History 101: Basic Issues in European History, 1650-Present

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Mears 212  
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Course Meetings: MWF 9-9:50 AM, Science 1245
Office Hours: Monday 10:15-12 p.m., Thursday 2:30-3:30 p.m., or by appointment

The course is an introductory-level survey exploring key patterns in the development of early modern and modern European history from the period of seventeenth-century absolutism to the collapse of Eastern European Communism and the end of the Cold War in 1989-91. The last 350 years have witnessed some of the most rapid and drastic developments in European history, including the emergence of nationalism, industrialization and representative democracies. Modernity has also brought with it industrial poverty and social displacement, imperialism, colonialism and totalitarianism. These different facets raise questions about the basic nature of the so-called “progress” of the modern age. We will examine these developments in ideas, lifestyles and institutions over this critical time period.

This course is not intended, however, to be an exhaustive survey of modern European history. Instead, it primarily provides an introduction to historical methodology through the lens of certain important developments that took place during this era. It is designed as a laboratory of historical thinking. We will take the role of historians, examining a sizeable and diverse body of evidence that illustrates various aspects of the social, political, intellectual, economic and cultural history of Europe in the modern age. In accordance with this approach to learning, we will focus on carefully analyzing our primary sources through in-depth reading, open discussions and written analyses. While we have a textbook to provide contextualization, our focus will be on the documents themselves.

When reading a text of any kind, consider these kinds of questions:
- What are the questions that the author is attempting to answer?
- How well does he or she answer these questions?
- What types of arguments and evidence does the author use to convince you?
- Does the author succeed in convincing you? Why or why not?
- What does the author leave out? Why?

Course Requirements (with percentage of grade in parenthesis)

1. Discussion (20%)
This course is organized around discussions and student presentations, along with periodic short introductory talks. You are required to read the assigned primary sources and textbook passages before coming to class and to participate actively in our discussions. Our class meetings are mandatory. As part of your discussion grade, you will be required to respond (on seven occasions) to a question or a set of questions that I will post to PioneerWeb about the readings throughout the semester. (I will distribute a separate schedule of discussion response dates once the course roster stabilizes). You will thus post a thoughtful short response (approximately two paragraphs) to PioneerWeb by 11 p.m. the day before discussion. These responses are required, but not graded. Because the primary purpose of these responses is to facilitate discussion, late postings will not be accepted for any reason. Non-submission will have an unfavorable impact on your final grade, as will, of course, non-attendance in class.

2. Papers (50%) (10% for paper 1, 20% for paper 2, 20% for paper 3)

There will be three papers for this course: a three-page primary source analysis and two five-page papers. The first paper will critically analyze a primary source from our course packet; the second paper will be slightly broader and comparative in scope, while the last paper will concentrate on William Sheridan Allen’s monograph, *The Nazi Seizure of Power*. Paper topics, style guidelines and grading criteria will be distributed in class.

4. Midterm and Final Examinations (30%) (10% for the midterm, 20% for the final)

There will be an in-class mid-term and a normal in-class final exam.

Required Texts

The following are available for purchase at the Grinnell College Bookstore.


Most of our daily readings will come from the *Documents to Illustrate Basic Issues in European History* (a photocopied course packet). You must pick up the course packet from me in my office (Mears 212) (ideally on the first day of the semester).

A few readings will be posted to PioneerWeb, and are indicated as “PioneerWeb” on the syllabus.

**Schedule of Course Meetings and Assignments**

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Week 1</th>
<th>The Old Order</th>
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<tr>
<td>January 21</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
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(For class, read Mark A. Kishlansky, “How to Read a Document,” in idem, Sources of the West (New York: Longman, 2001), xiii-xxii (PioneerWeb)

January 22  FILM NIGHT
The Return of Martin Guerre (Le Retour de Martin Guerre)
(Dir.: Daniel Vigne, 1982), ARH 102, 7 p.m. (most likely)

January 23  Discussion of The Return of Martin Guerre and early modern Europe
Readings: Documents 1AB; WC, 500-513

January 25  Europe in 1648
Readings: Documents 1CDE; WC, 513-530

Week 2  Absolutism and the Enlightenment
January 28  Louis XIV
Readings: Documents 1FGH; WC, 539-548, 553-559

January 30  The Scientific Revolution and the Church
Readings: Documents 2ABC; WC, 548-553, 573-599

February 1  Montesquieu and Voltaire
Readings: Documents 2DE; WC, 603-617

Week 3  French Revolution
February 4  Rousseau and Condorcet
Readings: Documents 2EF; WC, 617-624

February 6  Revolutionary origins
Readings: Documents 3ABC; WC, 643-653

February 8  The Revolution solidifies
Readings: Documents 3DEFG; WC, 653-661

Week 4  Revolution and Restoration
February 11  The Terror
Readings: Documents 3H; “The Festival of the Supreme Being”
(PioneerWeb); WC, 661-673

February 13  Romanticism and Conservatism
Readings: Documents 4ABC; WC, 711-715

February 15  Napoleon, Reaction and Restoration
Readings: “The Constitution of the French Republic” (PioneerWeb);
Documents 3J #6 (the Civil Code); Documents 4DF; WC, 708-711

PAPER #1 DUE FEBRUARY 15, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.

