

University of Wisconsin - Madison

History 350: The First World War and the Shaping of Twentieth-Century Europe

Spring 2022

Instructional Modality: Online asynchronous+ in person discussion section

4 credits

Designations and Attributes: Advanced Level; Humanities, Social Science Breadth; Counts as LAS credit

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The Great War has been 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 situate the upheaval of 1914-1918 within the larger framework of twentieth-century European history. Using a wide variety of sources – memoirs, essays, poems, literary and cinematic representations, among others – we will try to understand how historians have approached the cultural and political history of the war, and the problem of the relation between war and social transformation more broadly.

Learning Outcomes:

The course is an advanced engagement with the fields of modern European history and war and society more broadly. By the end of the semester, students will be able to:

- 1) Identify and explain the major trajectories in twentieth-century European history and the ways in which they were affected by the First World War, and more broadly, engage critical questions that animate the field of war and society studies today.
- 2) Identify and critically engage with the major interpretive frameworks that historians have used in their study of the First World War, and of total war more broadly

- 3) Analyze primary sources from the history of the First World War, both written and visual, and evaluate or critique interpretations of these sources.
- 4) Produce original historical arguments, in both written and oral communication, and properly mobilize evidence to support these arguments.
- 5) Evaluate interpretive frameworks, in both the historiography as well as the popular cultural memory of the war, and situate the emergence of such frameworks within a broader history of representations of the war and contestations over such representations.

Course Mechanics:

The course consists of **online content** (instructor's podcasts, online readings, documentaries, and film), printed material (books and a course reader), as well as weekly in-person discussion sections. Material and assignments for each week are listed on each week's page on Canvas.

Students who are not familiar with Canvas are encouraged to take the online tutorial at <https://canvas.wisc.edu/courses/13> (this will be useful for other courses as well!).

Instructor's podcasts: To listen to the podcasts, click on the relevant page link on Canvas; there you will find: an embedded podcast, followed by an outline and relevant images (scroll down the page to see them). You will also find a link to a Word version of the outline, to facilitate note taking (for those who wish to print it out or save the file to your computer and type your notes as you listen to the podcast). Close captioning is available by clicking on the 'cc' button.

It is best to listen to the podcasts in a dedicated study space, where you can concentrate, and make sure that you are not interrupted. The system of a greater number of shorter podcasts (rather fewer but longer ones) allows for a better engagement with the material. At the end of each podcast, take a quick break to summarize for yourself the main points of the argument. This class format requires self-discipline and a good system of note taking.

Online sources and film – all are hyperlinked on Canvas (on the relevant week's page).

Printed Materials:

Books: The following books are available at the bookstore. Cheap used copies are easily found online (any edition is fine). Copies of the books have been placed in the Library course reserve.

Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (1993).

Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (1933)

Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (1999).

Recommended text: Michael Howard, *The First World War: A Very Short Introduction* (Oxford, 2002, reissued 2007); a digital copy is available through UW Memorial library.

Course packet (hard copy / digital): a course packet will be available for purchase at the L&S Copy Center in the Social Science Building, Sewell Hall Room 6120, 1180 Observatory Drive. All readings will also be available on Canvas. You will need a paper copy for section.

Discussion Section:

For each week, discussion section takes place on the following Monday; for example, discussion section for week 1 takes place on Monday 01/31, for week 2 on 02/07, and so on (the relevant discussion section is listed for each week on the syllabus). You are required to attend all sections; you have a “free pass” for one unaccounted absence; two or more unaccounted and/or undocumented absences will severely affect your grade. Five or more such absences will result in a failure to pass the entire class. Your section grade reflects effort and engagement (merely showing up is not enough). Additional information will be given during the first meeting of your discussion section.

Requirements:

The course consists of online content and discussion sections. The success of both depends on your active participation. Read the assigned pages **before** class and bring them with you to the meeting.

Weekly Discussion Board: The purpose of the discussion board is to invite you to reflect on the new material collectively and prepare for discussion section. There are 10 weekly discussion boards (not including the “introduce yourself” and “discussion board etiquette” threads). You are asked to post (at least once per discussion board) a short and thoughtful reflection; you are encouraged to use the opportunity to read what your classmates had written and respectfully engage with their thoughts while adding your own. The discussion boards are divided according to sections. Your responses are due on the relevant **Sunday** (before the Monday section) by **11:59PM**. The discussion board will close after the deadline and late submissions will not be accepted.

