

**KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY**  
**Fall Semester 2009**  
**History 4490/02**  
**Special Topics: The First World War**  
**CRN 81160**  
**Social Sciences Classroom Building, Room 3029**

**Instructor: Dr. Joseph L. Meeler**

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Office Phone: **770-499-3288 (KSU History Dept.)**

Class Hours: **9:30 AM to 10:45 PM**

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Unlike all military conflicts before it, the first great war of the new twentieth century set a precedent for all martial conflagrations to come. It was a watershed event of modern history. The earth had never seen war on this scale, involving nations from every corner of the world. This fierce struggle is called by many names: World War I, the First World War, “the war to end all wars,” “The 1914-1918 War,” and “The Great War.” It began in the summer of 1914 and lasted until the autumn of 1918, changing the political map of the world forever. Though its opposing forces fought their battles primarily in Europe, the First World War claimed the lives of up to twenty million people worldwide, producing a “butcher’s bill” that made it one of the most lethal military conflicts of all time.

This war brought about the destruction of several long-standing polities and empires, concluding the reigns of many of the world’s most powerful and influential royal families. These included the Hohenzollerns of Germany, the Hapsburgs of Austria-Hungary, the Romanovs of Russia, and the Ottomans of the Middle East. Further, this great conflict’s conclusion saw the creation of several new states, such as the Soviet Union, Yugoslavia, Czechoslovakia, and a recreated/resurrected Poland.

The political situation within Europe had been steadily fermenting in the nine plus decades following the fall of Napoleon’s empire. The factors of industrialization, competitive colonialism, ethnic rivalries, and an attendant arms race made the coming military conflict more than just an isolated episode in the history of mankind. During the nineteenth century, nations had joined in alliances, warred over disputed territories, and garnered bitter rivalries and hatreds. The consequent vintage of these avaricious and fractious years was an epic struggle for the dominance of Europe and, perhaps, the entire world.

The necessity of an honorable victory was a Victorian-minded goal to which the warring opponents doggedly held for over four years. This aim brought nations to invent dreadful weapons, and with them, to execute ignominious tactics, which both sides turned on their enemies with alacrity. Thus, World War One saw the development and implementation of the trench, the airplane, the submarine, the refinement of indirect-fire artillery, poison gas, barbed wire, machine guns, and “storm-trooper” tactics, all “combat multipliers” that produced a battlefield environment that seemed to become more miserable and deadlier with new each day. Such a ghastly milieu produced unspeakable terror and suffering in the common soldiers, sailors, and aviators of both sides. The experience of soldiers in the trenches made the term “shell shock” -- a nervous condition produced by continuous exposure to artillery and mortar

bombardment -- a household word in the English Language. Similarly, the term “trench foot” became the widely used description of a devastating skin condition, affecting the feet of trench-bound soldiers, men who were required stand for days in water that oft-times covered and inundated their boots and socks.

The conclusion of this brutal conflict would introduce western democracies to the threat of spreading communist internationalism, to a briefly-belated great world economic depression, and ultimately, just a short fifteen years later, to the rise of Nazi Germany. Arguably, the vengeful bent of Germany’s new Chancellor, Adolph Hitler -- a former Corporal in the Kaiser’s Army and the victim of an Allied poison gas attack -- provided much of the impetus for the aggressive completion of “some unfinished business.” Hitler’s quest for vengeance against his nation’s former enemies is writ large upon the list of causations of the next great global struggle, the bloodiest war of all time, the Second World War.

In this course, we will discuss the major issues and causes of the First World War, study its major battles, its opposing forces and their governments, and the personalities (both military and political) who shaped the events and, ultimately, the outcome of this epic and blood-spattered confrontation. We will also study the social implications for the populations of the warring powers during and after the war. This information should bring the student a basic understanding of the political, military, and social history of the war and the long-range political, implications and consequences of the treaty that concluded it.

Class lectures and textbook readings will give you a general chronological framework. Films and videos shown in class will provide deeper insight into particular problems and periods. **As geography and an understanding of military maps are an important part of this course, tests and quizzes will include maps.** The course schedule is a guide to this course, outlining the student’s reading schedule and the subjects of discussion for each class period. Students should **complete all assigned readings before class.** Do not fall behind on reading assignments. Although there will not be enough time to discuss all assigned readings in a particular class, the information in each assignment may be included on examinations. The course schedule is subject to change. Students are responsible for any amendments to the reading list that the instructor may announce in class during the semester.

