

PLEASE NOTE CAREFULLY:

The full set of school regulations and procedures is contained in the Undergraduate Student Handbook which is available online at your MyAberdeen Organisation page. Students are expected to familiarise themselves not only with the contents of this leaflet but also with the contents of the Handbook. Therefore, ignorance of the contents of the Handbook will not excuse the breach of any School regulation or procedure.

You must familiarise yourself with this important information at the earliest opportunity.

COURSE CO-ORDINATOR/COURSE TEAM

Course coordinator: Prof Thomas Weber

Office hours: see departmental webpage

Office location: History Dept, Crombie Annexe, Meston Walk, office G03

Telephone: 01224-273539

Email: t.weber@abdn.ac.uk

Lecturing team: Colin Barr (CB), Alessandra Cecolin (AC), Andrew Dilley (AD), Anthony Heywood (AH), Heidi Mehrkens (HM), and Thomas Weber (TW)

tutorial leaders: see the MyAberdeen site of this course

Discipline Administration

Mrs Barbara McGillivray/Mrs Gillian Brown

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TIMETABLE

For time and place of classes, please see [MyAberdeen](#)

Students can view their university timetable at

<http://www.abdn.ac.uk/infohub/study/timetables-550.php>

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course provides an introduction to the academic study of history with an emphasis on the contested nature of history as an academic endeavour. In this course, we focus on the history of Europe in the twentieth century. We highlight a selection of seven major debates about key political, social, economic and other developments.

The lecture series begins with a survey of how historians have tried to make sense of Europe in the 20th Century. The introductory lecture also invites students to try and imagine what a history of Europe in the 20th Century that they would write would look like. It also provides a brief survey of the major themes and events that will be covered in this course.

In subsequent weeks, lectures focus on the selected debates. In each case the lectures aim to provide a brief introduction to the topic and the related debate among historians about which argument or arguments best explain the given issue.

The tutorials show how professional historians conduct and present research, and provide opportunities to develop and practise the research skills required successfully to complete this course. Tutorials will also provide a forum to discuss the nature of history as a mode of critical inquiry.

The debates selected for this session are:

1. Hard Power & Violence (Thomas Weber, TW)
2. The Origins of the First World War (Heidi Mehrkens, HM)
3. The Russian Revolution (Anthony Heywood, AH)
4. Ireland's Century of Violence (Colin Barr, CB)
5. European Integration (Andrew Dilley, AD)
6. Jews & Zionism (Alessandra Cecolin, AC)
7. 1989 & Beyond (Thomas Weber, TW)

INTENDED AIMS AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

The course aims to introduce students to the academic study of the complexities of twentieth-century European history. It seeks to show how

professional historians advance our collective knowledge and understanding of the past through debate about why particular changes occur.

By the end of the course students should be able to:

- demonstrate a critical appreciation of the main arguments to explain changes that are advanced by historians in at least three of the selected debates;
- relate specific primary (contemporary historical) sources and secondary sources (mainly works by historians) to specific explanations that are evident in the historians' debates;
- reach informed judgements and coherent conclusions in both tutorial discussion and written coursework;
- use basic IT skills, and writing, presentation and numeracy skills to present coursework in a professional manner;
- make an informed choice about honours-level History courses in particular in the area of modern and contemporary European History.

LECTURE/TUTORIAL PROGRAMME

The **lectures** focus on our selection of seven themes. The lecture programme is:

Week 1

Monday Session: Course Overview, Key Themes, & Writing the History of Europe in the 20th Century (TW)

Thursday Session: Theme 1: Essay Writing Techniques; Hard Power & Violence (TW)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, preface & ch. 1

Week 2

Monday Session: Theme 1: Hard Power & Violence (TW)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 2

Thursday Session: Theme 1: Hard Power & Violence (TW)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 3

Week 3

Monday Session: Theme 2: The Origins of the First World War (HM)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 4

Thursday Session: Theme 3: The Russian Revolution (AH)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 5

Week 4

Monday Session: Theme 2: The Origins of the First World War (HM)

Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 6

Thursday Session: Theme 2: The Origins of the First World War (HM)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 7

Week 5

Monday Session: Theme 3: The Russian Revolution (AH)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 8

Thursday Session: Theme 3: The Russian Revolution (AH)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch.9

Thursday: 3pm – online submission deadline for Essay Outline

Week 6

Monday Session: Theme 4: Ireland's Century of Violence (CB)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 10

Thursday Session: Theme 4: Ireland's Century of Violence (CB)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 11

Week 7

Monday Session: Theme 4: Ireland's Century of Violence (CB)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 12

Thursday Session: Theme 5: European Integration (AD)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 13

Week 8

Monday Session: Theme 5: European Integration (AD)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 14

Thursday Session: Theme 5: European Integration (AD)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 15

Week 9

Monday Session: Theme 6: Jews & Zionism (AC)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 16

Thursday Session: Theme 6: Jews & Zionism (AC)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 17

Week 10

Monday Session: Theme 6: Jews & Zionism (AC)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 18

Thursday Session: Theme 7: 1989 & the Rest of the Century (TW)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 19

Week 11

Monday Session: Theme 7: 1989 & the Rest of the Century (TW)
Reading: Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization*, ch. 20

Thursday Session: Theme 7: 1989 & the Rest of the Century; Overall Conclusions (TW); Prof. Wasserstein will join us via skype for this session to discuss his book

Thursday: 3pm – essay submission deadline

The **tutorials** are designed to help develop (a) your research skills and (b) your familiarity with historical debate, with some of the lecture topics used as specific examples.

