

EUH 3931 – The First and Second World Wars in Europe

Spring 2026
Keene-Flint Room 119
MWF, 9:35 - 10:25 AM

Instructor: Professor Christopher Goodwin
Keene-Flint 221
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(352) 392-0271 (office phone, no texts)

Office Hours: In-person: Fridays, 11:30 AM – 1:30 PM
Zoom: By appointment

Grading: Letter, 3 credit hours

I. Course Description

This course examines the First and Second World Wars as a single catastrophic era in European history rather than as isolated conflicts. It traces how industrialized warfare reshaped politics, society, culture, and everyday life from the early twentieth century through the middle of the twentieth century and how the consequences of those wars continued to structure Europe long after the fighting ended. Throughout the course, we engage major



historiographical debates: the causes of war, the nature of total war, the relationship between violence and modernity, gender and war, and the contested boundaries between perpetrators, victims, and bystanders. Special attention is given to wartime atrocities as outcomes shaped by ideology, bureaucracy, and wartime conditions.

By combining political, social, cultural, and historiographical perspectives, this course encourages students to understand the world wars not simply as events that happened in the past, but as forces that defined modern Europe and continue to influence the present.

II. Course Goals

- *Historical Analysis of Modern War* - By combining political, social, cultural, and historiographical perspectives, this course encourages students to understand the world

wars not simply as events that happened in the past, but as forces that defined modern Europe and continue to influence the present.

- *Engagement with Historiography and Historical Debate* - Students will analyze and compare major historiographical interpretations of the world wars, including debates over causation, responsibility, ideology, and violence, and learn to evaluate how historians construct arguments from primary and secondary sources.
- *Experience, Memory, and Representation* - Students will examine how war and genocide were experienced by soldiers and civilians and how those experiences were later remembered, represented, and contested. This includes close engagement with a work of historical fiction and a contemporary film to assess how narrative and medium shape historical understanding.
- *Legacies of War* - Students will assess how the legacies of the world wars influenced post-1945 Europe, including political reconstruction, memory cultures, and the emergence of a comparatively peaceful second half of the twentieth century, while recognizing the fragility and historical contingency of that peace.

III. Course Requirements

Course Readings

- Textbook: Alice-Catherine Carls and Stephen D. Carls, *Europe from War to War, 1914-1945*. ISBN: 978-1138999152.
- Ernst Jünger, *Storm of Steel* (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition). ISBN: 978-0142437902. Any other edition will work.
- Virginia Woolf, *Mrs. Dalloway* (Penguin Classics Deluxe Edition). ISBN: 978-0143136132. Any other edition will work.
- Movie: *The Conference* (2022)
- Movie: *Downfall* (2004)

Technology

A laptop, desktop computer, or a tablet that can do word processing of nearly any age, make, or model is necessary for this course.



Attendance

Attendance is a crucial component of this course for our productive classroom discussions and your course grade. 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.”

Late Work Policy

Except for approved late submissions, 5% will be deducted from the assignment’s final score for each 24-hour period beyond the due date and time. After 72 hours, the submission will not be accepted. Exemptions are permitted for serious illnesses, family emergencies, and university-approved functions, but students must notify me before the deadline. For unforeseen emergencies, contact me as soon as possible.

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

Quizzes (4 @ 5% each)	20%
Book Review	20%
Film Analysis Paper	25%
Final Project	35%

Grading Scale

93-100	A
90-92	A-
87-89	B+
83-86	B
80-82	B-
77-79	C+
73-76	C
70-72	C-
67-69	D+
63-66	D
60-62	D-
59 and below	F

V. Course Schedule

Week One (1/12) – Course Introduction and Turn-of-the-Century European Culture
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Course Introduction • Syllabus
Week Two (1/19) – The International System and Tensions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class – January 19 - Holiday • Carls – Chapter 1 (first three sections)

Week Three (1/26) – Military Planning and the Eruption of War
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carls – Chapter 1 (last three sections)
Week Four (2/2) – World War I's Second Phase – Total War
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Jünger, Storm of Steel (Orainville, Trench Warfare Day by Day, The Overture to the Somme Offensive, Guillemont, At St. Pierre Vaast, The Battle of Cambrai, My Last Storm) • Carls – Chapter 2
Week Five (2/9) – Demobilization and Continuing Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No Class – February 9 • Carls – Chapter 3
Week Six (2/16) – The Interwar Period
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Woolf – Mrs. Dalloway (entire book)
Week Seven (2/23) – The Fascist Challenge
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due Friday, February 27: Book Review • Carls – Chapter 5 • Carls – Chapter 6
Week Eight (3/2) – War in Europe Again
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carls – Chapter 7
Week Nine (3/9) – The Holocaust and War Crimes
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch movie The Conference (2022)
Week Ten (3/23) – Home Fronts
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due Friday, March 27: Film Analysis • Carls – Chapter 8
Week Eleven (3/30) – Germany in Retreat
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Watch movie Downfall (2004)
Week Twelve (4/6) – The Second World War in Memory
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Carls – Chapter 9
Week Thirteen (4/13) – Student Presentations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare for and Present Your Research
Week Fourteen (4/20) – Europe and the Twentieth Century
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Due Wednesday, April 22: Final Project • Carls – Chapter 10

VI. Other Information

This course complies with all UF academic policies. For information on those policies and for resources for students, especially concerning disability services, course evaluations, the University Code of Conduct, and In-Class Recording policies, please see [this link](#).