#### **Attendance:**

The instructor will take roll on a regular basis. Excessive absences (more than three) will result in a lower class participation grade and will surely impair the student’s ability to succeed on examinations. When necessity prevents a student’s class attendance, he or she should assure the procurement of notes from a reliable source. Students will receive their participation grade based on their individual contributions to classroom activities and attendance. **Each class absence over three (3) will result in a twenty- (20%) percent reduction in the “Participation” grade. Additionally, classroom inattention to lectures – sleeping or talking – will result in a reduction of the “Class Participation” grade.**

#### **LEARNING OUTCOMES:**

After successful completion of the course, students should be able to perform the following in written and oral presentations:

- (1) Reconstruct on exams and book reviews the relationship between the military, political, and social developments surrounding World War I and historical continuity and change.

- (2) Identify in the course readings, exams, and book reviews the central question(s) that different kinds of historical narratives address and the purpose, perspective, or point of view from which it has been constructed.
- (3) In classroom discussions and book reviews, draw on historical data to clarify information on the relationship between military, political, and social patterns and historic events.
- (4) In classroom discussions and on exams, analyze cause and effect relationships bearing in mind multiple causation.
- (5) In student presentations, bring sound and relevant historical analysis to the lives and careers of important military and or political leaders.

### **Course Goals:**

In this course we will examine the political conditions and precipitating actions that brought on World War I, its major battles and events, and the political and social consequences for the governments and populations that survived the war. Each week of the semester we will examine a specific aspect or historical period of the conflict, generally following the outline of the chapters in Brigadier General (US Army) S.L.A. Marshall's older work, *World War I*, supplementing that author's arguments and ideas with the more recent points of view of the Australian scholars, Robin Prior and Trevor Wilson, in their book, *The First World War*. In each lecture, where possible, the instructor will provide extra information or alternate views of the events that Marshall, Prior, and Wilson evince in their books.

Students will learn:

1. Military and World War I specific military terminology
2. The characteristics of the nations involved in World War I
3. The political, military and social factors that precipitated World War I
4. The nature of the battlefield and its conditions as well as the new technologies and tactics, which the opposing powers introduced during the First World War.
5. The major events of the more important battles that took place on the Western, Eastern, Italian, African, and Mediterranean-Middle Eastern Fronts
6. The major events of the more important sea battles
7. The nature of the Treaty of Versailles and the outcomes of the war
8. The personal characteristics of the prominent military and political leaders of the Central Powers during World War I
9. The personal characteristics of the prominent personalities of the governments and military services of England, France, and Russia, the members of the Triple Entente
10. The personal characteristics of the prominent military and political leaders of the for the Associated Powers

### **REQUIRED READING:**

Marshall, S.L.A., *World War I*  
 Prior, Robin and Trevor Wilson, *The First World War*  
 Fussell, Paul, *The Great War and Modern Memory*  
 Eisenhower, John S.D., *Yanks: The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I*

### **EVALUATION:**

Midterm Exam:	25%
Final Exam:	25%
Book Reviews	30%
Class Participation	10%
Student Oral Report	10%

### **EXAMS:**

The **TWO exams** will each include a map section, a section of objective questions, and an essay section. **Students must obtain prior permission (before the scheduled date of the test), from the instructor, to reschedule an examination.** Without such an arrangement or a valid excuse (personal illness verified by documentation from a health-care professional or a documented death in the family), the instructor may not allow the student to make up a missed examination. If an emergency occurs on an exam day, causing the student to miss that exam, he or she must contact the instructor within 24 hours of the exam time, explaining the nature of the emergency and his or her intention to reschedule that exam as soon as possible.

Grammar or spelling mistakes on examinations will not count against the student, nevertheless, his or her writing must be legible and comprehensible, and those responses should be well organized and reasoned. If the instructor cannot make sense of an answer, there will be no credit given for that response. **THE FINAL EXAM WILL BE COMPREHENSIVE OF THE ENTIRE COURSE.**

### **BOOK REVIEWS:**

Write separate book reviews of at least 1000 words on *The Great War and Modern Memory* and *Yanks*. The instructor will evaluate papers in the following areas: (1) Providing a thoughtful analysis of the book, (2) putting the authors subject in the context of American military history, (3) **writing quality, including grammar, spelling, and clarity of argument;** (4) generous use of material from the book read, and (5) documentation. You must use footnotes whether you are directly quoting material or simply paraphrasing it. Use the footnoting format for historical research (see the attached style sheet).

