

**Fall Semester 2016**

**Dr. Günter Bischof**

**T Th 11:00 – 12:15 PM,**

**Office Hours: T Th 8:00 – 9:00 am, 1:00 – 2:00 pm**

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## WORLD WAR II

Interest in World War II continues to be high around the world. Numerous anniversaries of signal WW II events and the opening of museums such as the Holocaust Museum in Washington and the National World War II Museum in New Orleans have kept the fascination with this brutal war alive in the U.S. and other parts of the world. In Switzerland, Germany and Austria international and American demands for restitution to victims of Swiss banking practices and survivors of the holocaust and forced laborers have kept the war alive in the press. Japanese refusal to confront its World War II crimes have upset formerly occupied nations throughout East Asia. President Obama's recent visit of the Hiroshima Memorial have given new attention to the dawn of the nuclear era.

This course begins with covering the basic military, diplomatic, political, economic and social events of the war. In the mid-semester section we want to touch on more elusive subject matters such as the social psychology of enemy images, propaganda, occupations, resistance, home fronts and public opinion etc., as well as the holocaust. In the final weeks of the semester we intend to cover the transition from war to peace and the its problems such as the political reordering of the world, putting war criminals on trial, the treatment of POWs and the historical memory of the war. Viewing films, visits to the National WW II Museum, and guest lectures are designed to add to add authenticity and depth to the class lecture.

### **Class Readings (can be purchased at UNO Bookstore)**

**\*\*Williamson Murray/Allan R. Millett. *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*. Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press Pb, 2001 [= survey textbook]**

Iris Chang, *The Rape of Nanking*. New York: Penguin Pb 1997

Primo Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz*. New York: Touchstone Pb 1995

Jan T. Gross, *Neighbors: The Destruction of the Jewish Community of Jedwabne, Poland*. Princeton: Princeton UP Pb 2001

Ian Buruma. *Year Zero: A History of 1945*. New York: Penguin Books Pb 2014

### **Additional Graduate Student Readings:**

Timothy Snyder. *Bloodlands: Europe between Hitler and Stalin*. New York: Basic Books 2010 (new paperback edition!)

Michael D. Gordin. *Five Days in August: How World War II Became a Nuclear War*. Princeton UP Pb 2015

## Grading

1 Midterm	30 %
1 Final	30%
4 Papers	30 %
Class participation	10 %

## Graduate Credit

Graduate students who enroll in this class have additional readings and paper assignments!

## Attendance Policy

Students have to attend ALL class lectures; one unexcused absence will be tolerated; additional unexcused absences will result in one grade drop per unexcused absence; a class can only be excused by contacting the instructor in advance (phone or e-mail)

## Academic Integrity

Academic integrity is fundamental to the process of learning and evaluating academic performance. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, the following: cheating, plagiarism (including copying work from the Internet!), tempering with academic records and examinations, falsifying identity, and being accessory to acts of academic dishonesty. Refer to the UNO Judicial Code for further information. The Code is available online at [http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial\\_code\\_pts.htm](http://www.uno.edu/~stlf/policy%20Manual/judicial_code_pts.htm).

## Students with Disabilities

Students who qualify for services will receive the academic modifications for which they are legally entitled. It is the responsibility of the student to register with the Office of Disability Services (UC 260) each semester and follow their procedures for obtaining assistance.

## Student Learning Objective

After successfully completing this course, students should be able to

- ◆ Identify on a world map the major theaters of operation in this global war
- ◆ Identify the major figures (politicians, generals, diplomats) of all major belligerents who drove the war's events
- ◆ Understand how the major theaters of war related to each other
- ◆ Have a basic understanding for what motivated the fighting soldiers in the field and how the brutality of war affects individuals for their entire lives

- ◆ Comprehend the enormity of the Hitler’s genocidal regime, the brutality of Japanese militarism and how the victorious democratic nations too were increasingly drawn into unethical practices during this most destructive war (“war without mercy”)
- ◆ Understand how the legacies and memories of World War II powerfully linger – and affect individuals and nations -- to this day

