Seminar in European History: World War I

This seminar examines the origins, conduct, and consequences of the "Great War," a disastrous conflict that profoundly shaped the twentieth century. The course essentially divides into three parts. We will begin by exploring the still-heated debates concerning the causes of the war, examining such factors as the European system of alliances, imperialism and the arms race, domestic political considerations, and the question of German war guilt. We will then look at the conduct of the war, considering how technology, propaganda, and mobilization of the home front helped make it the first “total war.” We will also look at changing war aims and secret treaties, the impact of the Russian revolution, and why all attempts to bring the combatants to the bargaining table failed prior to 1918. In the final section, we will examine the peace-making process at Versailles, some of the myths surrounding the peace settlements, and how this conclusion to the “war to end all wars” helped set the stage for a second world war.

Dates, Location and Hours:

Dates: March 27-April 1, 2012
Location: Vilseck, Germany. See Site Director for classroom location.
Hours: Tue-Fri 6:00-9:30 p.m.; Sat-Sun 8:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m.
Last day to enroll or drop without penalty: February 27, 2012

Site Director:
Carmelia Lowman. Phone: CIV 011-49-9662-83-2069; DSN 476-2069; Fax: 011-49-9662-83-3113 or DSN Fax 476-3113; E-mail: apvilseck@ou.edu

Professor Contact Information:
Course Professor: Dr. Melissa K. Stockdale
Mailing Address: Dept. of History, 455 W. Lindsey St.
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK 73019
Telephone Number: (405) 325-6001
Fax: (405-325-4503
E-mail Address: mstockdale@ou.edu
Professor availability: The professor will be available via e-mail to students before and after the class sessions. On-site office hours are half an hour before and after each class session, by appointment.

Textbook(s) and Instructional Materials:
Student materials are available at the Follett/AP Bookstore located in the Oklahoma Memorial Union, 900 Asp Ave., Norman, OK. Orders can be placed online at www.oklahomaunion bkstr.com or by telephone at 866-369-9713 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-5960 (outside the U.S.). E-mail orders may be sent to oklahomaunion@bkstr.com. Representatives are available from 8 a.m. to 6 p.m. CST Monday through Thursday and 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. CST on Friday. Summer hours: 8 a.m. to 4 p.m. CST. Faxed orders may be placed 24 hours a day to 866-223-5607 (toll free in the U.S.) or 405-325-7140(outside the U.S.).


4. Materials posted on the Electronic Reserve system: Articles and primary source materials. Access the OU Electronic Reserves Page at [http://libraries.ou.edu/eresources/reserves/](http://libraries.ou.edu/eresources/reserves/); enter OU NetID (4x4) and password, and select course and access material. Please contact your local Site Director if you require assistance.

Note: The Follett/AP Bookstore is the Advanced Programs contractual textbook provider. Should text changes become necessary after publication of the course syllabus, Advanced Programs will facilitate text returns/refunds only for texts purchased through the Follett/AP Bookstore.

**Course Objectives:**

A primary objective of the course is to gain a sophisticated understanding of the debates surrounding the causes, conduct, and international implications of the First World War. Additional objectives are to develop the student's ability to analyze and explicate complex arguments and their underlying assumptions, and to clearly and persuasively present one's own arguments, both verbally and in writing.

Each class meeting will consist of lecture, videos, "how-to" sessions on skills such as evaluating different kinds of evidence and, most importantly, class discussion. It is therefore crucial that seminar members come to class having read all the texts assigned for that day's session (which means students would be well-advised to do as much of the reading as possible before class begins!).

Additionally, to help guide you in your note-taking during lectures and better prepare for the final exam, I will hand out the study questions for the final on the first day of class.

**Course Outline:**

**Tuesday, March 27**

- Discussion: Debate over the Causes of the First World War (Fromkin book and articles on reserve)
- Video: The Outbreak of World War I
- Lecture: Warfare, 1914 (Schlieffen Plan and Eastern Front)
- Readings: For this class you should have read the assigned pages from Fromkin, *Europe’s Last Summer*, the reserve readings from Folder One and Howard, *The First World War*, chs. 2-3
- Papers are due at the start of class.

