

HISTORY 334  
WORLD WAR I



T-Th 2:30-3:45

Prof. Nathan Wood

[ndwood@ku.edu](mailto:ndwood@ku.edu)

Zoom Office Hours: ? Th 3:50-5:00, and by appointment (Zoom link here)

Graduate Teaching Assistant:

Titus Firmin

[tfirmin@ku.edu](mailto:tfirmin@ku.edu)

Zoom Office Hours:

?

World War I is one of the most important events in human history. It destroyed four empires, introduced industrial warfare, and caused enormous instability, suffering, and loss for millions of people. Many of the horrors that we associate with the Second World War, including genocide, ethnic cleansing, and targeting of civilians already occurred in the First World War. It directly precipitated the Bolshevik Revolution, gave unprecedented power to the principle of national self-determination, and set off the end of the colonial system across the globe. In short, the First World War ushered in the modern geopolitical order.

How did people experience this conflict? In this course, using primarily a cultural and social history approach, we will examine the military, social, and political causes of the war; the fighting on the Western, Eastern, and Southern fronts; life on the battle lines and on the home front; poetry, art, and propaganda; and the technological developments that helped shape the war. We will also consider the war's legacy.

Besides gaining a greater understanding of the war itself, our goal is to help you:

- Learn how to think historically, by understanding:
  - The role of contingency in history
  - How things have changed over time
  - How to position documents within a larger story
- Improve your ability to **analyze, discuss, and write persuasively about primary sources.**

### **Books** (available at KU Bookstore) **and other class materials**

*Required:* Marilyn Shevin-Coetzee and Frans Coetzee, *World War I: A History in Documents*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed.

*Recommended:* G. J. Meyer, *A World Undone: The Story of the Great War, 1914 to 1918*

Packback Questions: \$25 (fee waivers available. Refer to [www.packback.co/product/pricing](http://www.packback.co/product/pricing) for more information.)

Blackboard has required readings, the gradebook, the syllabus, and other vital course information.

### **Grades**

45% -- papers

25% -- final exam

30% -- participation (5% attendance, 25% Packback questions)

### **What to expect**

**Class:** This course is entirely online, but it is synchronous. This means that we expect you to attend on Zoom twice a week at our scheduled class time. Each Tuesday, the professor or a guest lecturer will speak on the theme for the week. This lecture will be interactive at times, encouraging you to react to images or questions. It will be recorded for those who must miss class. Thursdays are for discussion and small-group work as we synthesize the readings and the lecture to gain a deeper understanding of the topic. We will divide you into groups and assign roles for Thursday discussion sessions. You will be in the same small group for the entire semester.

We take **attendance**. You may miss three classes/discussions without consequence. While Titus and I do not need to know the reason for your absence, we would still appreciate the gesture of your letting us know. Please send an email to both of us regarding an absence. Missing discussion sessions is particularly rude to your classmates and we will therefore be less inclined to be lenient about absences during the second class period of the week. Unexcused absences beyond the allotted three will diminish your attendance grade.

**Packback Participation:** Participation is a requirement for this course, and the Packback Questions platform will be used for online discussion about class topics. Packback Questions is an online community where you can ask open-ended questions about the primary source documents assigned for the course, as well as topics covered in lecture. The Packback system coaches you on asking good questions that will facilitate your Thursday discussions over Zoom and help you to write better papers. Your participation on Packback will count toward 25% of your overall course grade.

There will be a Weekly Thursday at 12:00PM CST deadline for Packback submissions. In order to receive your points per week, you should submit the following per each deadline period:

- 1 open-ended Question per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50, each worth 33.33% of each assignment grade
- 2 Responses per week with a minimum Curiosity Score of 50, worth 66.67% of each assignment grade
- Half credit will be provided for questions and responses that do not meet the minimum curiosity score.

Please see Blackboard and the end of the syllabus for more information on using Packback, including how to register or address questions.

