

History Department
University of Wisconsin-Madison

**History 201: The Historian's Craft
Civilians and War on WWII's Eastern Front**

Professor Kathryn Ciancia
Spring 2020

Office Hours: Tuesdays, 1pm-2pm, or by appointment

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Lecture times: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11 am-12:15pm, Humanities Building, Room 1131

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Section times:

Section 316: Wednesdays, 8:50-9:40am, Humanities Building 2131

Section 317: Wednesdays, 9:55am-10:45am, Humanities Building 2121

Section 318: Wednesdays, 2:25pm-3:15pm, Humanities Building 2631



Course Description

This class introduces students to the rewarding work of historians through an in-depth investigation into a difficult, controversial, and often painful, topic: the Eastern Front during World War II. We'll begin by discussing what it means to "think like a historian" and how we should sensitively approach this particular topic. We'll then dive into three weeks of primary source analysis, looking at the experiences of a range of people under Nazi and Soviet rule. In the third part of the class, we'll explore three key questions that historians continue to debate: How did the Holocaust happen in eastern Europe? To what extent did local people collaborate? And can we conceive of German victimhood? Finally, we'll discuss questions of memory and both legal and historical judgment. The last third of the class will focus primarily on your individual research papers. In sum, the topic of the Eastern Front acts as a lens through which we can explore issues of collaboration, resistance, memory, trauma, and historical empathy, as well as wider questions about how studying history can help us to make sense of the world in which we live.

Course Objectives

Since this is a Communications B class, as well as a gateway class for the History Major, we'll spend a lot of time focusing on *process*, as well as *content*. There is no exam, so you will not be asked to memorize and then regurgitate content from lecture. Instead, I have designed the class so that each of the assignments builds upon the previous one, allowing you to walk through the process of doing historical research and writing, step-by-step. All of this work will culminate in a final research paper in which you will demonstrate the skills of summarizing and analyzing sources, creating historical questions, carrying out original research, and persuasively presenting your own ideas. The final paper will also give you the exciting opportunity to choose the topic that most interests you and to act as a historical detective as you track down sources and contribute to wider historiographical debates. As you'll see from the syllabus, lectures will be complemented with hands-on sessions about research and writing, trips to the various resources on campus, including the Wisconsin Historical Society and Memorial Library, and an in-class movie screening.

Credit Hours

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week (according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy, each lecture counts as 1.5 hours and each discussion counts as an hour). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, and preparing for discussion.

Methods of Assessment

Your work for the class will be assessed in four ways:

1. **Several short assignments (20% of total grade)** that help you to develop the skills necessary for completing the final research paper.
2. **Two oral presentations (15% of total grade)** that you will deliver in section. The first will be delivered in Week 10; the second will be delivered in either Week 12 or 13.
3. **Discussion participation (35% of total grade)**. Collin will discuss participation grading criteria with you during section. You will also be expected to attend all lectures (unless there is a good reason why you cannot attend a particular lecture) and take part in small-group work and class discussions during that time.
4. **Final research paper (30% of total grade)** that you will submit in both draft and final form. The paper will be between 9 and 10 pages long. More details will be provided as the semester progresses. The final grade will reflect the quality of the final paper, your responsiveness to feedback, and your ability to articulate what you have learned through the process.

Accessing course materials

All readings on this syllabus can be found in the course reader. The course reader can be purchased from the Copy Center in the Social Science Building. A copy of the course reader will also be available on reserve at College Library.

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Located at:

Sewell Hall, Room 6120
1180 Observatory Drive
Madison, WI 53706
262-5396

Email:

copycenter@ls.wisc.edu

Optional book for purchase:

- Mary Lynn Rampolla, *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martins, 2017—this is the information about the ninth edition but any edition of the book is fine). *This book is recommended, but not required, reading. It's a handy guide to many of the topics that we'll be discussing in our course and a great reference to have next to you when you plan and write your work.*

Weekly Schedule and Reading Assignments

Part I: Introductions

Week 1

Lecture 1 (01/21): Why Study the Eastern Front?

No assigned readings for section

Lecture 2 (01/23): How to “Think Like a Historian”

Week 2

Lecture 1 (01/28): The Pre-History of the Eastern Front

Reading for section:

- Timothy Snyder, *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin* (New York: Basic Books, 2012): vii-xix.