**Wednesday, March 28**

- Lecture: Total War: Economy, Home Front, And Propaganda.
- Discussion: Propaganda and Home Front Mobilization.
- Video: Total War
- Readings: For this class, read Howard, ch. 4; the essays by Strachan and Braybon (electronic reserve, folder two) and documents on “The Home Front” (electronic reserve, folder three)
Thursday, March 29

- Lecture: Industrialized Warfare: Mass Armies and New Technologies
- Discussion and Quiz: The Debate on the Stalemate; What is “Total War”?
- Video: Slaughter
- Readings: For this class, read Howard, ch. 5; selections on technology and generalship (electronic reserve, folder four)

Friday, March 30

- Video: Mutiny
- Discussion: The Front Line Experience; Why Keep Fighting? (Soldiers and Civilians)
- Readings: For this class, read Howard, chs. 6-7; essay by Englander and soldiers’ letters and poetry (electronic reserve, folder five)

Saturday, March 31

- Lecture (begin 9:00 a.m.): Diplomacy and the Search for Allies, 1915-1917; America Enters the War
- Discussion and Mock-Tribunal: Middle-East Agreements
- Break for lunch, 12:30-1:45 p.m.
- Lecture: The Campaigns of 1918
- Video: The American Experience
- Readings: For this class, Howard, ch. 8; MacMillan, Introduction and chs 1,8, 26-28; and items on Middle East (electronic reserve, folder six)

Sunday, April 1

- Lecture (begin 9:00 a.m.): Making Peace, 1918-1919
- Video: Legacies of the Great War
- Discussion: America’s Contribution and The 14 Points.
- Q and A for Final Exam Prep
- Lunch and Study Break, 1:00 -2:30 p.m.
- Readings: For today, Peace treaties and war myths (electronic reserve, folder seven); MacMillan, chs. 7, 30, conclusion, and Wilson’s 14 points.
- **Final Exam** (essay section is open book) 2:30-4:30

Monday, April 23

- Second Paper: Topic guidelines for this 8-9 page paper are at the end of this syllabus.

Useful Web Sites:

There are a number of fine web sites for the Great War, including:

- [www.net.lib.byu.edu](http://www.net.lib.byu.edu) The World War I Document Archive. The site is organized by year, and is an excellent source for the texts of treaties, diplomatic notes, contemporary newspaper accounts, and more.
- [www.worldwar1.com](http://www.worldwar1.com) Trenches on the Web. Aimed at a more popular audience, this site features sections on battles, weaponry, biographies, time lines, propaganda posters, etc. It is a particularly good source for maps, period photos, and contemporary pictures of the sites of important battles. It also has links to dozens of other WWI web sites (some good, some not so good.)
Assignments, Grading and Due Dates:

First Assignment:

The reading assignment and paper to be completed BEFORE the first meeting of the class are as follows. Late papers will be heavily penalized.

Reading:

Fromkin, *Europe’s Last Summer*, pp. 11-66, 114-305, AND at least two of the following selections from Folder One on electronic reserve: the article by Fritz Fischer or I. Geiss, and at least one of the other articles in this folder.

Paper Topic: "Why Did the War Happen?"

Your task in this paper is not to try to resolve the controversy over why the war occurred, but to analyze different approaches to that question. Approximately half your paper should focus on Fromkin’s book. Summarize his central arguments concerning the main causes of the war, the timing of its outbreak, and the county or parties most to blame. How does he make the case for his contention that there were in fact “two wars”? Then, briefly discuss the main argument about causes of and responsibility for the war made by TWO other scholars you read for this assignment, and compare them with Fromkin. How do these two interpretations reinforce, challenge or modify Fromkin’s thesis or aspects of it? You might wish to compare articles that focus on the motivations and behavior of two different countries, such as Williamson on Austria-Hungary and Geiss or Fischer on Germany. Or you might compare an interpretation examining the responsibility of a given country with an interpretation stressing pan-European or more military considerations (such as Farrar or Howard.)

Whatever your choice, your approach should be analytical rather than purely descriptive. (Here, it’s helpful to remember that the two most important skills being demonstrated in this paper are your ability to summarize accurately an author’s arguments, and to compare different interpretations.) It’s also interesting for the reader to know where you stand: please indicate which interpretation you find most persuasive, and why.