## Weekly Lecture and Reading Schedule

- Th Aug 18      Introduction
- Tu Aug 23      The Paris Peace Settlements 1919 and Its Consequences  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 1
- Th Aug 25      Discontent in Europe: The Rise of the Dictators  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 2  
Snyder *Bloodlands*, chs. 1-2
- Tu Aug 30      The Coming of the Asia-Pacific War  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, chs. 7  
Chang, *Rape of Nanking* (entire)
- Th Sep 1        Weimar Germany and the Rise of the Nazis  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 3
- Tu Sep 6        Between Isolation and War: The U.S. and the Coming of WW II
- Th Sep 8        *Blitzkrieg: The War in Europe 1939-41*  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 4  
Snyder *Bloodlands*, chs. 3-5  
Gross, *Neighbors* (entire)
- Tu Sep 13      Ideological War: The Invasion of the Soviet Union and the War in Russia  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 6
- Paper I due: Japanese and Polish war crimes: was the Holocaust a unique war crime? (compare the Chang and Gross books and write a 3-page essay)**
- Th Sep 15      Global War: The Attack on Pearl Harbor and the unfolding of the Asia-Pacific War  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 8
- Tu Sep 20      Coalition Warfare: Battle of the Atlantic; War in North Africa and in Italy 1942/43  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, chs. 5, 10

Th Sep 22      **Guest Lecture: Robert Citino, National World War II Museum**  
 The War in the East – Leningrad, Stalingrad, Kursk  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, chs. 11, 14

Tu Sep 27      “Second Front”? The Bombing War  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch.12

Th Sep 29      **No Class!**

Tu Oct 4      Terror Front I: Hitler’s New Order -- Occupation and Resistance

Background movie: view *Valkyrie* (dir. Stephen Spielberg 2008) on your own

Th Oct 6      **Midterm Exam!**

Tu Oct 11      Terror Front II: The “Final Solution”/The Holocaust  
Readings: Snyder *Bloodlands*, chs. 6-9  
 Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz* (entire)

Th Oct 13      **Fall Break – No Class!**

Tu Oct 18      D-Day: Normandy Invasion and Breakout  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 15

**Paper II due: What does Levi’s *Survival at Auschwitz* teach you about the human condition in the Holocaust? Were Stalinist methods of extermination comparable to Hitler’s? (5 pp)**

Background movie: view *Saving Private Ryan* (dir. Stephen Spielberg 1998) on your own

Th Oct 20      Slugging Match in Europe: Battle of the Bulge, Battle for Warsaw, and Into Germany  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 16  
 Snyder *Bloodlands*, chs.10-11, Conclusion

Tu Oct 25      **Guest Lecture: Dr. Allan Millett, UNO**  
*Writing the History of World War II*

**Visit the National WW II Museum on your own this week!**

Th Oct 27      Homefront and New Social Order: The Battles for Production

**Paper III due: A Report on the D-Day Museum (3 pp)**

Summarize the themes of the museum. What kind of memory of World War II does the museum generate? Is the argument of the World War II generation as the “greatest generation” historically valid?

Tu Nov 1      The Fall of Hitler’s “Third Reich”  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 16

Background movie: view *Downfall* (dire. Oliver Hirschbiegl, 2004) on your own

Tu Nov 3      The Asia Pacific War 1943-45 & The Dropping of the Atomic Bomb  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, chs. 13, 17-18  
 Gordin, *Five Days in August* (entire)

Tu Nov 8      The Prisoner of War Experience in WW II

Th Nov 10     World War II Diplomacy: Planning for the Postwar World

Tu Nov 15     The Postwar World Order and the Origins of the Cold War  
Readings: Murray/Millett, *A War to Be Won*, ch. 19-20

Th Nov 17     **Attend Keynote Lecture by Ian Buruma at National WW II Museum  
 (6 pm Reception, 7 pm Lecture)**

Tu Nov 22     **No class!**  
Readings: Buruma, *Year Zero* (entire)

Th Nov 24     **Thanksgiving Holiday—No Class!**

Tu Nov 29     Legacies and Historical Memories of World War II  
Readings: Coetzee, *World in Flames*, pp. 386-409

**Paper IV due:** How was the end of the war different in Germany and Japan (Buruma)? Was the atomic bomb needed to end the war against Japan (Gordin)? Write a 6-page analysis of these questions

**Tue Dec 8, 10:00 –12:00**

**FINAL EXAMINATION**