You will receive the full credit (1 point) for the post if it:

- Offers a thoughtful and compelling argument
- Directly engages with the course material (and cites or explicitly engages with at least one of the weekly sources)
- Written clearly, with appropriate usage, and with no major grammatical or other errors
- When appropriate, engages different opinions in a manner that is respectful and conducive to promoting a productive learning environment

Only responses that meet all these criteria will receive credit for the assignment.

Please note: a good, lively, and engaged discussion on Canvas can do wonders to overall learning in this class. It is also a good place to earn some participation bonuses! You are more than welcome to post more than once, and advised to check the discussion board regularly in the days leading up to section.

Weekly Question (text entry on Canvas): for each week, at the bottom of the page, you will be required to briefly answer a question related to the readings or the podcasts; your answer should be about 150-200 words long. These questions are designed to facilitate comprehension and retention of the material; it is best to complete them immediately after completing the required listening and readings for the week. There are 9 weeks with weekly questions, 1 point per question. Weekly questions are due **Monday 1:00PM**, before the relevant discussion section (to avoid confusion, you can simply complete both the discussion board and the weekly question by Sunday night). Late entries will not receive credit.

You will receive the full credit (1 point) for an answer if it :

- Fulfills the assignment
- Offers a thoughtful and compelling argument
- Directly engages with the course material (and cites at least one of the weekly sources)
- Written clearly, with appropriate usage, and with no major grammatical or other errors

Only responses that meet all these criteria will receive credit for the assignment.

WWI Chronology Quiz: In section, 02/21.

First essay: 02/28; 3-4 pages; based only on sources discussed in class.

Midterm Assignment: 03/24, 11:59PM; 3 pages; critical engagement with a new scholarly argument; you are strongly encouraged (but not required) to pair up with another student and submit jointly.

Film analysis: 04/25; 3 pages; based only on sources discussed in class.

Group research project: Each group (2-3 students) will be required to conduct research on one of the topics below and present their findings in class (12 minutes). Creativity is greatly encouraged. Each group will need to submit its presentation material (such as slides) electronically on Canvas before the presentation. You will be able to sign up for a presentation on the first discussion section (01/31). With the exception of unusual circumstances, the presenters are graded as a group. View the grading rubric on Canvas for further details. The topics for group presentations are:

<i>Conscientious Objectors and/or Pacifism</i>	02/14
<i>Trench Warfare</i>	02/28
<i>Gas Warfare</i>	03/07
<i>The Indian Army</i>	03/28
<i>Australia and New Zealand at War</i>	04/04
<i>Veterans and Disabled Soldiers</i>	04/25

Post-presentation Reflection: In no more than 600 words (200x3), please answer the following questions about the material covered in the presentation and the research leading up to it (one example for each question is enough):

1. What did I find most surprising?
2. In what way does this history help me understand later or contemporary debates or developments?
3. What aspects of this history would I have liked to learn more about?

Peer Reviews: Before the First Essay Assignment and Film Review students are required to meet (in pairs, virtually or in-person, depending on choice and circumstance) and review each other's drafts. You will need to report the time and date of the meeting, and very briefly (about 2 sentences) discuss what emerged from the review of each of the drafts.

Final Exam: online, asynchronous; 2 essay questions, 120 minutes; open books; no proctoring required; must be completed (in one sitting) before 05/11 12:05PM.

General instructions for written assignments:

* For more detailed instructions, go to the relevant page on Canvas. Assignments will also be discussed in section.

* Most assignments will require Turnitin Plagiarism Review; these assignments are later stored in the provider's repository.

* Dates for all written assignment are final; as a rule of thumb, there will be no extensions. Plan ahead!

Grade Structure:

Weekly short questions (1%X8/9)	9%
Weekly Discussion Board (1%x10)	10%
Chronology Quiz:	2%
Primary Source Module	2%
Peer Review (meet and report, x2)	4%
First essay	12%
Midterm Assignment	12%
Film Analysis	12%
Group presentation (12 minutes)	10%
Post-presentation reflection	3%
Final Exam	12%
Section Participation Grade	12%

Extra credits (1-3 points): One appointment with the History Lab and a short paragraph reflecting on what came out of the meeting (for example – plans for revision of the paper, or further research into a particular question); see details under Assignments on Canvas. Each

reported appointment will earn you one point, up to **three** extra credits allowed (although more visits to the Lab are highly encouraged!)