**Papers:** Your papers (850-1000 words) will be based mostly on the primary documents you read, but we expect you to integrate material from the lectures, films, and readings as well. One paper will be due from each of the three clusters. If you would like to write more than three, we will take your three highest grades. Submit the paper by 11:59 p.m. Sunday night following the week about which you are writing. So, for instance, if you would like to write about the first year of the war on the Western Front, that paper would be due by 11:59 p.m., February 21. Papers should have footnotes per the Chicago Manual of Style. Please submit them through SafeAssign on our Blackboard site and have the word count noted at the bottom. Late papers will be penalized one full letter grade and will not be accepted more than 24 hours after the deadline.

Take a look at the information at the back of the syllabus on how to read historical documents, how to write a good history paper, and to see the grading rubrics. These will all help you produce a better paper. If you are not getting good grades because of your writing, go to the university's Writing Center. You can reach the folks there at [writing@ku.edu](mailto:writing@ku.edu). The web page is here: <http://www.writing.ku.edu>. And don't hesitate to come to one of us to ask for help.

**Final:** The final exam will be based on the review session on Zoom on Thursday, May 6. I will post a study guide shortly after the review session and the exam questions will come from the guide. The open-book exam will go live at midnight Monday, May 10. You will have four hours to complete the exam, once you open it on Bb. It will be due at the end of our scheduled final exam slot, **Friday, May 14 at 4pm.**

**Behavior:** Please conduct yourself in a way that helps create a suitable learning environment. We strongly prefer that you use your camera in Zoom sessions, especially in discussion sessions on Thursdays. Please mute yourself when not speaking. Feel free to disagree with your fellow students and professor, but don't be disagreeable in doing so. Be polite and considerate toward your instructors and fellow students.

*If you have any questions at any point in the semester, please ask.*

### **Academic Misconduct**

This is the extremely unhappy portion of the syllabus. Academic misconduct includes disruptive behavior, plagiarism, cheating, behavioral problems, and forgery of, among other things, another student's work or a professor's signature (for a full definition, see <https://documents.ku.edu/policies/governance/USRR.htm#art2sect6>). Students who run afoul of KU's rules in any of these areas will be subject to university policies and procedures, which could result in failure on the assignment, failure in the course, and even immediate dismissal from the course. We will refer the case to the department and Strong Hall, where the fact that you cheated can go into your

permanent record.

Students who have problems with academic misconduct often cite stress, putting off projects, illness or being jammed up with multiple assignments due in the same week. Plan your semester carefully from the beginning and arrange your work schedule so you can avoid such situations. Note that you can choose which paper from each cluster to write, and plan accordingly. The Office of Student Success offers free workshops on how to manage your time. If you cannot submit your assignments on time, it is your responsibility to notify me ASAP. We can work out alternative due dates if you have a legitimate reason for being late.

Plagiarism is theft, and the academic community treats it accordingly. Incidents of plagiarism are subject to severe sanctions and you should avoid jeopardizing your future. Plagiarism is using another person's words or ideas without giving them credit. You should submit only your own original work. A complete copy of the university policy on plagiarism, including definitions and methods of avoidance, is available at: [www.writing.ku.edu/instructors/docs/ku\\_handbook.html](http://www.writing.ku.edu/instructors/docs/ku_handbook.html) and <http://www.writing.ku.edu/students/docs/integrity.shtml>

We use a digital plagiarism detection program to check your essays. If you have more questions, the Writing Center (<http://www.writing.ku.edu>) offers suggestions on how to avoid plagiarism. The History Department's policy and procedures regarding academic misconduct are available at: <http://www.history.ku.edu/undergraduate/>.

### **Students with Disabilities**

Students who are eligible should seek the help of Student Access Services. They will send me an email telling me what assistance you need. I will comply with whatever Student Services recommends, but I must see and sign that email first. For information about their resources, see <http://disability.ku.edu>.

### **SCHEDULE (subject to small alterations)**

#### **WEEK 1: The World in 1913**

2/2: **Introduction to the course:** <https://kansas.zoom.us/j/91905277120> Passcode: 469465  
(Use this link and passcode for every Tuesday lecture.)