KEEP COPIES OF ALL YOUR PAPERS UNTIL YOU RECEIVE YOUR FINAL GRADE.

### **COURSE PAPER DUE DATES:**

*The Great War and Modern Memory*, **September 17.**

*Yanks : The Epic Story of the American Army in World War I*, **October 29.**

### **CLASS PARTICIPATION:**

Be in class on time. The instructor will take roll on a regular basis. A student's class participation grade will be based his or her individual contributions to classroom discussions and classroom attendance. ***Each class absence over three (3) will reduce the student's class participation grade by twenty (20%) percent.*** Excessive absences will result in a lower class participation grade and will surely impair your ability to succeed on examinations. When necessity prevents your class attendance, assure that you obtain notes from a reliable source. Valid reasons for excused absences include personal illnesses, infirmities that a health-care professional verifies by documentation; or a death in the family, certified by an obituary from a newspaper or funeral program.

**\*The instructor prohibits student use of laptop computers and any other sound-reproducing device in the classroom before during or after class.\*** Students should keep their cell phones in their pockets, packs, or purses, turning the ringer to vibrate or silent before entering the classroom. If a student's cell phone should ring while he or she is in the classroom, that individual should turn it off immediately and directly put it away. However, if the phone call is important, he or she should leave the classroom and answer it outside in the hall. When that phone call is finished, the student should quietly return to his or her seat. **No student should have a cell phone in his or her hands for any other reason while he or she is in the classroom.\***

### **STUDENT ORAL REPORT:**

The Student Oral Report grade is a subjective determination by the instructor of each student's performance in presenting appropriate material pertaining to a person of importance in the time and space of military history for the period covered in this course. Student reports should emphasize this famous (or maybe infamous) individual's contribution to the change of warfare over the centuries. During one of several designated class sessions, each student will -- as scheduled by the instructor -- give his or her presentation, each of which will last at least 5 and no more than 7 minutes. Early in the semester the instructor will assign, from an instructor-compiled list, each student's report subject. The instructor will give as much leeway as possible to individual preferences in these assignments.

**The grading scale for this course's "semester grade" is as follows:**

- A = 90% or above = 4.0
- B = 80% to 89% = 3.0
- C = 70% to 79% = 2.0
- D = 60% to 69% = 1.0
- F = 59% and below = 0

### **ACADEMIC HONESTY:**

Observe the honor code. Your student handbook and KSU catalog thoroughly explain Kennesaw State University's stance on cheating and **plagiarism**. This instructor will enforce all stipulations of this code. Do your own work! The submission of any plagiarized work will denote an actionable case of academic dishonesty. Examples of plagiarism include papers and study sheets that you may copy from other students and the copying of significant passages from sources such as books, magazines, or websites without attribution. ***Even one incidence of plagiarism by a student is enough of an infraction of the honor code for the instructor to give that individual an **F** for the entire course.***

### **OFFICE HOURS:**

Students should bring questions concerning readings, lectures, themes, or general concepts, and any other course-related matters to the instructor's attention. Students can visit the instructor during office hours (see the first page of this syllabus). If these hours conflict with an individual's schedule, that student may arrange a meeting at another time. Students can see the instructor after class, make contact by E-mail, or leave a message in this instructor's mailbox in the History Department in order to arrange such a conference.

## **LEARNING DIABILITIES:**

Students with learning impairments should inform the instructor of their disabilities at their first opportunity. The instructor will then arrange a meeting with that student with the purpose of discerning what accommodations he can make to insure an optimal learning environment for that student.

