HISTORY 2203

WORLD WAR ONE

INSTRUCTOR: Dr. Paul Doerr  Fall 2018

OFFICE: BAC 443

PHONE: 902-585-1343

E-MAIL: paul.doerr@acadiau.ca

OFFICE HOURS:

Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: 1:30 – 2:30 pm or by appointment

History 2203 examines the causes, progress and consequences of World War One. Considerable attention will be paid to the origins of the war and the period leading up to 1914. The central part of the course, however, will focus on the events of the conflict, including the evolution of strategy and tactics and the impact of new weapons. The social impact of the war and the challenges of coalition warfare will also be considered.

The course has three objectives. First: to improve your understanding of the causes of the war. Second: to gain an understanding of the causes of the trench stalemate which characterized the fighting on the Western Front from 1914 to 1918. Finally, to gain an appreciation of the way the war impacted global history.

“War is a matter of vital importance to the State; the province of life or death; the road to survival or ruin. It is mandatory that it be thoroughly studied”. Sun Tzu, The Art of War.

“War provokes more muddled thinking than any human activity I know of”. General Hunter Liggett, 1928.

“Those who believe that wars can be surgical, that they can be won with “shock and awe”, or that they can be directed toward a precise endgame or end state know little about the Great War”. Robert A. Doughty, Pyrrhic Victory: French Strategy and Operations in the Great War, 2005.

TEXTS:

COURSE SCHEDULE:

Course readings are indicated in brackets.

September 5: Course introduction.

September 7: The European Great Powers at the turn of the century.

September 10: The Road to War (Strachan chapter 1).

September 12: The Road to War cont’d.

September 14: Film TBA

September 17: The final crises, 1914.

September 19: Opening Moves, 1914 (Strachan chapter 3).

September 21: FIRST CLASS TEST

September 24: Opening Moves, 1914 cont’d.

September 26: Stalemate, 1915, Part One.

September 28: The Shock of Total War, 1915.

October 1: Stalemate, 1915 Part Two.

October 3: Life and death in the trenches

October 5: Study day – no class

October 8: Thanksgiving holiday – no class

October 10: Attrition, 1916-17, Part One. (Strachan, chapters 2 and 4)

October 12: SECOND CLASS TEST

October 15: Attrition, 1916-17, Part Two.

October 17: The War in the Air (Strachan, chapter 20).

October 19: New Tactics on the Western Front

October 22: The War at Sea (Strachan, chapter 8).

October 24: Treatment of the wounded.
October 26: Film, TBA. **WRITTEN ASSIGNMENTS DUE**

October 29: The war outside Europe (Strachan chapters 6 and 7).

October 31: Grand strategy and the diplomacy of war (Strachan, chapter 15)

November 2: **THIRD CLASS TEST**

November 5: The crisis of 1917 (Strachan chapters 13, 14 and 18).

November 7: The crisis of 1917 cont’d.

November 9: Winning and Losing the Arms Race

November 12: Remembrance Day observed – no class

November 14: Fall Study Day – no class

November 16: Canada at War

November 19: The war on the Home Front (Strachan, chapter 11 and 16).

November 21: **FOURTH CLASS TEST**

November 23: Film, TBA

November 26: The German offensive of 1918 (Strachan, chapter 19).

November 28: The Allied offensive of 1918 (Strachan, chapter 21).

November 30: Film, TBA

December 3: Ending the war (Strachan, chapter 22).

December 5: TBA

**COURSE REQUIREMENTS:**

Four in-class tests worth 20% each for a total of 60% (only the top three scores will count). Test dates: **September 21; October 12; November 2 and November 21.**

Written assignment: 10% (due **October 26**)

Final exam: 30% (Exam period)
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION:

Class tests: Will consist of multiple choice, short answers, perhaps maps and diagrams. Questions will be drawn from lectures, films and the course text. More details will be made available prior to the test date – check your emails for updates!

This course will make use of e-mail, Acorn, Power Point and anti-plagiarism software.

Power points will be posted to Acorn shortly before the relevant classes. My power points contain a basic outline of the lecture, along with important terms, events, names, photos and maps. I do not put blocks of text on power points, nor do I post entire class notes. If you skip large numbers of classes, thinking that the power points on Acorn will substitute for class attendance, your mark will not be very good.

Attendance is mandatory for the class tests.

More information on the requirements for the written assignment will be posted to the Acorn site for this course shortly. Be sure to read the formatting instructions carefully!

Students are reminded that plagiarism is a serious academic offense and will result in a failing grade, possibly for the whole course. See page 50 of the Acadia University Calendar (Academic Integrity) for details. And if you have read this far in the course outline, here is a way to earn one percentage bonus point on your final grade. Send an email to me with ‘First World War’ in the subject line. Attach an image that, for you personally, summarizes the importance of the war, and explain your decision in three or four sentences in the text. And resist the temptation to tell your colleagues about this.

If you are a student with documentation for accommodations who anticipates needing supports or accommodations please contact Accessible Learning Services. Accessible Learning Services is located in Rhodes Hall.