2/4: Discussion of *The War to End All Wars* <https://kansas.zoom.us/j/97340798667>  
Passcode: 571903 (Use this link and passcode for every Thursday discussion.)  
Readings: Blackboard (Bb): Introduction, *The War to End All Wars*

#### **WEEK 2: Descent into War**

2/9: **Lecture:** "All for you, Franz?"  
Optional Readings: Meyer, 1-101 (skim, as necessary)

2/11: Discussion  
Readings: Coetzee, pp. vi.-34

2/14: **Paper 1A Due at 11:59pm on Blackboard (You may choose between essay 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D)**

#### **WEEK 3: Western Front**

2/16: **Lecture:** "The Western Front" Optional Readings: Meyer, 105-165; 184-234

2/18: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 34-49 (top); 52-57

2/21: **Paper 1B Due at 11:59pm on Blackboard**

**WEEK 4: Eastern Front**

2/23: **Lecture:** "The Eastern Front: Epicenter of Disaster"

Optional Readings: Meyer, 165-183; 234-259; 334-337; 344-348

2/25: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 58-59; 68-75; 102 -104; Bb: Jan Stomka, "The World in Arms," From Serfdom to Self-Governance, pp. 203-231

2/28: **Paper 1C due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 5: Total War, pt. I: Technologies of War**

3/2: **Lecture:** "Trench Warfare and Technology" Opt. readings: Meyer, 260-290; 305-318; 338-357

3/4: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 52-76; Primary docs on Blackboard (Bb)

3/7: **Paper 1D due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**PLEASE NOTE: You must have written your first essay by this point**

**WEEK 6: Total War, pt. II: Advertising & Propaganda**

3/9: Lecture: "Propaganda" Optional readings: Meyer, 501-505

3/11: Readings: Coetzee, pp. 97-117

3/14: **Paper 2A due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 7: Total War, pt. III: The War Comes Home: Broken Minds, Broken Bodies**

3/16: **Lecture:** "Shell Shock and Plastic Surgery" and "Wounded"

Optional Readings: Meyer, 361-429; 435-449

3/18: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 129-135; Bb: Vera Brittain memoir excerpt and other documents

3/21: **Paper 2B due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 9: Home Front**

3/23: **Lecture:** "The Home Front" Optional Readings: Meyer, 429-434; 450-490; 666-670

3/25: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, pp. 49-51; 77-83; 119-128; 138-143

3/28: **Paper 2C due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 10: Technology, Pt. II (Airplanes and submarines)**

3/30: **Watch documentary on Blackboard** Optional Readings: Meyer, 288-289; 410-413; 481-484

4/1: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee 75-76; Bb: Aviation readings

4/4: **Paper 2D due at 11:59pm on Bb** **You should have written your second paper by this point.**

**WEEK 11: Collapse in the East; Russian Revolution**

4/6: **Lecture:** "The Russian Revolution" Optional Readings: Meyer, 506-516; 549-552; 591-604

4/8: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 135-137; Bb: Russian Revolution Documents + Vox Populi

4/11: **PAPER 3A due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 12: Art and War**

4/13: **Lecture:** “Poetry and the First World War”; “Art and the Great War”

Optional Readings: Meyer, 424-428; 626-665; 671-684

4/15: Discussion - Readings: poems and art on Bb

4/18: **Paper 3B due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 13: Influenza 1918**

4/20: **Watch Documentary:** [American Experience: Influenza 1918](#)

4/22: Discussion - Readings: Bb: Spanish Influenza Documents

4/25: **Paper 3C due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**WEEK 14: The War Ends: Hunger and Hatred**

4/27: **Lecture:** “Hunger and Hatred” Optional readings: Meyer 622-625; 685-704

4/29: Discussion - Readings: Coetzee, 144-165; Bb: Jan Slomka, “Deliverance”

5/2: **Paper 3D due at 11:59pm on Bb**

**PLEASE NOTE: Your third and final essay must be completed by this date.**

**WEEK 15: WWI and the Creation of the Modern World**

5/4: **Lecture:** “WWI and the Creation of the Modern World”

Readings: Meyer, 705-715

5/6: REVIEW SESSION FOR FINAL EXAM

**FINAL EXAM DUE **Friday, May 14, 10am****

©Nathaniel D. Wood, 2021, with material from Jennifer Weber. Except for History 334 (S2021), lectures, notes, and Powerpoints may not be copied or used without express written permission.