## **COURSE SCHEDULE**

**Week 1**— August 18-20—Get Acquainted: “When the Lights Went Out”

Readings: Marshall = Chapter I  
Prior and Wilson = Introduction

**Week 2**— August 25-27: “Appointment at the Marne”

Reading: Marshall: Chapters I and II  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter One

**Week 3**— September 1-3: “Guns East”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter III  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter One

**Week 4**— September 8-10: “Seeds of Stalemate”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter IV  
Prior and Wilson: Chapters One & Two

**Week 5**—September 15-18: “Spreading Conflict”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter V  
Prior and Wilson: Chapters Two & Three

## ***The Great War and Modern Memory (Paper Due: September 17)***

**Week 6**— September 22-24: “Deadlock”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter VI  
Prior and Wilson: Chapters Three & Four

**Week 7**— September 29-October 1: “Ordeal of Nations”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter VII  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter & Three & Four

## **October 6 — MIDTERM EXAM**

**Week 8**— October 6-8 “Crisis in the Allied Camp”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter VIII  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Five

*(12 October is the last day to withdraw without academic penalty)*

**Week 9**—October 13-15: “Waiting for America”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter IX  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Five

**Week 10**— October 20-22: “Exit Russia”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter X  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Five

### **Yanks (Paper Due: October 29)**

**Week 11**— October 27-29: “New Storms in the West”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter XI  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Six

**Week 12**— November 3-5: “Enter the Yanks”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter XII  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Six

**Week 13**— November 10-12: “Turning the Tide”

Reading: Marshall: Chapter XIII  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Six

**Week 14**— November 17-19 – “Eleventh Hour” and Student Reports

Reading: Marshall: Chapter XIV  
Prior and Wilson: Chapter Six and “Conclusion”

**Week 15&16**— November 24-December 3: “Versailles” and Student Reports

Reading: Marshall: Chapter XV and review all chapters  
Prior and Wilson: “Conclusion” and review all chapters

**Last day of class is December 3: STUDENT REPORTS and Review for Exam**

**FINAL EXAM: Monday, December 8, 9:30 AM to 11:30 AM**

## Style Sheet for Writing Papers

### Form:

- 1) Papers must be double-spaced.
- 2) Paginate every page.
- 3) Indents are five spaces and do not add an extra space between paragraphs.
- 4) Use one-inch margins on all sides.
- 5) A Times New Roman font of 12 is mandatory.

### Style:

- 1) Papers must be free of spelling, punctuation, and grammar mistakes.
- 2) Book and magazine titles must be underlined.
- 3) Verify that the first sentence of each paragraph is a topic sentence, and that each sentence follows logically from the one preceding it.
- 4) Limit the use of direct quotes to essential passages in primary sources. If the words are powerful or paraphrasing would lose the original meaning, then use the quote. Avoid quoting secondary sources.
- 5) Be sparing in your use of block quotes (quotes of more than 40 words set off in block form).
- 6) Always provide some information or the name of the source of a quote. For example, give the reader information that will put a quote in context: As one Civil War veteran said, "War is hell." If it is important to be more specific because the person is an important figure, include the full name: As General William T. Sherman said, "War is hell."
- 7) Always footnote sources even when you paraphrase their words. Facts generally found in an encyclopedia do not need to be footnoted.
- 8) Put the footnote number at the end of the sentence.<sup>1</sup> If the sentence ends with a quote, put the number outside the quotation marks.<sup>2</sup>
- 9) Spell all numbers less than one hundred and general numbers such as one million.
- 10) Contractions such as "can't" or "don't" are not permitted in formal writing. Use cannot or do not.
- 11) A comma or period goes inside of a quote. For example: "War is hell," not "War is hell",
- 12) Historians avoid passive voice. There should be a subject carrying out some action at the beginning of the sentence. For example, do not write, "Jimmy was given the ball by Billy." Write, "Billy gave the ball to Jimmy."
- 13) Check your paper for run-on and incomplete sentences.
- 14) Use the past tense.
- 15) Do not use cliché phrases or slang.
- 16) Vary your words.
- 17) When one cuts out part of a quote in the middle of a sentence or paragraph, he or she should use ellipses (three periods). For example, "Jimmy . . . ran to the store." Four periods mean that you have eliminated an entire sentence.
- 18) Stay in the third person. Do not write, "I think" or "I believe." These phrases are unnecessary and are too mushy. Be bold. State your opinion forcefully.

