



History 2750 (CRN 80486)
Critical Trends and Issues in the Contemporary World
Clayton State University, fall 2015
This is a 100 percent online course.

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Disabilities

Individuals with disabilities who need to request accommodations should contact the Disability Services Coordinator, Student Center 255, 678-466-5445, disabilityservices@mail.clayton.edu.

Course Description

Critical Trends and Issues in Recent World History (3-0-3). An examination of the global significance of critical political, social, cultural, economic, and international trends and issues since the fall of Communism. Prerequisite(s): Any 1000 or 2000 level HIST course.

My Fellow Historians!

Greetings and welcome to the study of contemporary world and its origins!

“Why are they fighting all the time? Why are they so poor? Why is this/that country such a mess? How and why are the Chinese speeding ahead so fast? What is up with Israel/Palestine?”

To an inquiring mind in process of learning, any thorough reading of a newspaper produces almost as many questions as answers. We all know that Israel and its Arab neighbors do not get along. We also know that Afghanistan seems to be a mess, China is booming, Africa is poor, and that western world is largely affluent. However, many of us do not know why. Here is where this course comes into picture.

You need tools, i.e. knowledge, in order to think analytically. Facts are important. However, acquiring analytical skills to think about the past is equally important. You need both facts and analysis to understand how the United States became the dominant world power during the twentieth century, why Arabs and Israelis do not get along, why ISIS wants to kill you, or why “Bobby” from Dell’s technical support speaks with an Indian accent.

As a citizen of our global world, you have to compete in a global marketplace. The borders between countries and economies continue to erode at a dizzying speed. In this new world, those who know and understand other cultures will have a substantial advantage over their competition, no matter what their business.

Finally, in this course you will improve your critical reading and writing skills. You will, I hope, also learn to evaluate primary and secondary sources, and argue with facts, confidence, and the clarity of thought.

Writing Assistance

The Writers’ Studio 224 is located in the A&S building, room 224. There you can talk with trained writing tutors about your writing projects. They are available to work with you at any stage of your paper, from generating ideas to organizing your paper to understanding how to format it correctly. The service is free; you may drop in and wait for a tutor or sign up for a regular appointment. But remember: you, not your tutor, are ultimately responsible for the quality and content of the papers you submit.

http://a-s.clayton.edu/english/Writers%27_Studio/default.html

Computer Requirement

Each CSU student is required to have ready access throughout the semester to a notebook computer that meets faculty-approved hardware and software requirements for the student's academic program. Students will sign a statement attesting to such access. For further information on CSU's Official Notebook Computer Policy, please go to <http://itpchoice.clayton.edu/policy.htm>

Computer Skill Prerequisites

- Able to use the Windows™ operating system
- Able to use Microsoft Word™ word processing
- Able to send and receive e-mail using Outlook™ or Outlook Express™
- Able to attach and retrieve attached files via email
- Able to use a Web browser.

History Program Outcomes

Program outcomes for the B.A. in history degree at Clayton State are:

- Identify and describe basic chronologies of U.S. and world history.
- Identify and critically evaluate primary and secondary historical sources.
- Identify and evaluate conflicting historical interpretations of events and personalities.
- Perform historical research using primary and secondary sources in libraries, archives, and other repositories of historical records.
- Write in a clear, analytical, and organized manner, demonstrating appropriate professional documentation methods.
- Discuss historical findings in clear and coherent oral presentations.

Grading

Your final grade will consist of a midterm, final, participation, movie analysis, and book review grades. The final grade will break down as follows:

Midterms – 20% (two midterms, each worth 10%)
Final – 30%
Movie analysis – 10%
Book Reviews – 20% (two reviews, each worth 10%)
Participation – 20% (includes quizzes and possible think pieces)
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Total – 100%

The grades will not be curved. Your personal success will not be measured against your fellow students' performance.