**How to Register on Packback:**

An email invitation will be sent to you from [help@packback.co](mailto:help@packback.co) prompting you to finish registration. If you don't receive an email (be sure to check your spam), you may register by following the instructions below:

1. Create an account by navigating to <https://questions.packback.co> and clicking “Sign up for an Account”  
Note: If you already have an account on Packback you can log in with your credentials.
2. Then enter our class community's lookup key into the “Looking to join a community you don't see here?” section in Packback at the bottom of the homepage.  
Community Lookup Key: **bd59f0c0-0a06-4b57-aba8-14b59820d074**
3. Follow the instructions on your screen to finish your registration.

**How to Get Help from the Packback Team:**

If you have any questions or concerns about Packback throughout the semester, please read their FAQ at [help.packback.co](http://help.packback.co). If you need more help, contact their customer support team directly at [help@packback.co](mailto:help@packback.co).

For a brief introduction to Packback Questions and why we are using it in class, watch this video:  
[vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions](https://vimeo.com/packback/Welcome-to-Packback-Questions)

## **Reading Primary Documents Like a Pro**

### **Sources 101**

- What kind of document is this?
- Who created it? What do you know or what have you found out about that person? Is this a reliable source – someone you can believe?
- What biases did the author or artist have, either that you know about through outside reading or by what is suggested in the document? How do those opinions shape what you are looking at?
- When was this written or created? What else was happening around that time? How might that have influenced what you see in the document?
- What was the purpose of this document? Was it aimed at a public or private audience?
- What point or points is the writer or artist making?
- Was the document intended to persuade others? How? Do you find it convincing? Can you find evidence that people at the time thought it was persuasive?
- If the document was not something designed to sway others, do you think it paints an accurate picture of a particular event?

### **Using multiple documents**

- How are the documents alike? How do the creators agree?
- How are the documents different? In what ways do the creators disagree?
- If you're reading several documents, do you see any patterns developing – ways in which the creators agree or disagree? What does that suggest to you?
- At what point can you feel comfortable making generalizations based on a set of documents? Are two documents enough? Three? A dozen? More?

## Team Reading: Overview of Roles

<p><b>Discussion Director:</b> Your role is to identify the important aspects of your assigned reading, and develop questions your team will want to discuss. Focus on major themes or “big ideas” in the text and your reaction to those ideas. What interests you the most will most likely interest those in your team. You are also responsible for facilitating your team’s discussion.</p>	<p><b>Sample Questions:</b>          What did the reading make you think about? What do you think the reading was about? What <i>one</i> question would you ask the author if you got the chance? Why?          What are the most important ideas in this reading?</p>
<p><b>Illuminator:</b> Your role is to find important passages that the team should hear read aloud. These passages should be memorable, interesting, puzzling, funny, or <i>important</i>. Your notes should include the quotations but also why you chose them. You will read these passages aloud as part of your team’s discussion.</p>	<p><b>Sample Questions:</b>          What is this passage saying? Why is it important?          What other passages come to mind as you read it?</p>
<p><b>Connector:</b> Your role is to connect what you are reading with other topics in the class, what you are studying in other classes, or with the world outside of school. You can connect the reading to events in your own life, other classes you’ve taken, news events, political events, or popular trends. You can also connect the reading to other things you have read. The connections should be meaningful to you</p>	<p><b>Sample Questions:</b>          What connections can you make to your own life? What other books or articles might you compare this to?          How does this essay relate to other topics in the class?</p>
<p><b>Word Watcher:</b> Your role is to watch out for words worth knowing while you are reading. These words might be interesting, new, important, or used in unusual ways. It is important to indicate the specific location of the words so that your team can discuss the words in context. You may need to look up these words in a dictionary to include the definition in your notes.</p>	<p><b>Sample Questions:</b>          Which words are used frequently? Which words are used in unusual ways?          What words seem to have special meaning to the author?          What new words do you find in this section?          What does this word mean?</p>
<p><b>Summarizer:</b> Your role is to prepare a brief summary of the day’s reading. Use the questions to the right to help you decide what to include. If it helps you to organize the information, consider making a numbered list or an outline.</p>	<p><b>Sample Questions:</b>          What are the most important ideas or events in this reading?          What makes them so important?          What effect do they have on the reader?          What might be a good essay topic for this</p>



