

University of Florida
Department of History

Nuclear History

HIS 3931, Tuesday 10.40 – 11.30, Thursday 10.40 – 12.35
Turlington 2350

Michael Schüring

230 Keene-Flint
Phone: 352 273 3393, e-mail: m.schuering@ufl.edu

Office hours: Tuesday 2-4 pm, Friday 3-4.30 pm

The discovery of nuclear fission has made a profound impact on 20th century global history. In this class we will follow nuclear research and its implications from the very beginnings to current world affairs, including the involvement and responsibility of scientists, the cold war, and the anti-nuclear movement. We will focus on developments in the United States and Europe from a comparative perspective and also look at the reverberations of the “nuclear age” in film, music, and art.

Students will be introduced to the method of critical source analysis. They are required to write a final research paper (10 pages, double spaced), due on November 27, 9pm. This final paper should be outlined in a short abstract (1 page), containing a bibliography (10 titles or more) due on October 27, 9pm.

The paper should be a critical reflection on a topic we discussed in class, drawing on our readings and additional materials. I would like to see every student at least once during my office hours (or by appointment) to discuss the paper topic.

There will be a two-page source analysis assignment as a home written “Test”-paper with a “test”-grade due on September 18, 9pm.

These books used in the class will have to be purchased:

- Mark Walker, *Nazi Science: Myth, Truth, and the German Atomic Bomb* (Cambridge, MA: Perseus, 1995) ISBN 0738205850

- Jeff Hughes, *The Manhattan Project* (New York: Columbia UP, 2016)

ISBN: 9780231131537

When ordering the book, please check the ISBN Number or you might end up with a different edition.

Course Policies

Grading:

Final Exam: 30%

Four weeks before the final exam the instructor will hand out a study guide with a number of exam questions and tasks out of which one third will be chosen for the exam.

Final Paper: 30%

Participation: 40%

Participation requires regular reading responses via email consisting of at least two questions (which the instructor will specify in class) concerning the respective text assigned. The response should be e-mailed at 6pm the day before class.

Students who miss class more than three times unexcused will fail.

During class, phones, computers, and tablets have to be switched off and stored in bags/briefcases.

Plagiarism is not tolerated. Students who plagiarize in any of the writing assignments will fail the class. The instructor will inform the university about such behavior. The principles of academic honesty will be explained in class. Consult the university policies on rules of conduct here:

<http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/process/student-conduct-honor-code/>

Requirements for class attendance and make-up exams, assignments, and other work in this course are consistent with university policies that can be found at:

<https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Students with disabilities requesting accommodations should first register with the Disability Resource Center (352-392-8565, www.dso.ufl.edu/drc/) by providing appropriate documentation. Once registered, students will receive an accommodation letter which must be presented to the instructor when requesting accommodation. Students with disabilities should follow this procedure as early as possible in the semester.

Students are expected to provide feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results/>.

Course Schedule

Tuesday, August 22: Introduction

Thursday, August 24: Gabrielle Hecht on *Nuclear Things*, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, August 29: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 1 - 40

Thursday, August 31: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 41 – 93

Tuesday, September 5: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 95 - 121

Thursday, September 7: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 123 - 181

Tuesday, September 12: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 183 - 206

Thursday, September 14: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 207 - 241

Tuesday, September 19: Mark Walker, *Nazi Science* [...], pp. 243 – 271

Thursday, September 21: Ruth L. Sime on Lise Meitner, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, September 26: Jeff Hughes, *The Manhattan Project* [...], pp. 1 - 25

Thursday, September 28: Jeff Hughes, *The Manhattan Project* [...], pp. 26 – 74

Tuesday, October 3: Jeff Hughes, *The Manhattan Project* [...], pp. 75 - 104

Thursday, October 5: source analysis practice, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, October 10: source analysis practice, material provided by instructor

Thursday, October 12: Mark Fiege, *Sense of Wonder*, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, October 17: Film, *Atomic Cafe*

Thursday, October 19: Film, *Atomic Cafe*

Tuesday, October 24: Thomas C. Schelling, *Legacy of Hiroshima*, material provided by instructor

Thursday, October 26: Robert C. Post on *Enola Gay*, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, October 31: Stewart Firth on the *Nuclear Issue in the Pacific Islands*, material provided by instructor

Thursday, November 2: Gabrielle Hecht on *Nuclear Policy in France*, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, November 7: Lonna M. Malmshimer on Three Mile Island, material provided by instructor

Thursday, November 9: Adriana Petryna on Chernobyl, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, November 14: Dorothy Nelkin and Michael Pollak on the anti-nuclear movement, material provided by instructor

Thursday, November 16: Ian Welsh on the *NIMBY syndrome*, material provided by instructor

Tuesday, November 21: Alvin Weinberg on *Social Institutions and Nuclear Energy*, material provided by instructor

Thursday, November 23: Thanksgiving break, no class

Tuesday, November 28: Film, *Dr. Strangelove*

Thursday, November 30: Film, *Dr. Strangelove*

Tuesday, December 5: Conclusion