Grades

90 and above = A
80-89 = B
70-79 = C
60-69 = D
59 and below = F

Mid-term Progress Report:

The mid-term grade in this course, which will be issued during the first week of October, reflects approximately 30% of the entire course grade. Based on this grade, students may choose to withdraw from the course and receive a grade of "W." Students pursuing this option must fill out an official withdrawal form, available in the Office of the Registrar, or withdraw on-line using the Swan by mid-term, which occurs on October 9th.

[Instructions for withdrawing are provided at this link.](#)

The last day to withdraw without academic accountability is October 9th, 2015.

Books and Movies

You are expected to read all the assignments by their due dates, and I will reserve the right to give you couple of brief reading assignments not mentioned in the syllabus. We will discuss the readings in the class, and your active, informed participation will largely determine your participation grade. Additionally, as you do research for your paper, you will have to read books and academic articles about your chosen topic.

The following is the list of required readings for this course. Please let me know if you have difficulties finding the books.

Ye Sang, *China Candid* (University of California Press, 2006)

James L. Gelvin, *The Arab Uprisings* (Oxford University Press, 2012)

Joseph E. Stiglitz, *The Global Studies Reader* (Oxford University Press, 2014)

Kevin Bales, *Disposable People* (University of California Press, 1999)

Bruce Hoffman, *Inside Terrorism* (Columbia University Press, 2006)

We will watch the following movies for the course. They are all available on Netflix DVD/Blue Ray or Amazon Prime. Make sure you get the copies well in advance, as you might have to get the DVDs via mail. WARNING: Two of the movies, *The Baader-Meinhof Complex* and *Tsotsi* are R-rated, due to some nudity, language, and violence. If you are offended by such scenes, you do not have to watch the film and write the report. Instead, I will give you a reading and writing assignment to cover the same topic. Please send me an email and we can work out the details.

Uli Edel, *The Baader-Meinhof Complex* (Germany, 2009).

Gavin Hood, *Tsotsi* (South Africa, 2005).

Wolfgang Becker, *Good Bye, Lenin* (Germany, 2003)

Danny Boyle, *Slumdog Millionaire* (UK/India, 2008)

Attendance

University Attendance Policy: Students are expected to attend and participate in every class meeting. Instructors establish specific policies relating to absences in their courses and communicate these policies to the students through the course syllabi. Individual instructors, based upon the nature of the course, determine what effect excused and unexcused absences have in determining grades and upon students' ability to remain enrolled in their courses. The university reserves the right to determine that excessive absences, whether justified or not, are sufficient cause for institutional withdrawals or

failing grades. I do expect you to visit our Desire2Learn –site regularly. If I see no record of participation in online activities, I consider that as an absence from the course.

Learning outcomes

We seek to improve our research and writing skills, our historical literacy, knowledge of historiography, and our analytical abilities.

The content of this course syllabus correlates to education standards established by national and state education governing agencies, accrediting agencies and learned society/ professional education associations. Please refer to the course correlation matrices located at this [website](#).

HIST 2750 supports [Program Outcomes](#) 1-6, as adopted by the history faculty at Clayton State University.

Student Handbook

For issues concerning ethical rules, student life, student rights and responsibilities, et cetera, please consult the student handbook and information about judicial affairs. The links are, respectively,

<http://adminsivices.clayton.edu/studentaffairs/StudentHandbook/foreword.htm>

<http://adminsivices.clayton.edu/judicial/>

Cheating

Presenting the work of somebody else as one's own, unaccredited quotations, letting others do one's work for him/herself, and other forms of academic dishonesty are strictly forbidden. Violators will be pursued and punished according to Clayton State University's guidelines and regulations. Usually cheating results in disqualification from the course and the final grade of "F."