Tutorial programme:

- Week 3 Introductions; the research process – questions and interpretations in historical research and writing; writing an essay outline
- Week 4 Sources for historical research – types of source, and where to find them; using and abusing the web
- Week 5 Writing up your historical research I: how to build and present a bibliography; why and how to reference
- Week 6 Writing up your historical research II: preparing the Introduction; your argument, and how to build it
- Week 7 Reading week
- Week 8 Do individuals and single events matter in history? Does history have any uses for the present? (reading: Stefan Zweig, 'The Sealed Train', in idem, *Decisive Moments in History* (Riverside, CA, 1999 (1927)), pp. 235-48)
- Week 9 Source analysis I: Visual documents – Revolutionary Munich, 1919
- Week 10 Source analysis II: Hitler's 1939 'Armenian speech'
- Week 11 Source analysis III: Ronald Reagan's 1987 'Tear Down This Wall' speech

READING LIST

Details about the reading and preparatory work for the tutorials will be posted on MyAberdeen as we go along.

The textbook for this course will be **Bernard Wasserstein's *Barbarism and Civilization: A History of Europe in Our Time* (Oxford, 2009 (2007))**. It is available as a paperback, as a hardback, and as an e-book. Copies of the book will be available from Blackwells on campus as well as most other book shops and online retailers.

Even though Wasserstein's book is very good indeed, we would invite you to read his book critically, i.e. not to treat the book as the equivalent of the ten commandments but to engage critically with the arguments advanced by the book and be aware that other historians may disagree with the arguments put forward.

For one of the tutorials, we will read a chapter from Stefan Zweig's *Decisive Moments in History* (Riverside, CA, 1999 (1927)). The chapter in question will be made available on MyAberdeen. You could, however, do much worse than obtain your own copy of the book and read it from cover to cover, as the book is not only a good read but invites us to think about what drives history (as well as to whether history helps us understand and master the world in which we live).

A note about Wikipedia (and similar general non-academic websites): Wikipedia is not a 'quotable' source for historians because for the most part its material has not been properly checked. Hence, academic work largely based on this type of web resource cannot hope to achieve the levels of sophistication and professionalism that are required in University work.

By contrast, academic books and journal articles are published only after careful scrutiny by fellow academics, usually on an anonymous basis, to ensure that they comply with the profession's high research standards. These sources are the ones to use.

As a rule of thumb, the bibliography of your essay should include about 8-12 items, with a mixture of academic articles and books, and both your essay and your exam script should discuss the views of specific historians.

Specific instructions about the preparatory work required specifically for the tutorial classes will be published on the course website during the term.

ASSESSMENT

Summative assessment:

One 2,000 word essay (100%).

Formative assessment:

Draft introduction and essay plan (up to 1,000 words)

Resit:

One 2,000 word essay (100%)

To view the CGS Descriptors please go to **MyAberdeen- Organisations-Divinity, History, & Philosophy Student Information for Undergraduates**. The link to the CGS Descriptors is on the left hand menu.

PLEASE NOTE: In order to pass a course on the first attempt, a student must attain a Common Grading Scale (CGS) mark of at least E3 on each element of course assessment. Failure to do so will result in a grade of no greater than CGS E1 for the course as a whole.

If you submit your work on time, you can expect that feedback will **normally be provided within three working weeks** (excluding vacation periods) of the submission deadline.

ESSAYS

The word count for the essay includes footnotes/endnotes but excludes the required bibliography. Help with essay writing will be given through the tutorials. The main criteria for assessing the quality of your work are:

- a critical, questioning approach. Did this really happen as the source states? Are interpretations given by historians acceptable?;
- degree of own contribution (composition and thinking) as opposed to reproduction;
- clarity of argument, use of historical evidence, and appropriate organisation;
- degree and clarity of how question is addressed and answered, and put into general context;
- choice of literature;
- appropriate use of specialist historical vocabulary, concepts etc.;
- language and style.

Note that marks may be deducted for failure to include references (footnotes or endnotes) and a separate bibliography at the end. Please refer to the History Department Referencing guide for advice.

ESSAY PLAN EXERCISE

The essay plan must take the form of notes. Use the top half of the page for planning the Introduction, and the bottom half to list the main analytical points that form the spine of your argument. Use bullet points, and add some notes about supporting evidence. Do not use more than about 250-300 words for the whole exercise.

LIST OF ESSAY TOPICS

A list of essay titles will be posted on the course website in week 2.

ASSESSMENT DEADLINES

Essay plan: week 5, Thursday, 11 October, 3pm – online submission deadline for the Essay Outline

Essay: week 11, Thursday, 22 November, 3pm – online submission deadline for the Essay

SUBMISSION ARRANGEMENTS

When uploading assignments, please do the following:

1. Submit a .doc or .docx and include the word count.
2. Submit by the due date, no hard copy will be required unless directly requested by the Course Coordinator through [My Aberdeen](#).
3. In advance of uploading, please save the assignment with your student ID number listed in the filename, i.e. 59999999 Hlxxxx Essay 1.
4. When asked to enter a title for the assignment, please enter a title identical to the name of your saved assignment, i.e. 59999999 Hlxxxx Essay 1.

Please note: Failure to submit by the due date (unless a prior arrangement has been made) will result in a deduction of marks. Where no submission is received, this will result in a mark of zero.

Please note: *Safeassign* text-matching software will be used. However the School of Divinity, History and Philosophy reserves the right also to submit material to *TurnitinUK* when deemed necessary.