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #1:

- In around 300 words, SUMMARIZE the argument made by Timothy Snyder in the excerpt from *Bloodlands* ***without analyzing or evaluating his argument.***

Lecture 2 (01/30): How to Read

Reading for lecture:

- Tim Parks, “A Weapon for Readers,” *New York Review of Books* blog, December 3, 2014.

Part II: Primary Sources

Week 3

Lecture 1 (02/04): The Germans in Poland: 1939-1941

Readings for section:

- Robert Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society: A Brief History in Documents* (Boston: Bedford Books, 2009): 112-115.
- Yitzhak Arad, Yisrael Gutman, Abraham Margalio, eds., *Documents on the Holocaust: selected sources on the destruction of the Jews of Germany and Austria, Poland, and the Soviet Union* (Jerusalem: New York: Ktav Pub. House in association with Yad Vashem [and the] Anti Defamation League, 1981): 192-195; 198-99; 216-229.

Lecture 2 (02/06): Trip to Memorial Library

Please bring your laptops to this session so that you can work on an in-class assignment.

Your library assignment must be turned in on Canvas by 5pm on Friday, 02/07.

Week 4

Lecture 1 (02/11): The Soviets in Poland, 1939-1941

Readings for section:

- Irena Grudzińska-Gross and Jan Tomasz Gross, eds., *War Through Children's Eyes: The Soviet Occupation of Poland and the Deportations, 1939-1941* (Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution Press, 1981): xxi-xxviii; 3-27; 64-69; 70-73; 84-87; 130-132; 147-150; 160-164; 234-237.

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #2:

- Write ONE historical question for the collection of children's depositions as a whole. Explain briefly (two-three sentences) why you think this is a good historical question, using the criteria that we discussed in Week 4, Lecture 1.

Lecture 2 (02/13): A Front Ripe for Atrocity

Week 5

Lecture 1 (02/18): Analyzing Primary Sources: Film and Newspapers

Readings for section:

- Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society*, 117-124.
- Jeremy Noakes and Geoffrey Pridham, eds., *Documents on Nazism, 1919-1945* (New York: The Viking Press, 1974): 616-630.
- J. V. Stalin, Radio Broadcast (July 3, 1941).

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #3:

- Read *ALL* of the sources for discussion and come to section prepared to discuss them. Choose *ONE* source for your analysis. Write: (a) two or three sentences summarizing the source's content; (b) a two or three sentence analysis, stating what you know about the context in which the source was produced and how it may have affected the source's approach.

Lecture 2 (02/20): How did the Holocaust happen?

Part III: Historiographical Debates

Week 6

Lecture 1 (02/25): Collaboration

Readings for section:

- Michael R. Marrus, *The Holocaust in History* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2000), 8-54.
- Moeller, ed., *The Nazi State and German Society*, 139-147.
- Arad et al., eds., *Documents on the Holocaust*, 22-30.

Assignment for section:

SHORT ASSIGNMENT #4:

- Read Marrus. Based on this text, in 150 words, summarize the "functionalist v. intentionalist" debate. Then choose *ONE* of the documents from either of the document collections and—in another 150 words—explain the extent to which your document supports one side or the other.

Lecture 2 (02/27): Trip to the Wisconsin Historical Society Library and Archives

Week 7

Lecture 1 (03/03): The Many Meanings of Resistance

Readings for section:

- Svetlana Alexievich, *The Unwomanly Face of War: An Oral History of Women in World War II* (New York: Random House, 2017): 251-288.
- *Notes from the Warsaw Ghetto: The Journal of Emmanuel Ringelblum*, edited and translated by Jacob Sloan (New York: McGraw Hill, 1958): 298-301.

Lecture 2 (03/05): Putting Together a Research Proposal

Week 8

Lecture 1 (03/10): Were the Germans Victims too?

Readings for section:

- Anonymous, *A Woman in Berlin* (New York: Metropolitan Books, 2005): 44-82.
- Atina Grossmann, "A Question of Silence: The Rape of German Women by Occupation Soldiers," *October*, Vol. 72 (1995): 42-63.

Assignment for section:

DRAFT PROPOSAL:

- Come to section with a provisional research proposal. Your proposal should include: a) your research question, as well as a three-sentence explanation of why you think this is a good research question; b) a short annotated bibliography with at least two secondary sources and two primary sources that you think might be helpful. The annotated bibliography should include a short description of the source and an explanation of how it will help you to explore your historical question.