Week 5  Industrial Revolution and its Ideologies
February 18  Liberal Economic Theory
Readings: Documents 5ABC; WC, 677-690, 715-717

February 20  Industrial Revolution
Readings: Documents 5DEF, WC, 690-703

February 22  Marxism
Readings: *The Communist Manifesto* (49-99 at the very least; feel free to read the introduction and the multiple prefaces); WC, 717-722

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<tr>
<th>Week 6</th>
<th>Revolts and Unifications</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>February 25</td>
<td>1848</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 5GH, 6E; WC, 732-737</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 27</td>
<td>Italian Unification</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 6ABCD; WC, 742-750</td>
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<tr>
<td>February 29</td>
<td>Germany</td>
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<td>Readings: Documents 6GHIJ; WC, 750-761</td>
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<th>Week 7</th>
<th>Reactions to Industrialization</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 3</td>
<td>Industrialization: Statistics and Reformers</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 7ABD; WC, 765-771, 777-782</td>
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<tr>
<td>March 5</td>
<td>Midterm Review</td>
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<td>March 7</td>
<td>MIDTERM EXAMINATION IN CLASS</td>
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<th>Week 8</th>
<th>Discontents</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 10</td>
<td>Socialism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 8ABCE; WC 782-805</td>
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<td>March 12</td>
<td>Feminism</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 9BCDEFG; WC, 821-832</td>
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<td>March 14</td>
<td>Imperialism</td>
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<td>Readings: Documents 10CDF, “Modern Egypt” (PioneerWeb); WC, 810-821</td>
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SPRING BREAK!!

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<th>Week 9</th>
<th>World War I</th>
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<tr>
<td>March 31</td>
<td>Origins of World War I</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 8H, 10GH; WC, 832-839, 843-853</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 2</td>
<td>World War I, continued</td>
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<td>April 4</td>
<td>NO CLASS!</td>
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<tr>
<th>Week 10</th>
<th>Revolution and Interwar Europe</th>
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<tr>
<td>April 7</td>
<td>Russian Revolution</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 11ABDFGHI; WC, 853-861, 861-865</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 9</td>
<td>Interwar Europe</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 12ABCD; WC, 865-875, 881-884, 895-900, 903-911</td>
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<tr>
<td>April 11</td>
<td>Authoritarian Responses</td>
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<tr>
<td>Readings: Documents 12FGH; WC, 886-895, 913-925</td>
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PAPER #2 DUE APRIL 11, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.
Week 11  From Weimar to the Third Reich
April 14  Nazism’s Origins
Readings: Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power, 4-52; WC, 900-903, 925-927
April 16  The Nazi Rise to Power
Readings: Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power, 54-147
April 18  Nazism, part III
Readings: Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power, 152-216

Week 12  Nazism and World War II
April 21  Triumph of the Will
Readings: Allen, Nazi Seizure of Power, 216-279, 282-303; WC, 927-932, 938-945
April 23  War and Genocide
Readings: Documents 12I; WC, 949-973, 982-983
April 25  Origins of the Cold War
Readings: Gale Stokes, From Stalinism to Pluralism, 19-42 (PioneerWeb); WC, 973-978, 985-990, 999-1005

Week 13  Economic Boom and the Critics of Prosperity
April 28  Welfare States and European Cooperation
Readings: Documents 13DEFG; WC, 990-998
April 30  Decolonization and Immigration
Readings: Documents 13ABC; WC, 978-981, 1005-1010

PAPER #3 DUE APRIL 30, MEARS 212, 5 P.M.

May 2  Prosperity and its Discontents
Readings: Documents 13I; Feenberg and Freeman, May 1968 documents (PioneerWeb)

Week 14  The End of the Cold War
May 5  From Budapest to Charter 77
Readings: Stokes, From Stalinism to Pluralism (PioneerWeb), 81-87 and 122-38; WC, 1011-1017
May 7  1989 and the Collapse of Eastern Europe
Readings: Documents 14DE; Stokes, From Stalinism to Pluralism (PioneerWeb), 253-267; WC, 1017-1019, 1025-1031
May 9  Europe in 2007
Readings: WC, 1031-1042, 1047-1051, 1057-1066

FINAL EXAMINATION FRIDAY, MAY 16, 9 A.M.
Additional Ground Rules:

1. Deadlines are to be taken most seriously. I will automatically grant you one extension on any of the three papers. You must e-mail me 48 hours before the paper is due; you do not need to explain the circumstances necessitating the extension. The extension will be for 72 hours. Barring exceptional emergency circumstances, I will not grant you an extension on another paper. Normally, I take off 1/3 of a letter grade for every 24 hours a paper is overdue.

2. Papers must be double-spaced and have one-inch margins, and should not employ anything larger than 12-point font. E-mailed papers will not be accepted.

3. All written work at Grinnell College is subject to the Student Handbook. If you have questions as to how a particular assignment relates to the Student Handbook, please consult with me in advance of that assignment’s due date.

4. All written work submitted for a grade must be completed in order to pass the course. In addition, any student who misses more than six classes (again, barring exceptional emergency circumstances) will not receiving a passing grade.

5. If you have specific physical, psychiatric or learning disabilities and require accommodations, please let me know early in the semester so that your learning needs may be appropriately met. You will need to provide documentation of your disability to the Dean for Student Academic Support and Advising, Joyce Stern, located on the third floor of the Rosenfield Center (x3702).