HIST 102:  
Modern European History, 1700-2012

COURSE OVERVIEW

This course examines the history of modern Europe from the 18th century until the present. We will concentrate on the historical evolution of European political, cultural, and technological revolutions during this period. While the course will cover a range of issues, two issues will be of primary concern. First, we will trace the evolution of ideas about democracy as well as the continent’s record of living up to the democratic and liberal ideals. In other words, how did various socio-economic, religious, racial, and ethnic groups come to participate in the democratic experiment? How did liberal democracy prevail over alternative conservative or radical ideologies? As you will find out, democracy’s success was anything but assured over the course of the 19th and 20th centuries. Second, we will investigate Europe’s relationship to the world, not only because Europe exercised an enormous influence on the world community, but also because Europe changed profoundly over the course of that interaction. At the end of the course, you will determine for yourself the relative success of the democratic process and the nature of Europe’s impact on the world and vice versa.
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

I. Content:

By the end of the semester, students should be familiar with:

- the political, social, economic, and cultural development of the European continent from 1700 to the present.
- the general chronology of European history.
- basic theories, generalizations, and debates of Russian/Soviet history.

II. Cognitive skills:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- identify and relay an argument of a specific readings concisely and precisely
- think critically about an author’s approach and execution of a historical problem.
- think historically about events, processes, and significant individuals.

III. Communication skills:

By the end of the semester, students should be able to:

- present their point of view concisely and persuasively while staying on topic.
- participate in a group discussion in a productive and collaborative manner.

REQUIRED TEXTS (available at the Oberlin College Bookstore):


Assignments and Final Grade Distribution

~ Map Quizzes – 15 % ~

There will be a total of five map quizzes that will give you a sense of how the political map of Europe changed over the course of 19th and 20th centuries. On Blackboard, you will find links to maps of Europe in 1789, 1815, 1918, 1945, and 1991. The point of map quizzes is not only to test your ability to recognize political entities on blank maps, but also to be able to state what had changed and why those changes occurred.
~ Reading Abstracts —30 % ~

To help you/motivate you to keep up with the readings, you will turn in ten (10) reading responses that should be between approximately 300-350 words in length. These assignments will be graded individually. In the writing assignment, your task is to identify the central argument of the day’s readings. In other words, I am not asking what the article “is about” but what the author’s argument is. In addition to identifying the author’s argument, methodology, and sources, you are encouraged (though not obligated) to reflect on and probe/problematize the author’s contentions. These assignments are meant to help you precisely and concisely express your thoughts in any academic/professional setting.

Three cardinal rules about analytical short assignments:

• You must turn in one writing assignment per week until you reach the assigned quota of 10 response papers. You can turn in more than one response, but one assignment per week is obligatory. No exceptions.
• If you are absent from class, you must hand in a response paper for the class that you missed as soon as possible. This will count towards your total.
• You must hand in your assignments at the beginning of class in hard copy. No assignment can be turned in after a reading has been covered in class (Unless, of course, you were forced to miss class.)

~ Analytic Essays – 30 % ~

During the semester we will watch three films about European history: Behind the Lines, The Battle of Algiers, and The Little Shop on Main Street. In addition, we will be reading one play and two journalistic accounts: Eugene Ionesco’s Rhinoceros, Sven Lindqvist’s “Exterminate All the Brutes”, and Ian Buruma’s Murder in Amsterdam. You will be writing on any two of the above works of your choosing—with the caveat that you must turn in one review before spring break and the other after spring break.

I ask that you consider what the two works of your choosing are saying about the nature of Russian/Soviet history. Both the films and novels assert a particular interpretation of historical events and these reviews (of approximately 750 words each) are intended to aid you in becoming more self-conscious in detecting the authors’ “agenda.” The goal of these reviews is not to discuss the historical accuracy of these films/novels nor provide the summary of the plot, but rather to discern what the authors are attempting to convince their audience of with their historical narrative.

~ Attendance and Oral Presentation – 30 % ~

Attendance is mandatory. Although I will keep track of your attendance, I primarily rely on your observance of the Honor Code when you miss class due to illness/family emergencies/extenuating circumstances. I will do everything in my power to make class a productive and enjoyable endeavor and your attendance and participation are crucial elements of this goal. Although some class sessions will be lectures, for much of the time we will collectively discuss the assigned readings. Throughout the semester I will keep track of your participation – both in terms of quality and quantity. The ability to engage meaningfully—to engage your colleagues in a way that will add depth and dimension to an evolving discussion—is a crucial skill in both academic and professional settings. I will provide you with individual feedback regarding this aspect of the course after the 3rd, 6th, and 9th week but I encourage you to come speak with me if you have questions or concerns at any point
in time. Moreover, I will do everything in my power to create an environment in which all members of this learning community feel welcome and encouraged to vocalize their views and ideas.

