

Spring 2017  
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**History 506:102 – Word War II in World History**  
T/Th 6:10-7:30 Campbell Hall A3

World War II was the most violent, lethal, and consequential conflict in human history. It was a total war that mobilized states and societies across the globe, permeating all aspects of life. It was an ideological war, fought not only for the control of territory, people, and resources, but for the realization of distinct visions about human nature and social order. World War II purposely and disproportionately targeted civilian lives: it killed upward of 50 million people, devastated cities from Hamburg to Warsaw, Stalingrad, and Tokyo, and turned wide parts of the Eurasian continent into wastelands. The war and its aftermath rewrote the global political landscape, bringing down Europe's colonial empires, producing new nations, and a new world order. As the bloodiest event in world history, the war is palpable throughout the world to the present day.

This course seeks to understand this huge event as a whole. Relying on a broad array of sources, which include political manifestos and military doctrines; literary accounts, photo collections and diaries; cartoons and film, the course will explore political, military, economic, social, and cultural dimensions of WW II. How was WW II prefigured by the Great War of 1914-1918, the world's first total war? How did different political regimes mobilize for the conduct of war, and how did their efforts resonate on the social and individual levels? To what extent did individual participation in the war result from persuasion and active compliance, and how much of it was a matter of coercion (often the two seemed to be inextricably mixed)? How did the experiences of soldiers and civilians, men and women, compare across wartime societies? What choices did people have (did they have choices at all?) as they enacted or suffered violence? How should historians engage memories of the war, whether stories of victimization or claims about the "best years of our lives"?

For a fuller statement of the learning goals pursued in this class, see the relevant History department statement: <http://history.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/learning-goals>

Students' grades will be determined as follows:

- Regular attendance and participation in class: 15%
- Blog postings: 20%
- Short paper (800-1000 words): 15%
- Midterm exam: 20%
- Final exam: 30%

Failure to complete any assignment will result in failure for the course

For your paper assignments, please follow the History Department Guide on writing historical essays: <http://history.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/learning-goals/writing-historical-essays>  
For the course to “work,” i.e., to be a rewarding individual and collective learning experience, students are expected to attend all classes. If you expect to miss one or two classes please use the University absence reporting website <https://sims.rutgers.edu/ssra/> to indicate the date and reason for your absence. An email is automatically sent to me. Please note: If you miss more than two classes without a valid and documented reason your absence will affect your grade.

You are responsible for familiarizing yourself with the History Department's policy on Mutual Responsibilities and Classroom Etiquette:

<http://history.rutgers.edu/undergraduate/academic-policies/52-academics/undergraduate-program/108-policy-on-mutual-responsibilities-and-classroom-etiquette>

Cell phone use during class times is forbidden. All cellphones must be switched off and be stored away from your desk. Wireless capabilities of computers and pads must be turned off. I reserve the right to impose penalties in case of violations.

I encourage all of you to see me during office hours to discuss your assignments or other aspects of your work for this class.

### **Reading Assignments**

History 506:102 requires a good deal of interesting reading. The textbook that we will be using is available at the Rutgers University Bookstore:

Michael J. Lyons, *World War II: A Short History*, 5<sup>th</sup> edition (Prentice Hall, 2009).

All other readings on this list are available on our Sakai course site where they can be found under «Resources / Readings». The titles there correspond to those listed on the syllabus. Download them to your own computer and print them out. Please always bring paper copies of the required readings for a given day to class.

### **Schedule of Classes and Readings**

Note: the readings listed under a given day are DUE THAT DAY!