All instances of academic dishonesty will be reported to the Office of Student Life/Judicial Affairs. Judicial procedures are described at

<http://adminsivices.clayton.edu/judicial/>

Disruption of the Learning Environment

Behavior which disrupts the teaching–learning process during class activities will not be tolerated. While a variety of behaviors can be disruptive in a classroom setting, more serious examples include belligerent, abusive, profane, and/or threatening behavior. A student who fails to respond to reasonable faculty direction regarding classroom or online behavior and/or behavior while participating in classroom activities may be dismissed

from the group. A student who is dismissed is entitled to due process and will be afforded such rights as soon as possible following dismissal. If found in violation, a student may be administratively withdrawn and may receive a grade of WF. A more detailed description of examples of disruptive behavior and appeal procedures is provided at:

<http://a-s.clayton.edu/DisruptiveClassroomBehavior.htm>

Learning Units

FIRST THEME: INTRODUCTION TO OUR CONTEMPORARY WORLD

(August 17-30)

Introduction, rules of the game, and other pertinent stuff. The lingering effects of World War II. How to make sense of our world? Knowing how the world works: introduction to methodology.

SECOND THEME: COLD WAR AND POST-WWII IDEOLOGICAL STRUGGLE (August 31-September 13)

Communism and capitalism: Ideological foundations. Roots of Soviet paranoia: George Kennan and Long Telegram. Olympics, proxy wars, and the battle over hearts and minds. Velvet revolutions and failed coups: collapse of communism.

Watch: *Good Bye, Lenin*.

THIRD THEME: TERRORISM (September 14-27)

Fringe left, fringe right, and fringe afterworld: modern extremism. From Marxist materialists to otherworldly aspirations: changing character of terrorism. Mind of a terrorist.

Read: *Inside Terrorism*

Watch: *The Baader-Meinhof Complex*

FIRST MIDTERM: SEPTEMBER 28, 2015. YOU WILL HAVE 75 MINS TO TAKE THE TEST. YOU HAVE TO TAKE IT DURING THE 28th, BETWEEN 00:01 AM – 11:59 PM. THE TEST HAS TO BE SUBMITTED BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

FOURTH THEME: THE MIDDLE EAST (September 28-October 11)

The Birth Pangs of a Jewish nation: Israel, Arab world, and the creation of the modern Middle East. Iran and Iraq: the complex realities and simple mistakes of western influence. Afghanistan: graveyard of the empires. Arab Spring. REMEMBER: OCTOBER 9th IS THE LAST DAY TO WITHDRAW AND GET THE GRADE “W”

Read: *The Arab Uprisings*.

FIFTH THEME: THE DEVELOPING WORLD (October 12–25)

Latin America's search for political stability: Peronism, militarism, and *ordem e progresso*. The rise and deflation of Japanese miracle. India: success at home – finally! Sun rises from the East: China's peculiar "communism."

Read: *China Candid*.

Watch: *Slumdog Millionaire*.

SECOND MIDTERM: OCTOBER 26th, 2015. YOU WILL HAVE 75 MINS TO TAKE THE TEST. YOU HAVE TO TAKE IT DURING THE 26th, BETWEEN 00:01 AM – 11:59 PM. THE TEST HAS TO BE SUBMITTED BEFORE MIDNIGHT.

SIXTH THEME: THE UNDEVELOPED WORLD (October 26–November 8)

Decolonization, but for whom and how? African dreams, African realities: from the party in Accra to the tragedy of the diamond wars. Progress v. pockets of wealth: geographic dissemination of modern poverty.

Read: *Disposable People*.

Watch: *Tsotsi*.

SEVENTH THEME: GLOBALIZATION (November 9–22)

Politics of place and placelessness: state, people, and capital in the global world. Politics of globalization. Brief primer from Bretton Woods to Seattle Riots. Technology of globalization: from jet engines to Facebook. Globalization and you.

Read: *The Global Studies Reader*.

EIGHT THEME: CHALLENGES FOR THE FUTURE (November 23–December 7)

Water? Economy? Mass movements? Climate change? The rise of new powers? How will future challenges impact our lives?

FINAL TEST: DECEMBER 9th, 2015. YOU WILL HAVE TWO HOURS TO TAKE THE TEST. YOU HAVE TO TAKE IT DURING THE 9th, BETWEEN 00:01 AM – 11:59 PM. THE TEST HAS TO BE SUBMITTED BEFORE MIDNIGHT.