## Writing for a History Course

1. In any essay, *you must have an argument*. State this argument in the first paragraph, preferably at the end of the first paragraph. This will be the thesis that you spend the rest of the essay explaining and proving.
2. Use topic sentences. That's the first sentence in every paragraph. Every sentence in the paragraph should be related to what you said in your topic sentence. If a sentence is about another topic, delete it from this paragraph.
3. Give examples. We also call this "evidence." This can be a quotation or your paraphrasing a quotation, or illustrating your point with a brief story. This shows your reader that you did not pull your opinion out of thin air. Think like a lawyer: you can't win a case if you can't prove it with witness's testimony, DNA testing, and/or other physical evidence. Prove it, prove it, prove it.
4. Think in a linear manner. For some of you this is natural. A leads to B. B leads to C. C leads to D. And so on. Other people like to wander in circles until they settle on a point, kind of like a dog walking around its bed before lying down. If you're this kind of thinker, do the circling in the privacy of your own head, but not on the page. Historians are more inclined to be linear thinkers, or at least writers, and history professors give the best grades to people whose transitions from here to there make sense.
5. Be clear. Remember: the object of a paper is to get the good ideas from your brain to the reader's brain intact. If your writing is not clear, it's like static on the radio. We can't hear you. Clear writing is evidence of clear thinking, though, so be sure to *leave yourself enough time to think* so that you're clear about your ideas before you ever start writing them down.
6. Outline. Even with short papers, this helps clarify your ideas and allows you to be organized. Look at that outline with a cold eye: Do what you have to say and the way you are organizing your argument make sense?
7. Don't try to sound smart. Seriously. This is how people get in trouble and sound, um, not so smart. Don't use words if you do not know *exactly* what they mean. Look them up if you aren't sure. Simple words and simple sentences are easier to read and to understand. You'll sound smart if you have good ideas and communicate them effectively.
8. Spell check, grammar check, and then read your paper all the way through. Rewrite where you're not clear and reorganize if you have to. Repeat.
9. Footnote. This is not optional. Give the sources of quotes, ideas, numbers – anything that is not generally known information. Historians use the *Chicago Manual of Style* (or Kate Turabian) as the model for how to write footnotes and bibliographies. You can find the basics here: [http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools\\_citationguide.html](http://www.chicagomanualofstyle.org/tools_citationguide.html)  
You can access a full version through the KU library. Go to the library homepage > databases > C > Chicago Manual of Style.

## Grading Guidelines

### Essays and Exams

An **A** or **A-** exam or essay is one that is good enough to be read aloud in a class. It is clearly written and well organized. It demonstrates that the writer has conducted a close and critical reading of texts, grappled with the issues raised in the course, synthesized the readings, discussions, and lectures, and formulated a perceptive, compelling, independent argument. The argument shows intellectual originality and creativity, is sensitive to historical context, and is supported by a well-chosen variety of specific examples. The paper that falls into this category is built on a critical reading of primary material and engages with secondary sources. An A or A- exam draws on primary and secondary readings along with lecture material.

A **B+** or **B** exam or essay demonstrates many aspects of A-level work but falls short of it in either the organization and clarity of its writing, the formulation and presentation of its argument, or the quality of research. Some papers or exams in this category are solid works containing flashes of insight into many of the issues raised in the course. Others give evidence of independent thought, but the argument is not presented clearly or convincingly.

A **B-** exam or essay demonstrates a command of course or research material and understanding of historical context but provides a less than thorough defense of the writer's independent argument because of weaknesses in writing, argument, organization, or use of evidence.

A **C+**, **C**, or **C-** exam or essay offers little more than a mere a summary of ideas and information covered in the course, is insensitive to historical context, does not respond to the assignment adequately, suffers from frequent factual errors, unclear writing, poor organization, or inadequate primary research, or presents some combination of these problems. An exam that does not have a clear argument, or thesis statement, cannot earn more than a C+, no matter how well written.

*Whereas the grading standards for written work between **A** and **C-** are concerned with the presentation of argument and evidence, a paper or exam that belongs to the **D** or **F** categories demonstrates inadequate command of course material or writing problems so profound that they severely affect the student's ability to convey his ideas.*

A **D** exam or essay demonstrates serious deficiencies or severe flaws in the student's command of course material.