**Note:** I reserve the right to fail anyone with three unexcused absences.

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<tr>
<th>Date</th>
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<th>Readings and Assignments</th>
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<td><strong>Week 1</strong></td>
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<td>T.</td>
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<td>Feb. 5</td>
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<td>Th.</td>
<td>The Enlightenment</td>
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| | | * Monty Python - *A Witch & the Annoying Peasant* (two skits)  [
| | | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzrMhU_4m-g  |
| | | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JvKIWjnEPNY]  |
| **Week 2** | | |
| T.  | The French Revolution |  |
| Feb. 12 | | *  |
| | | * Crash Course: The French Revolution  [
| | | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fTTvKwCy1FY  |
| Th.  | The French Revolution: Debates & Effects |  |
| Feb. 14 | | *  |
| | | * The Burke-Paine Debate on French Revolution (documents on BB).  |
| | | * BBC documentary on M. Robbespierre  [
| | | http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ef5reeb4-hQ]  |
| **Week 3** | | |
| T.  | Napoleon: General and Emperor |  |
| Feb. 19 | | *  |
| | | * PBS Documentary on Napoleon Bonaparte, Parts 1-4  [
<p>| | | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkE_Ahu-icQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkE_Ahu-icQ</a>  |
| | | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grHw-bbbHlge">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=grHw-bbbHlge</a>  |
| | | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Omn9lPfEzng">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Omn9lPfEzng</a>  |
| | | <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDVvNwsoLQs">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SDVvNwsoLQs</a>  |</p>
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* BBC History Website on Industrialization  
[http://www.bbc.co.uk/history/trail/victorian_britain/?site=history_victorian_industry] |
| **Week 4** | **T. Feb. 26** | The Revolutions of 1848 and the Age of Nationalism  
* Karl Marx, *The Communist Manifesto*, Chapters I, II, and IV.  
{http://www.marxists.org/archive/marx/works/1848/communist-manifesto/index.htm} |
| **Week 5** | **T. March 5** | Roots and Consequences of Imperialism  
* Sven Lindqvist, "*Exterminate All the Brutes*": One Man's Odyssey into the Heart of Darkness and the Origins of European Genocide (The New Press, 2007) |
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<tr>
<td>Th. March 7</td>
<td>WWI &amp; the End of Absolutist Monarchies</td>
<td>* Crash Course on WWI <a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XPZQ0LAIR4">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_XPZQ0LAIR4</a></td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Brose, Chapter II: <em>Europe Before the Great War</em>, 38-63; 74-76; Chapter III: <em>The Great War and Beyond</em>, 77-109.</td>
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<td>Week 6</td>
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<td>T. March 12</td>
<td>Effects of WWI</td>
<td>* Brose, 63-74, 109-119, 132-144.</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>* Gillies MacKinnon (dir.), <em>Behind the Lines</em> (1997)</td>
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<td>* Wilfred Owens, <em>Dulce et Decorum Est</em> (Poem)</td>
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<td><a href="http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/owen1.html">http://www.warpoetry.co.uk/owen1.html</a></td>
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<td>* Mark Mazower, <em>The Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century</em>, 3-40</td>
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<td>Week 7</td>
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<td>T. March 19</td>
<td>The Russian Revolution</td>
<td>* Brose, Chapter IV: <em>The Illusion of Peace and Democracy</em>, 166-175.</td>
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<td>* <em>The Russian Revolution and its Aftermath</em>: Timeline with John Rees [<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VldXUyCaeQ">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2VldXUyCaeQ</a>]</td>
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<td>* Documentary on the fate of democracy after the Russian Revolution: <em>The Kronstadt Rebellion</em> [<a href="http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzN1FxxOYVE">http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lzN1FxxOYVE</a>]</td>
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<td>Week 9</td>
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| T. April 2 | Roots of WWII | * Crash Course on WWII [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Q78COTwT7nE]  
* Brose, Chapter V: Toward the Cataclysm, 176-222. |
| Th. April 4 | WWII | * Brose, Chapter VI: World War Two, 223-264. |
| Week 10 |  |  |
| T. April 9 | The Holocaust | * Ján Kadár, *Shop on Main Street* (1965, Czechoslovakia)  
| Th. April 11 | Postwar Europe and the Start of the Cold War | Brose, Chapter VII: Ruin, Reconstruction, and Recrimination, 265-294.  
* CNN Cold War Documentary Episode 2: Iron Curtain, 1945-1947  
............. .Episode 4: Berlin Blocade, 1948-49  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jhG3oT99rw  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=38Ft2Kp-PUg |
| Week 11 |  |  |
| T. April 16 | Postwar Attitudes | Eugene Ionesco, *Rhinoceros*. |
| Th. April 18 | The Division of Europe | * Brose, Chapter VIII: Europe and America, 325-357.  
* CNN Cold War Documentary Episode 3: Marshall Plan, 1947-52  
* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1DQTikyJp0  
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=H7tD1ISLc78w |
<p>| Week 12 |  |  |</p>
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<td>T. April 23</td>
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- Gillo Pontecorvo, *The Battle of Algiers* (The Criterion Collection) [1967]

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<td>T. April 30</td>
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<td>Th. May 2</td>
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- *CNN Cold War Documentary* Episode 14: Red Spring [http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dkhBdxBFoGg]

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<td>T. May 7</td>
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- Reflections and conclusions.