Lecture 2 (03/12): Postwar: A Brutalized Population

****SPRING BREAK****

PART IV: Postwar Reckonings and Memorialization

Week 9

Lecture 1 (03/24): In the Courtroom: The Nuremberg trial

NB: Collin will return draft proposals today

Readings for section:

- Charles E. Wyzanski, “A Fair Trial? A Dangerous Precedent,” *The Atlantic*, April 1946 issue (online edition)
- Michael R. Marrus (ed.), *The Nuremberg War Crimes Trial, 1945-46: A Documentary History* (Boston and New York: Bedford/St. Martin’s, 1997): 57-70, 241-254.
- Michael Biddiss, “Victors’ justice? The Nuremberg Tribunal,” *History Today* 45, no. 5 (1995): 40-46.

Lecture 2 (03/26): Eichmann, Gröning, and the Pursuit of Nazi War Criminals

Week 10

Lecture 1 (03/31): In-class Movie Screening: *Ida* (Pawel Pawlikowski, 2013)

Assignment for lecture:

- **REVISED RESEARCH PROPOSAL:** *Using Collin’s feedback from the previous assignment, complete a revised proposal. Include a couple of sentences explaining what you have revised.*

Assignment for section:

- **ORAL PRESENTATION #1:** *Students briefly present their revised research proposals.*

Lecture 2 (04/02): Holocaust testimonies: Written and Oral accounts

NB: Collin will return revised research proposals by the end of the week.

Week 11

Lecture 1 (04/07): Remembering the “Great Patriotic War”

Assignment for section:

- **PLAN OF PAPER:** *You should bring a plan of your paper to section. It should include a provisional thesis statement and plans for each paragraph, including supporting evidence/quotations/paraphrasing for at least one paragraph.*

Lecture 2 (04/09): Interactive Session: What Makes a Good Paper/Oral Presentation?

Week 12

Lecture 1 (04/14): NO LECTURE: Student consultations with Collin and/or Professor Ciancia

Assignment for section:

- **ORAL PRESENTATION #2:** *Students spend section briefly presenting their research.*

Lecture 2 (04/16): NO LECTURE: Student consultations with Collin and/or Professor Ciancia

FIRST DRAFT OF FINAL PAPER due at noon on 04/17.

Week 13

Lecture 1 (04/21): How to Revise a Paper

Assignment for section:

- **ORAL PRESENTATION #2:** *Students spend section briefly presenting their research.*

Lecture 2 (04/23): The Memory of the Eastern Front Today

NB: Collin will return first drafts of papers by the end of the week.

Week 14

Lecture 1 (04/28): Final Class Activities

Lecture 2 (04/30): NO LECTURE: Student consultations with Collin and/or Professor Ciancia

FINAL PAPER DUE ON MONDAY, MAY 4, AT NOON.

APPENDIX A: Class Policies and Further Resources

Office Hours

My office hours are posted at the top of the syllabus. Please come by! This time is set-aside specifically for students, and I would be happy to discuss any aspect of the class with you. If you are unable to make this time, please send me an email so that we can set up a mutually convenient appointment time.

Class Etiquette

There is no laptop use in class and you must make sure that all devices with a screen are switched off or put on silent for the duration of the lecture. Come and speak with me if you are concerned about this policy.

We will begin lectures on time, so please make sure that you arrive a few minutes early. Persistent tardiness (as well as going AWOL!) will lead to a lower participation grade. A sign-up sheet will be distributed at the beginning of each lecture so that I can keep track of the attendance and fully reward the students who show up. If you are unable to attend lecture, please email me ahead of time to let me know so that I can mark down your absence. If you are unable to attend section, please email Collin ahead of time.

If there are any assigned readings for lecture or section, you should bring them with you to class. You can participate fully only if you have access to the texts.

Grading

Here is the grading scale that will be used in the class. By assigning a numerical as well as a letter grade for your major assignments, Collin can communicate where you are within the grade range.

A = 93-100
AB = 88-92
B = 82-87
BC = 77-81
C = 72-76
D = 67-71
F = 66 or below

The short assignments will not each be graded, but Collin will provide some formative feedback so that you can work on improving that particular skill in anticipation of the final paper.