An **F** exam or essay demonstrates no competence in the course or research materials. It indicates a student's neglect or lack of effort in the course.

## Essay Rubric

Criteria	A	B	C	D	F
<b>Quality of thesis and argumentation</b>  <b>20</b>	Clearly states a creative, arguable thesis. Each paragraph clearly and logically supports the argument.	Has an arguable and creative claim, though it may not be clear. Most paragraphs support the thesis and are clearly written, but may overlook important elements to make a persuasive case.	No argument. 1 or 2 weak claims. Some irrelevant or confusing statements. Does not contain enough facts, statistics, or quotations to make a convincing case.	No argument. A number of irrelevant or confusing statements. Uses a few facts, statistics or quotations, but may not use them appropriately or may not understand them.	No argument. Many irrelevant or confusing statements. Few or no facts, statistics or quotations, or those that appear are used inappropriately or misunderstood.
<b>Use of facts and evidence</b>  <b>20</b>	Each paragraph includes relevant facts, statistics, quotations or paraphrasing. Quotations and citations are elegantly integrated. Strong historical context.	1 or 2 paragraphs are missing facts, statistics, quotations or paraphrasing that could help support the argument. Good integration of quotations/evidence. Good historical context.	Several paragraphs are missing facts, statistics, quotations or paraphrasing that could help support the argument. Integration of quotations/evidence is somewhat awkward. Some sense of historical context.	Few paragraphs contain facts, statistics, quotations or paraphrasing that could help support the argument. Poor integration of quotations/evidence. Little sense of historical context.	Paper contains so few facts, statistics, quotations or paraphrasing that the argument is not plausible. No sense of historical context.
<b>Use of primary sources</b>  <b>15</b>	Each paragraph other than intro and conclusion has at least 1 primary source supporting the claim; when appropriate, each draws on several sources.	Most paragraphs in the body of the essay have at least 1 primary source. Many contain more than 1 when appropriate.	Many paragraphs in the body of the essay have at least 1 primary source. A few contain more than 1 source.	A few paragraphs in the body of the essay cite at least 1 primary source.	Few or no paragraphs in the body of the essay cite primary sources.
<b>Accuracy</b> <b>5</b>	All supporting facts and quotations appear accurately.	Almost all supporting facts and quotations appear accurately.	Most supporting facts and quotations appear accurately.	Many supporting facts and quotations are inaccurate.	Most supporting facts and quotations are inaccurate.

<b>Organization 15</b>	Compelling introduction, informative middle and strong conclusion.	Clear introduction, middle and end, but could be more compelling.	Organized but sometimes gets off topic.	Writing disorganized; reader has to work to understand what the writer is saying.	Writing is very disorganized; reader has a hard time understanding the ideas the writer is trying to say.
<b>Grammar, spelling, punctuation, usage 10</b>	No errors.	1 or 2 errors.	A few errors that interrupt flow.	Writer makes enough errors to distract the reader.	Writer makes so many errors that the work is difficult to read.
<b>Fluency 10</b>	Every paragraph has sentences that vary in length. Sentences always make the point in as few words as possible. Writer uses vivid language with accurate wording.	Almost all paragraphs have sentences that vary in length. Vivid language, but occasionally words are used inaccurately or seem overdone. Mostly concise.	Some sentences vary in length. Writer uses words that communicate clearly, but writing lacks variety, punch or flair. Some use of jargon or clichés. Often wordy.	A few sentences vary in length. Limited vocabulary that does not communicate strongly or accurately. Uses jargon or clichés. Very wordy and/or sometimes goes on tangents.	Sentences do not vary in length. Writer frequently uses words incorrectly, overuses jargon or clichés. Extremely wordy and/or often goes on tangents.
<b>Documentation and formatting 5</b>	Flawless documentation and formatting in quotations, citations, and pagination.	Fewer than 3 errors in formatting quotations, citations, or pagination.	Several errors in formatting, quotations, citations, or pagination.	Many errors in formatting, quotations, citations, or pagination.	Excessive errors in formatting, quotations, citations, or pagination.