EUH 4930
Research Seminar:
Germany and World War One

Souvenir plate for German personnel
at the Erfurt Prisoner-of-War Camp, 1913
[later a Nazi concentration camp]

Wednesday 7-9th periods (1.55-4.55 p.m.) in FLI 115

The First World War is one of the most important, defining events of the twentieth century. Much of its history was written from a nationalistic perspective. On the Allied side, one’s own country seemed to be the only one that counted. This course seeks to examine the involvement in the war by one of the losers: Germany. Oxford history professor Hew Strachan’s survey of the war will provide a basic overview, but the class will strive to focus more closely on German policy, German strategy, and how the fighting was experienced not only first hand by the soldiers at the front, but by the civilian population as well. This will be possible through the use of a wide range of materials in translation, not only documents but literature and other media, which students will present in class, thus providing extensive hands-on experience with primary and secondary sources.

Required purchase

Additional readings will be assigned as appropriate
Assignments
The main task of the semester is to have each student produce a significant and polished 6,000-word research paper (approx. 20 pages). You are encouraged to seek mentoring of this from me throughout the semester. There will be other, short writing assignments. All students are expected to play an active and informed role in each week’s discussions. Teams of students will make class presentations on assigned topics. In the second half of the semester, each student will make an individual presentation of his/her research, which will be subject to peer evaluation.

The various components of the final grade will count as follows:
- Research paper: 40%
- Mid-term essay examination: 30%
- Two 3-page book reports: 10%
- Active participation/presentation of research: 20%

There is no final examination.

- More detailed advice on the presentation of these assignments will be provided in class, and at my website at www.clas.ufl.edu/users/ggiles
- Please note that attendance at every class and discussion session is mandatory. Non-attendance will lower your final grade. If you are unable to attend on medical grounds, you must provide documentation.
- A make-up examination is only ever granted by prior agreement with me before the exam takes place.
- Cell-phone policy: If I hear a cell phone ringing during class, I will immediately suspend my lecture and give a pop quiz on the readings for that week to the entire class, the grade for which will be figured into everyone’s final grade! You can imagine how unpopular this will make you with the rest of the students in this class, many of whom will do badly in such an unannounced test. So please respect your peers by using that silent button, in order to avoid this drastic solution. Make sure that your cell phone is turned off before entering the classroom!
- In writing papers, be certain to give proper credit whenever you use words, phrases, ideas, arguments, and conclusions drawn from someone else’s work. Failure to give credit by quoting and/or footnoting is PLAGIARISM and is unacceptable. Please review the University’s honesty policy at http://www.dso.ufl.edu/sccr/honorcodes/honorcode.php
- Please do not hesitate to contact me during the semester if you have any individual concerns or issues that need to be discussed. Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office (http://www.dso.ufl.edu/drp/). The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the instructor when requesting accommodation.

Course schedule

August
25  Introduction, course assignments
    Background to the war

September
1   Overview of the outbreak of war
    Using the resources of the UF Library
8   July 1914—the role of Serbia, Austria-Hungary and Germany

Williamson & Van Wyk 1-4
July 1914—the role of Russia, Italy, France and Great Britain
The Fischer controversy
Williamson & Van Wyk 5-8

Research tasks

The War as now assessed
Strachan 1-5

**October**

The latest interpretations
Strachan 6-10
Strachan book review due
LAST DAY TO CHOOSE RESEARCH PAPER TOPIC

The glorification of trench warfare
Propaganda and posters
Jünger (whole book)
Jünger book review due

**MIDTERM EXAM**
Growth and role of the Prussian/German army

Thesis exposition and peer review
ABSTRACT OF RESEARCH PAPER WITH BIBLIOGRAPHY DUE

**November**

Thesis exposition and peer review

**December**

Intellectuals and the war
War Poets
Witkop (whole book)

Concluding discussion
RESEARCH PAPERS DUE

There will be no final exam