Final Grade Scale: The final grade, calculated as points, will be converted to a letter grade according to the following scheme:

A	94-100
AB	88 to <94
B	84 to <88
BC	78 to <84
C	68 to <78
D	61 to <68
F	0 to <61

Important: Please note that active, constant, and collegial participation, and genuine effort and engagement (in section as well as online) – will be rewarded! The grades in this class are **not** curved.

What if I have a question or want to share my thoughts with the class?

At the bottom of each module, you will find a discussion thread for thoughts, comments, and questions. This is the place to ask questions about the material, related issues you came across during the week, or post your comments and thoughts. You can reply to an existing thread or start a new one. Please note, that this is the space to ask questions about the material or the class that would be of interest to the entire class (rather than emailing your instructors, which should be reserved to personal or particular matters).

Credit Hours and Workload

The credit standard for this 4-credit course is met by an expectation of a total of 180 hours of student engagement with the course learning activities (at least 45 hours per credit), which include regularly scheduled instructor - student meeting times [group discussion of 50 minutes per week], dedicated online time, reading, writing, completing individual and group assignments, individual consultations with the instructor, and other student work as described in the syllabus.

Regular and Substantive Student-Instructor Interaction

This course requires regular and substantive student-instructor interaction: regular interaction through weekly online assignments and discussions; feedback on written and other assignments; scheduled study and office hours, weekly required in-person discussion section, and optional discussion and review hours with the professor.

COVID-19: All students must follow university guidelines regarding COVID-19 (covidresponse.wisc.edu)

Diversity & Inclusion Statement

Diversity is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

Academic Integrity Statement

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary action include, but is not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

Accommodations for Students with Disabilities Statement

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy (Faculty Document 1071) require that students with disabilities be reasonably accommodated in instruction and campus life. Reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities is a shared faculty and student responsibility. Students are expected to inform faculty [me] of their need for instructional accommodations by the end of the third week of the semester, or as soon as possible after a disability has been incurred or recognized. Faculty [I], will work either directly with the student [you] or in coordination with the McBurney Center to identify and provide reasonable instructional accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

Academic Calendar & Religious Observances

See: <https://secfac.wisc.edu/academic-calendar/#religious-observances>

Course Schedule

01/25: First section meeting; introductions and course mechanics

I Why WWI?

Online:

- 1.1 Why World War I?
- 1.2 Course Mechanics

Recommended readings:

Michael Howard, *The First World War, a very short introduction*; or any other source; will give you a good background on the war and help you prepare for the short quiz on week III.

Do:

Introduce yourself (online): on the Introduce Yourself discussion thread on Canvas.

Complete: Primary Source Module (all parts; bring your thoughts on the final exercise to section).

Section: 01/31:

- Workshop on Primary Sources
- Assignment of group presentations

II To Arms

Online:

- 2.1 Europe before the war
- 2.2 Nations and empires
- 2.3 The "Spirit of 1914"
- 2.4 War culture and propaganda

Read:

*Michael Howard, *The First World War* (Oxford, 2002), chapters 1-2, "Europe in 1914" and "The Coming of War," pp. 1-26.

*Stefan Zweig, *The World of Yesterday* (1942), chapter 9, "The First Hours of the War of 1914," pp. 214-237.

*Filippo Marinetti, "The War as the Catharsis of Italian Society" (November 1914)

*Nicoletta Gullace, *The Blood of our Sons: Men, Women, and the Renegotiation of British Citizenship during the Great War* (New York, 2004), chapter 1, "The Rape of Belgium and Wartime Imagination," 17-33.

-The Bryce Committee Report on German Atrocities, Part II (b): "Treatment of Women and Children" (no more than a quick look online).

Do:

Discussion Board Etiquette: read what your peers suggest and participate at least once.

Week 2 Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 02/07

III Women and Men

Online:

- 3.1 War and gender: an introduction
- 3.2 Military mobilization: men
- 3.3 Military mobilization: women
- 3.4 A short introduction to the literary history of WWI

Read:

Vera Brittain, *Testament of Youth* (at least up to page 289).