Papers and Assignments

Papers should be turned in on time. If there is a problem, it is important that you consult with Professor Ciancia and Collin in plenty of time prior to the deadline. Late papers will be penalized by two points per 24 hours (see grading scale above).

All assignments, including the short assignments, should be submitted via the relevant folder on Canvas by the deadline marked on the syllabus as Word documents only. Unless otherwise agreed, email submissions will not be accepted.

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You should clearly post the word count (along with your name, section day/time, etc.). All assignments should stick within the word limit.

Historians use the Chicago Manual of Style, which can be found online at www.chicagomanualofstyle.org. See also *A Pocket Guide to Writing in History* for more details.

Pre-Med Humanities Writing Requirement

This class can be used to fulfill the Pre-Med Writing Requirement *if* you write a final paper that is between 10 and 12 pages long. Please come and speak with Professor Ciancia at the beginning of the semester if you are intending to use the class to fulfill this requirement.

Academic Honesty

There is information about what constitutes plagiarism here (http://writing.wisc.edu/Handbook/QPA_plagiarism.html), but please come and speak with Professor Ciancia or Collin during office hours if you have questions or concerns.

Disabilities

Disability guidelines for course accommodations may be found at the UW McBurney Disability Resource Center site: <http://www.mcburney.wisc.edu/>. Please come and see Professor Ciancia or Collin if you would like to talk further.

Religious Observance Policy

Students must notify Professor Ciancia within the first two weeks of class of the specific days or dates on which they request relief.

Writing Resources and Guidelines

The **University's Writing Center** is a wonderful resource that allows you to work with a consultant to improve your written work. Take a look at their website (<http://www.writing.wisc.edu/index.html>) for more information.

The **History Lab** is a resource center where experts (PhD students) will assist you with your history papers. No matter your stage in the writing process, History Lab staff will help you sharpen your skills and become a more successful writer. In addition to helping you with the specifics of writing in the discipline of history, the experts at the Lab will also provide assistance in terms of your writing style (including for non-native speakers of English).

APPENDIX B:
The Historian's Craft: Objectives for All Classes

Please find below the official criteria for *The Historian's Craft*. As we go through the class, I will highlight the various skills that we are working on. Please remember that you won't be able to work on all of these skills at once, so I have sequenced them in a way that makes sense.

1. Ask Questions: develop the habit of asking questions, including questions that may generate new directions for historical research.

- a) Develop historical questions through engagement with primary sources, secondary literature, and/or broader ethical, theoretical, or political questions.
- b) Ask historical questions to guide individual research.
- c) Pose questions to prompt productive group discussion.

2. Find Sources: learn the logic of footnotes, bibliographies, search engines, libraries, and archives, and consult them to identify and locate source materials.

- a) Identify the purposes, limitations, authorities, and parameters of various search engines available both through the library and on the world-wide web.
- b) Take advantage of the range of library resources, including personnel.
- c) Locate printed materials, digital materials, and other objects.
- d) Be aware of, and able to use, interlibrary loan.

3. Evaluate Sources: determine the perspective, credibility, and utility of source materials.

- a) Distinguish between primary and secondary material for a particular topic.
- b) Determine, to the extent possible, conditions of production and preservation.
- c) Consider the placement of sources in relation to other kinds of documents and objects.
- d) Identify the perspective or authorial stance of a source.
- e) Summarize an argument presented in a text.
- f) Distinguish between the content of a source and its meaning in relation to a particular question.

4. Develop and Present an Argument: use sources appropriately to create, modify, and support tentative conclusions and new questions.

- a) Write a strong, clear thesis statement.
- b) Revise and rewrite a thesis statement based on additional research or analysis.
- c) Identify the parts of an argument necessary to support a thesis convincingly.
- d) Cite, paraphrase, and quote evidence appropriately to support each part of an argument.

5. Plan Further Research: draw upon preliminary research to develop a plan for further investigation.

- a) Write a research proposal, including a tentative argument, plan for research, annotated bibliography, and abstract.
- b) Identify the contribution of an argument to existing scholarship.

6. Communicate Findings Effectively: make formal and informal, written and oral

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presentations tailored to specific audiences.

- a) Write a clearly argued, formal academic paper, using appropriate style and bibliographic apparatus.
- b) Deliver a concise, effective, formal verbal presentation with appropriate supporting material.
- c) Contribute constructively to discussion, whether proposing or responding to an idea.