EUH/AMH/WOH 3931 – The Second World War through Digital History

Fall 2024
Keene-Flint Hall 111
MWF, 11:45 AM - 12:35 PM

Instructor: Professor Christopher Goodwin
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Office Hours: In-person: Mondays, 12:45 PM – 2:45 PM
Zoom: By appointment

Grading: Letter, 3 credit hours

I. Course Description

The Second World War spanned the globe and engulfed Europe, Asia, and North Africa in catastrophic levels of violence and destruction. It ruptured human experiences that proved formative at all levels: continental alliance systems, nations, political partisanship, neighborhoods, and individuals. The war uncovered the shocking hubris of human ambitions but also structured the current global and cultural order in significant ways that continue to resonate and fascinate.

Digital history provides new and exciting avenues to study the conflict. Students will study past and current digital projects related to the war to gain a foundational understanding of the possibilities that digital history opens for historians and the public. Students will then examine the conflict using a variety of digital methods: data management, audio and visual projects, digital exhibits, and geographical information systems. The course also considers the war's digital manifestations in non-academic public spaces: video games, social media, and generative artificial intelligence.

II. Course Goals

- Familiarize yourselves with the basic history of the Second World War
- Acquaint yourselves with digital history presentations in the public sphere and in academia
- Develop digital research skills that are widely applicable in diverse contexts
- Learn methods of analyzing and presenting historical material digitally
- Practice working in small groups on a collective project.

III. Course Requirements

Course Readings
- Evan Mawdsley. World War II: A New History. 2nd edition. (ISBN: 9780195156225)
- Readings on the course website

Technology
A laptop or desktop computer of almost any age, make, or model is necessary for this course. You should bring a digital device to every class, preferably a laptop. A phone or tablet may work with our projects, but this is not guaranteed. All software used in the course is free.

Attendance
Attendance is expected. Each student will be entitled to 3 absences during the semester. Any absences beyond those 3 will require documented justification. Unexcused absences beyond the 3 mentioned above, will result in the lowering of your grade by 1 letter.

According to the Office of the University Registrar, "acceptable reasons for absence from class include illness, serious family emergencies, special curricular requirements (e.g., judging trips, field trips, professional conferences), military obligation, severe weather conditions, religious holidays and participation in official university activities such as music performances, athletic competition or debate. Absences from class for court-imposed legal obligations (e.g., jury duty or subpoena) must be excused."

Accommodations
Students with disabilities who experience learning barriers and would like to request academic accommodations should connect with the disability Resource Center. Click here to get started with the Disability Resource Center. It is important for students to share their accommodation letter with their instructor and discuss their access needs, as early as possible in the semester.

IV. Assignments and Grading

Assignments and Weighting		Grading Scale	
Attendance	10%	93-100	A
Bibliographic Software Assignment	5%	90-92	A-
		87-89	B+
Digital Timeline Project	10%	83-86	B
Essay on LLMs	20%	80-82	B-
Essay on Digital Exhibits	20%	77-79	C+
Final Project	35%	73-76	C
• Outline of Project		70-72	C-
• Group Work Plan		67-69	D+
• Initial Draft		63-66	D
• Presentation		60-62	D-
• Final Digital Publication		59 and below	F

V. Course Schedule

Date	Discussion and Lecture Topics
Week 1 – Introduction	
08/23/2024	Introduction to Course and Digital History
Week 2 – The Legacy of the First World War Readings: Mawdsley, 1-42 Cohen and Rosenzweig, "Promises and Perils of Digital History"	
08/26/2024	Europe after the First World War
08/28/2024	Asia after the First World War
08/30/2024	Digitally Researching the Second World War
Week 3 – Building Up to World War Readings: Mawdsley, 43-86	
09/02/2024	No Class – Labor Day
09/04/2024	Asia Ignites
09/06/2024	Fascism and Militarism Grow in Europe
Week 4 – The Axis on the Move Readings: Mawdsley, 87-110 Hicks, ChatGPT is Bullshit	
09/09/2024	The Japanese War of Conquest; Soviet Conquests
09/11/2024	Germany Ascendent
09/13/2024	Reference and Source Management; Large Language Models

	Introduction to Bibliographic Software Assignment Introduction to Large Language Models Essay Assignment
Week 5 – World War Readings: Mawdsley, 111-176	
09/16/2024	Operation Barbarossa
09/18/2024	The United States Enters the War
09/20/2024	Digital Timelines Introduction to Digital Timeline Assignment **Bibliographic Software Assignment Due**