In your discussion, make sure to refer by name to the authors whom you are analyzing (for example, “Williamson argues that…”) Whenever supplying examples, evidence, or direct quotes from a text, at the end of the relevant sentence provide a citation: the author’s name and the page number, in parentheses (for example: Fromkin, 49). You should average at least 2.5 citations per page. The paper is to be 5 pages long, typed, doubled-spaced; it is due at the start of the first day of class, and late papers will be heavily penalized. Please *proof-read carefully for grammar, spelling, and typos*, since an unprofessional presentation will significantly lower your paper’s grade.

Final Paper: MacMillan’s Paris 1919

The final paper for this course is 8-9 pages long (including notes), typed double-spaced and using standard font size and margins. It should be substantially based on, and evaluate
arguments of, the Margaret MacMillan book assigned for class. Additionally, you will choose 1-2 outside sources yourself--either primary or scholarly secondary sources—to aid you in your discussion of MacMillan’s theses and the peace. Approximately half your discussion should be based on your outside sources; note that no encyclopedias, including wikipedia, are acceptable. Your best bet for scholarly sources is J-STOR, the online database of scholarly journal articles accessible through OU’s Bizzell Library home page. I strongly recommend that you check with me on your proposed outside sources, to make sure that you have selected appropriate ones likely to produce an interesting discussion.

Citations should be endnotes or footnotes, following Chicago Manual of Style (or the Kate Turabian version of CMS. As a general rule, a well-supported paper will average 2.5 citations per page—that means that if your paper has less than 20 endnotes or footnotes, you are almost certainly not giving enough evidence. Please take care to proof read carefully for grammar as well as spelling: sloppy papers are unprofessional and will receive a lower grade.

I’m happy to consult with you during any stage of the writing process and to look over rough drafts. The final paper is due electronically by noon on Monday April 23; late papers will be penalized heavily, unless you have made a prior arrangement for an extension.

1. **Regional Settlements.** Select one section or substantial sub-section of the MacMillan book—on the peace with Germany, Italian concerns, the Balkans, the Middle East, for example—and analyze in depth MacMillan’s theses and discussion. What does she consider strengths or weaknesses of the final settlements for this area, and how does she account for the more problematic points? As a point of comparison, you will then select from an appropriate internet source or database one or two other appraisals of that topic. For example, you might wish to compare her handling of German reparations with two other appraisals of the “economic consequences of the peace.” Either primary or scholarly secondary sources are fine (one long or two shorter ones.)

2. **League of Nations.** Creation of a League of Nations was one of Woodrow Wilson’s paramount goals, but the United States never became a member of that organization. U.S. refusal to join was one of the sources of that body’s weakness. Explore MacMillan’s handling of the negotiations that went into creation of the league, and her analysis of its shortcomings. Then, select 1-2 texts exploring American rejection of membership in the League—either a primary source, like minutes of Senate debates, or secondary sources, such as scholarly articles—to consider why America refused to join and the degree to which America’s absence doomed the League’s usefulness.

3. **Self-Determination.** The right of national self-determination was implicit in Wilson’s 14 points. The peace crafted at Paris has been condemned for failing to allow sufficient national self-determination, and/or for honoring it unequally and inconsistently. Explore some of the issues of national self-determination in MacMillan’s book—for German nationals, other Europeans, Arabs, other peoples living under colonial rule—and evaluate her analysis of national self-determination in the ensuing treaties. Then, select and analyze 1-2 other viewpoints—from primary or scholarly secondary sources—that agree or differ.

