woodrow Wilson, “The Idealistic View”
- *German Delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, “A Peace of Might”
- *Adolf Hitler, “Speech of 10 April 1923”

Sept. 5-7: Roots and Causes pt. 2 – the Crisis of Democracy

NO CLASS MON. SEPT. 5TH – LABOR DAY

Readings:

- *Eric Hobsbawm, *The Age of Extremes: a History of the World, 1914-1991* (New York: Pantheon Books, 1994), 119-141.
- *Richard Bessel, *Nazism and War*, 35-89.

Documents:

- “Mussolini and the Masses” (Sourcebook)
- “Abyssinia’s Plight” (Sourcebook)
- “Spain’s Anguish” (Sourcebook)

Sept. 12-14: Peace in Our Time? The War Begins

Readings:

- Overy, *1939: Countdown to War*.

Documents:

- “Hossbach Memorandum” (Sourcebook)
- “Appeasement” (Sourcebook)
- “France Goes to War” (Sourcebook)

Sept. 19-21: Blitzkrieg: the Partition of Poland

Readings:

- Rossino, *Hitler Strikes Poland*, xiii-28, 58-152, 191-235.

Documents:

- “Rethinking Armored Warfare” (Sourcebook)
- “Occupied Poland” (Sourcebook)

Sept. 26-28, Oct. 3-5: Hitler’s Europe: Occupation, Collaboration and the Home Front
PROFESSOR OUT OF TOWN WEDS. SEPT 28TH and MON. OCT. 3RD - WATCH *THE EYE OF VICHY*; FILM ANALYSIS DUE WEDS. OCT 5TH

Readings:

- *Rab Bennett, *Under the Shadow of the Swastika: the Moral Dilemmas of Resistance and Collaboration in Hitler’s Europe* (New York: NYU Press, 1999), 43-67.
- *Anette Warring, “Intimate and Sexual Relations” in *Surviving Hitler and Mussolini: Daily Life in Occupied Europe* (New York: Berg, 2006): 88-128.
- *Jose Harris, “War and Social History: Britain and the Home Front during the Second World War.” *Contemporary European History* 1.1 (1992), 17-35.

Documents:

- “France’s Collapse” (Sourcebook)
- “Strange Defeat” (Sourcebook)
- “French Collaboration” (Sourcebook)
- “London is Burning” (Sourcebook)

Oct. 10-12: Barbarossa

UNDERGRAD MIDTERM PAPER PROMPT HANDED OUT WEDS. OCT. 12TH
GRADUATE PAPER PROPOSALS DUE WEDS. OCT. 12TH

Readings:

- Merridale, *Ivan’s Army*, 2-22, 49-171.

Documents:

- “Germany Strikes East” (Sourcebook)
- “The Criminal Orders” (Sourcebook)
- “Saving Moscow” (Sourcebook)
- “Combat on the Russian Front” (Sourcebook)

Oct. 17-19: Holocaust pt. 1

Readings:

- *Avraham Barkai, “‘Aryanization’ and the Holocaust” in *The Final Solution: Origins and Implementation*, ed. David Cesarini (New York: Routledge, 1994): 33-40.
- *Jürgen Förster, “The Relation between Operation Barbarossa as an Ideological War of Extermination and the Final Solution” in *The Final Solution*: 85-102.

- *Jan T. Gross, “Jews and their Polish Neighbors: the Case of Jedwabne in Summer of 1941” in *Contested Memories: Poles and Jews During the Holocaust and its Aftermath* (New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2003): 69-82.
- *Timothy Snyder, “Holocaust: the Ignored Reality.” *New York Review of Books*, July 16, 2009.

Documents:

- “Atrocities in Kamenets-Podolsky” (Sourcebook)
- “The Warsaw Ghetto” (Sourcebook)
- “Wannsee Conference” (Sourcebook)

Oct. 24-26: Holocaust pt. 2

MIDTERM PAPER DUE WEDS. OCT 26TH

Readings:

- Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz*.

Oct. 31-Nov.2 : Endgame pt.1 – the Tide Turns

Readings:

- Merridale, *Ivan’s Army*, 171-298
- *Peter Schrijvers, *The Crash of Ruin: American Combat Soldiers in Europe During World War II* (New York: NYU Press, 1998), 218-248.

Documents:

- “Stalingrad: the Rats’ War” (Sourcebook)
- “The Fall of Mussolini” (Sourcebook)

Nov. 7-9: Endgame pt.2 – Resistance

Readings:

- *Rab Bennett, *Under the Shadow of the Swastika: the Moral Dilemmas of Resistance and Collaboration in Hitler’s Europe* (New York: NYU Press, 1999), 130-174.
- *Gustavo Corni, “Italy” in *Resistance in Western Europe*, ed. Bob Moore (New York: Berg, 2000), 157-188.

Documents:

- “The Polish Resistance” (Sourcebook)
- “Yugoslavia’s Partisans” (Sourcebook)

Nov. 14-16: Endgame pt.3 - Downfall

FINAL PAPER PROMPT HANDED OUT WEDS. NOV. 16TH

Readings:

- Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin*.
- Merridale, *Ivan’s Army*, 299-335.

Nov. 21-23

THANKSGIVING BREAK

Nov. 28-30: Postwar: Prosecution, Retribution and Recovery

Readings:

- *Geoff Eley, “When Europe Was New: Liberation and the Making of the Post-War Era” in *The Lasting War: Society and Identity in Britain, France and Germany after 1945*, ed. Monica Riera and Gavin Schaffer (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2008): 17-43.
- *Norman Naimark, “The Persistence of ‘the Postwar’: Germany and Poland” in *Histories of the Aftermath: the Legacies of the Second World War in Europe*, ed. Frank Biess and Robert Moeller (New York: Berghahn Books, 2010): 13-29.
- *Megan Koreman, “The Collaborator’s Penance: The Local Purge, 1944-5,” *Contemporary European History* 6.2 (1997): 177-192.
- Merridale, *Ivan’s Army*, 336-371.

Documents:

- “Nazis to the Bitter End?” (Sourcebook)
- “The Nuremberg Trials” (Sourcebook)

Dec. 5-7: The Good War? Memory and Representation

REFLECTION PAPERS DUE WEDS. DEC. 7TH

EXTRA CREDIT PAPERS DUE BY WEDS. DEC. 7TH

Readings:

- Merridale, *Ivan’s Army*, 372-388
- *Heidemarie Uhl, “From Victim Myth to Co-Responsibility Thesis: Nazi Rule, World War II, and the Holocaust in Austrian Memory” in *The Politics of Memory in Postwar Europe*, ed. Richard Ned Lebow, Wulf Kansteiner and Claudio Fogu (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006): 40-72.
- *Martin Evans, “Memories, Monuments, Histories: the Re-Thinking of the Second World War since 1989,” *National Identities* 8, no. 4 (2006): 317-348.

Documents:

- “Remembering D-Day and the Boys of Pointe du Hoc” (Sourcebook)
- “Germany Commemorates the Fortieth Anniversary of Defeat” (Sourcebook)

ALL FINAL PAPERS DUE AT NOON ON MON. DEC. 12TH