Week 6 – The Homefront
Readings: Davey and Salapska-Gelleri, "A Transnational Perspective of Women on the Home
        Front"
        Madison, World War II: A History in Documents, 50-53	

09/23/2024	Nations' Homefronts
09/25/2024	Gender and Ethnic Minorities across Nations
09/27/2024	No Class – Work on LLM Essay and Timeline Project
Week 7 – Crimes Against Humanity Readings: Edele, Crimes against Humanity	
09/30/2024	German War Crimes and the Holocaust **Essay on Large Language Models Due**
10/02/2024	Japanese War Crimes and Medical Experimentation; Soviet and Allied Crimes **Digital Timeline Project Due**
10/04/2024	The Holocaust in Digital Spaces Introduction to Digital Exhibits Essay Assignment

Week 8 – Peripheries of Combat
Readings: Mawdsley, 177-204, 235-260
        Gross's Neighbors, "Outline of the Story"
        Hertwig, "Race and Love"	

10/07/2024	The War in North Africa, Japan's Perimeter
10/09/2024	The Occupation Policies of Axis Nations
10/11/2024	Visualizing Data from WW2
Week 9 – Economics, Technology, and Resistance Readings: Murray and Millett, A War to be Won, 527-553	
10/14/2024	Resistance Movements; Wartime Economies and Technologies
10/16/2024	Introduction to Final Digital Project Introduction to Final Project Guidelines Create Groups for Final Project **Digital Exhibits Essay Due**
10/18/2024	No Class - Homecoming

Week 10 – Grand Strategy in the Second World War Readings: Mawdsley, 205-234 Grufstedt, Shaping the Past, 1-17, 42-56	
10/21/2024	Grand Strategies of Belligerent Nations
10/23/2024	War in the Air and Sea
10/25/2024	WW2 and Video Games – Accuracy, Memory, and Legal Concerns
Week 11 – The Tide Turns Readings: Mawdsley, 261-296 Madison, World War II: A History in Documents, 104-106	
10/28/2024	Turning Points in the Pacific
10/30/2024	Turning Points in Europe
11/01/2024	Digitally Mapping the Second World War **Outline of Final Project Due**
Week 12 – Götterdämmerung (Twilight of the Gods) Readings: Mawdsley, 297-364 Madison, World War II: A History in Documents, 106-111	
11/04/2024	The End of the Third Reich and Fascist Italy
11/06/2024	The End of the Japanese Empire
11/08/2024	Final Digital Project Group Work **Group Work Plan Due**
Week 13 – The Legacy of the Second World War Readings: Seaton, "Japanese Society at War: History and Memory"	
11/11/2024	No Class – Veterans Day
11/13/2024	Postwar Settlements and Memories
11/15/2024	Final Digital Project Group Work **Final Project Initial Draft Due**
Week 14 – Final Projects Readings: None	
11/18/2024	Final Digital Project Group Work
11/20/2024	Final Digital Project Group Work
11/22/2024	Presentations
Thanksgiving Break – No Classes November 25-29	
Week 15 – Course Conclusion	
12/02/2024	Presentations
12/04/2024	Course Conclusion Discussion of Final Project
Finals Week	
12/11/2024	**Final Project Due at 12:00 PM (Noon)**

VI. Other Information

Online Course Evaluation
Students are expected to provide professional and respectful feedback on the quality of instruction in this course by completing course evaluations online via GatorEvals. Guidance on how to give feedback in a professional and respectful manner is available at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/students/. Students will be notified when the evaluation period opens, and can complete evaluations through the email they receive from GatorEvals, in their Canvas course menu under GatorEvals, or via https://ufl.bluera.com/ufl/. Summaries of course evaluation results are available to students at https://gatorevals.aa.ufl.edu/public-results/.

Academic Honesty
Academic dishonesty, including cheating on exams and plagiarism, will not be tolerated. Any student engaging in such activities will be dealt with in accordance with University policy. It is your responsibility to know what constitutes plagiarism, and what the university policies are. If you have doubts, we would be happy to discuss with you. Please refer to the current Undergraduate Catalog for more information on the Student Honor code (http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/catalog/policies/students.html). If you have questions about these policies, I would be happy to discuss them with you.