

World War I

History 428/528
Spring 2022, CRN 33097
Tuesday/Thursday – 12:00-1:20; PLC 189

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Office hours: Thurs. 2-3; Friday 10-12; anytime directly after class or by
appointment (I'm on campus every day)

Subject of the course

This course is a general survey of World War I. We will begin with the origins and causes of the war. We will continue with an examination of the trajectory of the war, both with respect to military operations and to the political, economic, and social dynamics produced by the war and the pressures waging war placed on all the belligerent states. Along the way we will look at how the war was experienced by those who participated in it, both as soldiers and civilians. And we will conclude with the peace settlement as well as the broader repercussions and consequences of the war on Europe and the global balance of power more generally.

Expected Learning Outcomes

1. Gain a familiarity with the basic outline of the history of World War I and the major themes and issues of recent scholarship on the war.
2. Identify and assess the complex set of factors that explain the trajectory and outcomes of the war and in particular the interrelationship between the domestic political, international, military dimensions of the war.
3. Assess the claims of recent popular accounts of World War I against the existing scholarship.
4. Practice the methods of historical research, the identification of appropriate historical scholarship, and the assessment of that scholarship.

Estimated student workload

Class attendance is expected. We will be reading two books and I do expect you to read them. You will also be expected to conduct independent research for two of the papers.

You should expect about 80 pages of assigned reading per week (though you will find that the larger of our two books is *extremely* engaging and readable). You can expect to have to read not quite same for the purposes of independent research. The total writing for the class is likely to be in the range of 30 pages for the term (six-eight total pages for the short assignments; eight for the midterm and final exams; and six-seven pages for the research paper).

The two assigned books (available in the Duckstore) are:

Hew Strachan, ed., The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War, 2nd edition, 2016.

Peter England, The Beauty and the Sorrow: An Intimate History of the First World War, 2011.

How Grades will be determined – submissions are on-line

See the calendar of assignments appended to the end of this document for dates.

Participation and presence	10%
On-line quizzes (five with variable dates)	15%
Causes of war paper	10%
“Beauty and Sorrow” paper	20%
Of which 2% the brief description of work used	
Midterm essays	20%
Final essays (Tuesday, June 7, 11:59 pm)	25%

The quizzes are untimed, open-book tests designed to alert you to important arguments in the book. You can submit each quiz twice and Canvas will take the higher score.

All written work will be assigned grades following the guidelines established by the Department of History. You can find those guidelines here:

<http://history.uoregon.edu/undergraduate/>

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93% and up

A- = 90-92.9%

B+ = 87-89.9%

B = 83-86.9%

And on down the scale to 60% = D-

Anything below a 60% is an F.

A+ are awarded on a discretionary basis. I typically award 1-3% of any class an A+ but only when there are clear cases of students who consistently outperform their peers throughout the duration of the term.

Course Policies

Class attendance is expected and the quizzes and exams will reflect that expectation. If you are in class, I expect you to avoid the use of any devices or engaging in behavior that might distract your fellow students.

I encourage everyone in the class to collaborate - to talk with classmates about the quizzes, the midterm, and the final. You will benefit from sharing ideas and talking with others about the coursework.

>>>> **However, all submitted written work must be your own:** you may share ideas but in the end, you must write it up yourself. Doing otherwise - whether "borrowing" a colleague's written work or submitting something written by a third party - constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarized work will receive a zero in the first instance. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the class and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

For information regarding the research paper, the conduct of research, appropriate research materials, the formatting of papers, and proper reference methods for research papers, see the course Canvas under the "Research Paper" module.

Class schedule

(the readings are listed for the days on which we will discuss them)

Introduction

March 29: Introduction: Why World War I? And a look at how the war began.

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, beginning through page 16; Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, "Introduction"; and we're going to talk about Michael Howard, "Reflections on the First World War." (Howard's article is on the course Canvas site).

Unit 1: Origins and Causes of WWI

March 31: Origins and causes

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, ch. 1; and a selection of documents from Williamson and Van Wyk, July 1914 (on Canvas).

April 5: Causes: the German paradigm (and other possibilities)

Read: the documents from Mombauer, The Origins of the First World War, ch. 8 and two further British documents regarding Russia.

Unit 2: The war, 1914-15 (with a bit of 1916)

April 7: How to win the war: the strategy of the Central and Entente powers

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 2-4; and look at the materials in the "Military strategy and operations" page on Canvas.

April 12: The view from the ground

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, 17-72 (or as far as you can get! But we're only going to talk about the parts up to page 72, so don't give any secrets

away); and for a view of early combat, “Into the Fire” from Béla Zombory-Moldován, The Burning of the World: A Memoir of 1914, pages 40-60.

April 19: Other fronts

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 5-7.

April 21: 1915

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, to page 200.

Unit 3: the war of attrition

April 26: The war at sea and at air

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 8, and 20

April 28: Home fronts

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 11-12

May 3: The economic war

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 9-10; also, read the introduction and one of the country chapters (to be selected by the class) from Broadberry, Broadberry, and Harrison, eds., The Economics of World War I (see Canvas for link to Knight Library ebook).

May 5: 1916

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, to page 314

May 10: Eastern and Western Fronts, 1916-1917 and the crisis of 1917

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 13, 14 and 16; **and** Frederic Manning, Her Privates We (excerpt).

May 12: Responding to the crisis

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 15, 17 and 18

May 17: It was a very bad year

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, to page 419

Unit 4: The end of the war

May: 19: German victories, Allied victory

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 19 and 21

May 24: 1918

Read: Englund, The Beauty and the Sorrow, to page 508

May 26: The Peace Settlement

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, ch. 22; and excerpts from Paul Mantoux, Deliberations of the Council of Four, on reparations.

May 31: The political legacy of the war

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 23

June 2: The social and cultural legacy of the war

Read: Strachan, Oxford Illustrated, chs. 24

June 7 (Tuesday night): On-line final essays due, 11:59 pm

Calendar of assignments: HIST 428 WWI, spring 2022

April 5: Origins quiz

April 10: Origins of the war paper

April 17: Early course of war and operations quiz

April 25: Identification and brief description of work you plan to use for “Beauty and the Sorrow copycat assignment

May 1: War of attrition quiz

May 8: Midterm essays

May 16: Battles of 1916 to crises of 1917 quiz

May 22: Beauty and the Sorrow copycat paper

May 30: Victories quiz

June 7 (Tuesday): Final essays (in lieu of a final “exam”)