#### CHRONOLOGY I

January 17: Introduction

January 19: The Great War (1914-1918) and the Reshaping of the World

Reading: Lyons, 1-22

January 24: Left/Right Militarism Resurgent: Soviet Socialism and Italian Fascism

Reading: Ostrovsky, How the Steel was Tempered, Mussolini on the State; Lyons, Chapter 3

January 26: Hitler's Rise to Power

Reading: Lyons: 47-56; Hitler's speech at opening of House of German Art (1937)

January 31: Japan's Imperial Mission

Reading: Lyons, 23-24, 42-47. Shigenobu, *Illusions of the White Race*; The Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere

February 2: Madrid, Munich, Moscow, 1936-1939

Reading: Lyons: 51-63; La Pasionaria's Farewell Address; "Documents on Munich"

February 7: The Partition of Poland

Reading: Lyons, 63-70 and 115-123; Klukowski, *Diary*; Guderian, *Rethinking Armored Warfare*

February 9: France Falls, England Fights

Lyons: 76-94, Sources on France; Churchill, "Blood, Toil, Tears and Sweat"

February 14: Pearl Harbor and the War in the Pacific

Lyons, Chapter 12 and 142-145, 160-161 (skim the rest of Chapters 13 and 14); Dower, *Patterns of a Race War*

Short paper due on February 15

February 16: Blood and Soil: Germany's War in the East

Reading: Lyons, Chapter 10; Decrees on the War in the East

February 21: The Great Patriotic War

Reading: Molotov, Speech of June 22, 1941; Grossman, *Diary*

February 23: Turning Point at Stalingrad

Reading: Lyons, Chapter 16; Stalin's Order No. 227; [www.facingstalingrad.com](http://www.facingstalingrad.com) (study at least one Russian and one German interview)

## THEMES

February 28/March 2: War Economies in Comparison

Reading: Students will divide into six groups, reporting on different parts of Liz Collingham, *The Taste of War*. Group 1: Germany (2 chapters); Group 2: Great Britain (2 chapters); Group 3: Soviet Union (2 chapters); Group 4: United States (2 chapters); Group 5: Japan (3 chapters); Group 6: China (1 chapter)  
Lyons, Chapter 21: sections on the economy

March 7/9: Home Fronts: Gender and Race in the War Effort

Reading: Rose, *Sex, Citizenship, and the Nation in World War II*; Koppes and Black, *Blacks, Loyalty, and Motion Picture Propaganda during World War II*; <http://rosietheriveter.umw.edu/katie-jones-interview/>; Solis Thomas Interview; Sherwood, *Colonies, Colonials, and WW II*; Malakhova, *Four Years as a Frontline Physician*; Goebbels, Sports Palace speech; Earhart, *Warrior Wives*; Lyons, chapter 21: sections on the home front

March 9: Distribution of Midterm Exam, due back March 24

March 14/16: Spring break

March 21/23 The Face of the Enemy

Screening and Discussion of “Know Your Enemy – Japan” (Frank Capra, 1943)  
Reading: Dower, Know Your Enemy (March 21), and War Hates and War Crimes (March 23)

March 28/30 Propaganda, Morale, Culture and the Arts

Reading: Miller, The Measurement of National Morale (August 1941); Roosevelt, “Four Freedoms” Speech; Kracauer, The Conquest of Europe on the Screen; Ehrenburg, The Justification of Hate; Earhart, A People United in Serving the Nation

April 4/6 Nazi and Japanese Occupation. Annihilation, Resistance, Collaboration

Reading: Occupation: France; Occupation: Poland; Occupation: Soviet Union; Occupation: China; reprise Lyons, Chapter 11

## CHRONOLOGY II

April 11: Uncovering Mass Graves: Liberation Campaigns in the East (1943-1944):

Reading: Tolstoy, Brown Madness

April 13: D-Day to Berlin 1945

Reading: De Gaulle, Liberation Speech; Roberts, What Soldiers Do (Ch. 2); Lyons, chapters 22 and 23

April 18: Japan’s Defeat

Reading: Lyons, Chapter 25; “Internal US debates about the use of Atomic Bombs, 1945”; Shoko, A Labor Service Corps Girl’s Diary

April 20: Justice and Revenge. The Postwar Trials

Reading: Opening speeches by the US and Soviet prosecutors, Jackson and Rudenko; Lyons: 295-303

April 25: From World War to Cold War. Decolonization

Reading: Churchill and Stalin speeches, 1946; Indian Independence source

April 27: The War’s Shadows in Today’s World

Reading: Assmann, Europe’s Divided Memory

April 27: Distribution of Final Exam, due back May 4