The Great War was the "seminal catastrophe" (George Kennan’s words) of twentieth-century Europe. The experience of the war was linked to nearly every social, cultural, and political transformation that marked the short century that followed: mobilization and the experience of total war transformed the relations between governments and citizens, between men and women, and between social classes. Europeans experienced death on an unprecedented scale and came to terms with new forms of industrialized warfare, from the use of poison gas to modern practices of genocide. Europeans now learned to live with violence, both during as well as after the war, and found new ways to mourn or remember the dead. This course will explore such themes. Using a wide variety of contemporary sources -- memoires, essays, poems, or cinematic representations -- we will try to situate the upheaval of 1914-1918 within the larger framework of twentieth-century European history.

**Required Texts:**

**Books:** The following books are available at the bookstore. Cheap used copies are easily found online. There are several editions of each of the first three books – any edition is fine. Copies of the books have been placed in the College Library course reserve.

- Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (1933)
- Robert Graves, *Goodbye to all that* (1929)

**Course packet:** A course packet is available at the Copy Center, 1650 Humanities. The relevant readings are marked by an "*" on the schedule of lectures below.

**Online sources** –marked by a ‘-’ on the schedule below (go to Learn@UW ➔ Materials ➔ Content, or to the hyperlinks on the electronic version of the syllabus).
**Requirements:**
The course consists of both lectures and discussions. The success of both depends on your active participation. Read the assigned pages *before* class and bring them with you. You are required to attend all lectures.

**Exams:** Midterm (10/23, in class), and a final (12/19, 5:05-7:05 pm, location TBA).

**Papers:** 1) One 3-4 pp. paper, due 10/05 (topics TBA).
2) One 6-8 pp. paper, due 12/06. In this paper you should explore in greater depth a topic of your own choice: this could be a person, a battle, an organization, a weapon, a political party, a novel, a movie, an artistic representation… You may choose a topic we have covered in class or an entirely different one. You will need to consult additional secondary sources.

**Grade structure:**
- Midterm: 20%
- Final examination: 25%
- 3-4 pp. paper: 20%
- 6-8 pp. paper: 25%
- Participation: 10%

Please note that active, constant, and collegial participation will be rewarded!

**Schedule of Lectures**

**Week I**
09/04 Introduction: Total War and the Twentieth Century
09/06 The “Road to War”

**Read:**

**Week II**

**Nations in Arms**
09/11 The “Spirit of 1914”

**Read:**

- Filippo Marinetti, “The War as the Catharsis of Italian Society” (November 1914)

- BLAST: The Manifesto of Vorticism (July 1914).
09/13  The Propaganda Machine

Read:

*The Bryce Committee Report on German Atrocities, Part II (b): “Treatment of Women and Children”.

---

**Week III  Mobilization for Total War**

09/18  Patterns of Mobilization

09/20  Women and Men

Read:
**Book:** Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (at least up to page 289. You will need to finish the entire book during the semester – we will discuss it again on 11/29).

*Review the chapter from Zweig, *The World of Yesterday*.

---

**Week IV  Industrialized Warfare (I)**

09/25  The New Realities of War

Read:

09/27  “Humanity is Mad:” The Trenches

Read:


---

**Week V  Industrialized Warfare (II)**

10/02  Technology as Culture

Read:
*Ernst Jünger on the pilots, from *Copse 125* (1930).
10/04  History through Film: Stanley Kubrik’s *Paths of Glory* (1957). Viewing in class; discussion on 10/09.

*** First paper due in class ***

**Week VI  The Politics of Resistance**

10/09  Interpreting Mutiny and Disobedience

Read:
* Marshal Pétain on the mutinies of 1917, from his *A Crisis in Morale in the French Nation at War* (1926).

10/11  Shattered Nerves (History through Literature)

Read:
**Book:** Elaine Showalter, *Regeneration* (entire).

- *Peter Taylor Whiffen on the “Shot at Dawn” campaign.*

**Week VII  Home Fronts (I)**

10/16  Keeping Life Going

Read:

10/18  The New Ecology of Production

Read:

- *Helen Cleary on the life of Joan Williams, a British munitions worker.*

**Week VIII  Home Fronts (II)**

10/25  The Regulation of Morals

10/23  **MIDTERM**

(No readings; prepare for midterm)
**Week IX  Nations and Citizenship**

**10/30  “A Terrible Beauty is Born”**

**Read:**

*”Pride in the Anzacs at Gallipoli,” excerpts from an article in *Argus* (1915).

*Proclamation of the Irish Republic (1916)*

**11/01  The Contest for Citizenship**

**Read:**

- Read about the *Suffragette (later Britannia)*, the newspaper of the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU).

**Week X  The Civilian’s War**

**11/06  Occupation, Displacement, and Genocide**

**Read:**

*Reports on the Armenian genocide (published in 1917).*

**11/08  War and Revolution in Russia**

**Read:**

*Reports on the condition of the troops (1917).*

*Lenin’s April Theses (1917).*

*Order N. 1 (1917).*
Week XI  The Great Colonial War  
11/13  War of Empires  
11/15  The Experience in the Colonies  
Read:  

Week XII  
11/20 History through Film:  Abel Gance’s *J’Accuse* (second version, from 1938).  
11/22 THANKSGIVING

Week XIII  The Politics of Memory  
11/27  Mourning and Commemorating  
11/29  Writing  
Read:  
Book: Robert Graves, *Good Bye to All That* (entire).  
Also review Brittain, *Testament*.

Week XIV  A Wounded Continent  
12/04  The Search for Stability  
Read:  
12/06  The Politics of Discontent  
Read:  
*SDP appeal for a general strike, 1920  
*Hindenburg on the “Stab in the Back,” 1918

*** Second paper due in class***

Week XV  The Great Illusion  
12/11 History through Film: *La Grande Illusion* (A different viewing time will be scheduled; attendance is mandatory).  
12/13 Discussion and course conclusions  
(No readings; prepare for final).