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 02/14

- *Group Presentation: Conscientious Objectors and/or Pacifism*

IV Home Fronts

Online:

- 4.1 WWI and the making of the Home Front
- 4.2 European socialisms and WWI
- 4.3 “War Socialism” and its legacies
- 4.4 The new ecology of production

Read:

*Roger Chickering, *Imperial Germany and the Great War, 1914-1918* (Cambridge, 1998), 32-40.

* Belinda Davis, “Home Front: Food, Politics, and Women’s Everyday Life during the First World War,” in *Home/Front: The Military, War, and Gender in Twentieth-Century Germany*, 115-138 (2002), 115-138

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 02/21:

- WWI Chronology Quiz
- First essay workshop

V Armageddon

Online:

- 5.1 The “cult of the offensive”
- 5.2 Industrialized warfare
- 5.3 Discipline and collapse

Read:

*War Poems: Siegfried Sassoon, “The Attack;” Wilfred Owen, “Dulce et Decorum Est”

Watch:

- * Strachan on the Somme and Verdun (documentary)
- * Stanley Kubrick’s *Paths of Glory* (1957)

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question
First Essay Peer Review (02/25)

Section: 02/28:

- *Group Presentation: Trench Warfare*

***First essay due Monday 02/28 12:00PM ***

VI Faces of War

Online:

- 6.1 War in the Air
- 6.2 The Politics of Shellshock

Read:

Pat Barker, *Regeneration* (entire)
Peter Taylor Whiffen on the “Shot at Dawn” campaign.

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 03/07

- *Group Presentation: Gas Warfare*

Spring Break

VII Midterm Assignment Week

Section: 03/21

- Midterm workshop

** Midterm assignments due Thursday 03/24 11:59 PM **

VIII Colonial Conscripts

Online:

7.1 Colonial Conscripts

Read:

Joe Lunn, *Memoirs of a Maelstrom: A Senegalese Oral History of the First World War* (Introduction, chapters 1-3, 5-7, and conclusion)

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section 03/28

- *Group presentation: The Indian Army*

IX: Global, Imperial, Total War

Online:

9.1.1 The War in Africa and the Middle East

9.1.2 War and the Imperial Project

9.2.1 Civilians in war: occupation, atrocities, refugees

9.2.2. War and genocide

10.1.1. Ireland before the war

10.1.2 Ireland's War

Read:

*Michelle Tusan, "Genocide, Famine, and Refugees on Film: Humanitarianism and the First World War," *Past and Present* 237 (2017).

*Proclamation of the Irish Republic

*Yeats, "A Terrible Beauty is Born"

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Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 04/04

- *Group Presentation: Australia and New Zealand at War*

X The War on Film

Watch:

- (1) Required:
 - La Grande Illusion (1937)
- (2) At least one of the following:
 - Black and White in Color (1978)
 - Blackadder (first and last episodes, at least)
- (3) Refresh your memory:
 - Paths of Glory (1957)

Do:

Discussion board + Weekly Question

Section: 04/11

Week XI The Search for Stability

Online:

- 11.1 The failures of economic reconstruction
- 11.2 The failures of democracy
- 10.2.1 War and the Vote
- 10.2.2 Gender, citizenship, and postwar reconstruction

Watch:

Documentary on war and revolution

Read:

- *Ernst Jünger, *The Storm of Steel* (1929), pp. 315-319.
- *Sebastian Haffner, *Defying Hitler: A Memoir*, pp.29-45.
- *Hindenburg on the "Stab in the Back," 1918.
- Mary Louise Roberts, "Samson and Delilah Revisited: the Politics of Women's Fashion in 1920s France," *American Historical Review* 98:3 (1987): 657-684. [JSTOR]

Do:

Film Analysis Peer Review (by 04/15 11:59PM)
Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 04/18

****Film Analysis due 04/18 12:00PM****

XII: Cultures of Commemoration

Online:

12.1 The bodies and names of fallen soldiers

12.2 War Memorials

Read:

*Jay Winter, *Sites of Memory, Sites of Mourning: The Great War in European Cultural History* (1995), chapter 1, "Homecomings: the return of the dead," and chapter 3, "Spiritualism and the "lost generation," pp 15-28 & 54-77.

Do:

Discussion board + weekly question

Section: 04/25

- *Group Presentation: Veterans and disabled soldiers*

XIII WWI and the 20th Century

Online:

13.1 Total War and the Twentieth Century

- WWI and its legacies, Oxford University Debate.

Section 05/02

- Final Exam workshop

****Final Exam (online) due May 11, 12:05PM ****