4. **Open topic.** You may craft another topic of your own devising, if you wish, based partly on MacMillan and also using outside sources. In the past, students have used this option to pursue their own particular interests or expertise. (For example, I have had students write on Italy, on post-imperial Austria, and on the absence of a “war crimes” tribunal and the failure to investigate the Armenian genocide.) Whatever your choice, for this option you must secure my approval of the topic and your outside sources before writing your paper.
Grading: This is a letter-graded course: A, B, C, D, or F. The course evaluation will be based on the following:

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Percent of Grade</th>
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<tr>
<td>5 page paper (Due first day of class)</td>
<td>20%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Class participation and exercises</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Examination (Last day of class)</td>
<td>25%</td>
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<tr>
<td>8-9 page paper (due Monday, April 23)</td>
<td>30%</td>
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NOTICE: Failure to meet assignment due dates could result in a grade of I (Incomplete) and may adversely impact Tuition Assistance and/or Financial Aid.
POLICIES AND NOTICES

Attendance/Grade Policy

Attendance and participation in interaction, individual assignments, group exercises, simulations, role playing, etc. are valuable aspects of any course because much of the learning comes from discussions in class with other students. It is expected that you attend all classes and be on time except for excused emergencies.

Excused absences are given for professor mandated activities or legally required activities such as emergencies or military assignments. Unavoidable personal emergencies, including (but not limited to) serious illness; delays in getting to class because of accidents, etc.; deaths and funerals, and hazardous road conditions will be excused.

If you are obtaining financial assistance (TA, STAP, FA, VA, Scholarship, etc.) to pay all or part of your tuition cost, you must follow your funding agency/institution’s policy regarding “I” (Incomplete) grades unless the timeline is longer than what the University policy allows then you must adhere to the University policy.

Students who receive Financial Aid must resolve/complete any “I” (Incomplete) grades by the end of the term or he/she may be placed on “financial aid probation.” If the “I” grade is not resolved/completed by the end of the following term, the student’s Financial Aid may be suspended make the student ineligible for further Financial Aid.

Students are responsible for meeting the guidelines of Tuition Assistance and Veterans Assistance. See the education counselor at your local education center for a complete description of your TA or VA requirements.

Academic Honesty

Honesty is a fundamental precept in all academic activities and … [you] have a special obligation to observe the highest standards of honesty. Academic misconduct in any form is inimical to the purposes and functions of the University and is therefore unacceptable and is rigorously proscribed. Academic misconduct includes:

- cheating (using unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise), plagiarism, falsification of records, unauthorized possession of examinations, intimidation, and any and all other actions that may improperly affect the evaluation of a student’s academic performance or achievement; assisting others in any such act; or attempting to engage in such acts.

All acts of academic misconduct will be reported and adjudicated as prescribed by the student code of the University of Oklahoma. All students should review the “Student’s Guide to Academic Integrity” found at http://www.ou.edu/provost/integrity

Accommodation Statement

The College of Continuing Education [Advanced Programs] is committed to making its activities as accessible as possible. For accommodations on the basis of disability, please contact your OU Site Director.

Course Policies

Advanced Programs policy is to order books in paperback if available. Courses, dates, and professors are subject to change. Please check with your OU Site Director. Students should retain a copy of any assignments that are mailed to the professor for the course.

Copyright

Any and all course materials, syllabus, lessons, lectures, etc. are the property of professor teaching the course and the Board of Regents of the University of Oklahoma and are protected under applicable copyright.

For more information about Advanced Programs, visit our website at: http://www.goou.ou.edu/
INSTRUCTOR VITA
Melissa Kirschke Stockdale, Ph.D.

Education
- 1989  Ph.D., History, Harvard University
- 1981  M.A., Soviet Area Studies, Harvard University
- 1979  B.A., History, University of Tulsa

Current Positions
Associate Professor of History, University of Oklahoma

Frequently Taught Advanced Programs Courses
HIST 6200  Seminar in European History – World War I

Major Areas of Teaching and Research Interest
- Research: Politics and ideology in the ear of the Russian Revolution: World War One in Russia: Patriotism and National Identity in Russia, 1890-1928

Representative Publications and Presentations
- “Politics, Morality, and Violence: Kadet Liberals and the Question of Terror, 1902-1911,” Russian History, 22 (Winter 1995), 455-80

Representative Honors and Awards Received
- Fulbright-Hayes Research Fellowship to Russia (2002, 1984-85)
- Amoco Foundation Good teaching Award, O.U. (1998)
- John M. Olin Foundation Junior Faculty Fellowship (1992)

Major Professional Affiliations
- American Association for the Advancement of Slavic Studies (AAA-SS)
- Association of Women in Slavic Studies (AWSS)
- The American Historical Association (AHA)