### Content:

- 1) Avoid retelling the story. The paper should be analytical.
  - 2) These papers do not need much background information. Get right to the point and analyze the documents or book.
  - 3) Be generous in your use of evidence. The more you have the more convincing your argument will be. Every paragraph in the body of the paragraph should have a footnote. Use footnotes in the format shown below.
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## Footnotes:

The citation method for history papers comes from the *Chicago Manual of Style*. If you have any questions about how to cite a particular book, consult the sixth edition of Kate L. Turabian, *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*. Below are a few examples of the most common ones you will encounter for this paper.

<sup>1</sup> Melba Pattillo Beals, *Warriors Don't Cry: A Searing Memoir of the Battle to Integrate Little Rock's Central High* (New York: Washington Square Press, 1994), 15.

Once you have cited a source once you may shorten it. For example,

<sup>2</sup> Beals, 34.

Two authors:

<sup>3</sup> Thomas G. Paterson and Dennis Merrill, eds., *Major Problems in American Foreign Relations Volume II: Since 1914*, 4<sup>th</sup> ed. (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1995), 56, 77, and 103.

For three or more authors:

<sup>4</sup> Carol Berkin and others, *Making America: A History of the United States Volume II: Since 1865* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 77.

For multiple references in a single footnote use:

<sup>5</sup> Caroline Seabury, *The Diary of Caroline Seabury, 1854-18*, ed. Suzanne L. Bunkers (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1991), 14; Robert A. Doughty and Ira D. Gruber, *American Military History and the Evolution of Warfare in the Western World* (Lexington, Mass: D.C. Heath, 1996), 56; and Carol Berkin and others, *Making America: A History of the United States Volume II: Since 1865* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1995), 77.

To cite my lecture notes write:

<sup>3</sup> Joseph Meeler, Lecture Notes, 1 January 2008.

## How to Write a Book Review

- 1) A book review is an essay, which the writer/student composes with the purpose of commenting on a particular work or a series of works bearing upon a single subject or related subjects. The most important element about a book review to remember is that it is a **commentary**, not merely a summary. You should devote relatively little space to surveying the contents. Simply present a brief outline or synopsis, indicating the general topic, the chronological scope, the major emphasis (political, economic, intellectual, etc.) and which, if any, aspects of the subject are totally ignored.
- 2) The bulk of your review, therefore, should concentrate on your evaluation of the way the author(s) handled the issues discussed. What is/are the overall thesis/theses -- the points of view or conclusion? What are your reactions? Did the book enhance your understanding of the issues? Be as direct as possible. Remember, you are the expert. In

framing your review, you should provide some information on the author(s). What are his or her relevant qualifications and background (or lack thereof) for writing on this subject? What were his or her reasons for writing this book? (Often, the preface contains such information) What evidence does the author cite, and has new documentation become available? If so, identify the new documentation. Alternatively, does the book present a novel interpretation based on previously available documents, or does it provide a new literary or dramatic account of a subject already treated by others? Your conclusions and assessments regarding these aspects, of course, will affect your comparative evaluations of the works. You should also consider the time during which the book was written and, if evident, the author's values and biases. For example, in all likelihood a biography of Senator Joseph McCarthy written by a conservative Republican journalist in 1954 will differ from a biography written by a neo-Marxist academic in 1974.

- 3) It will probably be necessary to refer to specific portions of the books to illustrate your statements and conclusions, but it is generally not advisable to quote extensively from it. Do not try to make more points than can be accomplished thoroughly in your review. It is better to make a few points well than many points poorly. Once you have decided on the central points you intend to make, treat each one as a separate section of your review. Each section should explain the one point, supporting it with your own arguments and with brief examples from the book(s) under review and drawing conclusions as to the meaning and importance of the point.
- 4) Your review should conclude with your personal critique. Refer back to your introductory paragraph(s). What is your ultimate judgment of the style, format, contents, and historical value of the book? Has the author achieved the purpose, explicit or implicit, for writing the book? Has he or she persuasively argued the thesis to your satisfaction? Then, explain why or why not? Compare the evidence cited and argumentation used to support the respective conclusions. Has the book challenged you intellectually, increasing your knowledge, raising new questions, and/or presenting the material in a novel, even provocative manner? On the other hand, does the author simply rehash what everyone already knows?

(Some material excerpted from documents written by US Army Combat Studies Institute Fort Leavenworth, Kansas)