

HIST 2380

The Twentieth-Century World

Syllabus

Course description

The *Undergraduate Calendar* of The University of Manitoba describes HIST 2380 as follows:

The problems of the modern world, including the global impact of Western civilization, the clash of ideologies, war and peace, and modernization. Students may not hold credit for both HIST 2380 (or 011.238) and HIST 2381 (or 011.238).

It is a course in contemporary history that blends into our own times. It covers the late nineteenth-century to the present and examines both the industrially developed and underdeveloped countries. It deals with diplomacy and international affairs but also looks at the internal histories of different societies around the globe.

There are no prerequisites for this course than an interest in the subject and skills in reading and writing. It can be completed successfully by anyone meeting the requirements outlined in this manual.

If you are taking history at The University of Manitoba for the first time, you may choose from any 100-level or 200-level course. You may begin at either level. This course counts for credit toward either a major or a minor in History.

See the *Undergraduate Calendar* or consult the History Department for the regulations governing majors and minors.

Contacting your instructor

For information on contacting your instructor as well as other important information from your instructor see the Instructor Letter link in your course website.

Course goals

There are two specifically academic goals:

- To facilitate your understanding of those recent historical events that have influenced the course of human affairs.
- To introduce you to the academic discipline of history as it relates facts and ideas in the interpretation of specific periods in twentieth-century affairs.

There are two general education goals:

- To encourage you to read widely in both academic and other sources having an historical orientation, always critically questioning what you are reading.
- To strengthen your interpretative and writing abilities through the preparation of specific essay assignments.

Course overview

This course manual serves as a kind of map for finding your way through the course. It explains some of the things to look for in the readings and tells you how to complete the written assignments successfully. It also discusses the special characteristics of history as a discipline and how these affect the way we study it. You will find that the characteristics of the subject matter and the type of assignments are closely linked.

In addition, the course manual tells you how to gain some perspective on recent history itself. Yet how much do we really know about the recent past? How well informed are we? Only an unusual person can give the dates of recent events correctly on the first try. But this would be only a start, because the real issue is not only what the facts are but what they mean. This is not to suggest that recent world history is an unusually formidable subject, but only that we need to sort it out before we can really claim

to know anything, otherwise events will remain jumbled in our minds. Once we have the facts straight, however, then we can think about their meaning. The purpose of this manual is to prepare you for the study of information and ideas that every educated person ought to know, yet cannot be taken for granted as common knowledge.

Course materials

Required

The following required materials are available for purchase from the [University of Manitoba Bookstore](#). Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your [Distance and Online Education Student Handbook](#) for instructions on how to order your materials.

Keylor, W. R. & Jerry Bannister. *The Twentieth-Century World: An International History*. 2nd Can. ed. Don Mills: Oxford University Press, 2011.

Stavrianos, L. S. *Global Rift: The Third World Comes of Age*. New York: William Morrow and Company, 1981.

Optional

The following optional materials are available for purchase from the University of Manitoba Book Store. Please order your materials immediately, if you have not already done so. See your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* for instructions on how to order your materials.

This book is recommended as a guide to effective writing, as many of the assignments in the course consist of essay-type questions.

Strunk, William Jr., and E. B. White. *The Elements of Style*. 4th ed. New York: Longman, 2000.

If you do not have access to a good atlas, you may wish to purchase the following inexpensive paperback.

Fullard, Harold. ed. *The Prentice-Hall Pocket Atlas of the World*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall, 1983.

Each unit of the course includes a supplementary reading section, an optional bibliography of library readings for extra study, additional materials you might want to consult. Most of the books are available at The University of Manitoba Library

http://www.umanitoba.ca/libraries/units/distance_education/index.html .

Evaluation and grading

Distribution of marks

The assignments are weighted on an ascending scale so that more credit is given after you have gained some experience in writing history. Assignment 4 is weighted lightly because it asks you to undertake a very short reading assignment; this allows for a holiday at the midpoint of the course, as is the usual pattern with courses given on campus. Within each assignment, the essay counts for half the marks, and the identifications count for half.

Assignment	Percentage
1	7
2	9
3	12
4	8
5	12
6	12
Total term work	60%
Final examination	40%
Total	100%

Grading scale

A numerical as well as a letter grade will be given each assignment, so you may gauge your relative performance within as well as between the ranges represented by A, B, C, etc.

Letter grade	Percentage range	
A+	85 - 100	Exceptional
A	80 - 84	Excellent
B+	75 - 79	Very good
B	70 - 74	Good
C+	65 - 69	Satisfactory
C	60 - 64	Adequate
D	50 - 59	Marginal
F	0 - 49	Failure

Please note: All final grades are subject to departmental review.

Assignment due dates

Unit/Topic	Reading assignment	Approximate pages of reading	Due dates	
			Sept.–Apr.	Jan.–July
1 The Global Impact of the West	Keylor & Bannister, prologue Stavrianos, note, chaps. 1, 13–17	160	Oct. 13	Jan. 20
2 World War I and a New International Order	Keylor & Bannister, chaps. 1–2 Stavrianos, chaps. 18–20	193	Nov. 13	Feb. 20
3 The Interwar Period: 1918–1939	Keylor & Bannister, chaps. 3–4 Stavrianos, chap. 21	183	Dec. 3	Mar. 20
4 World War II	Keylor & Bannister, chaps. 5–6	47	Jan. 13	Apr. 20
5 A Developed World Perspective on the Post-1945 Era	Keylor & Bannister, chaps. 7–13	199	Feb. 13	May 20
6 A Third World Perspective on the Post-1945 Era	Stavrianos, chaps. 22–24 Keylor & Bannister chaps: 14–20	226	Mar. 13	June 20

The final exam will be written at the University of Manitoba (UM), Fort Garry campus or at an approved off-campus location. **Students needing to write at an off-campus location must declare a location by the specified deadline date** (see off-campus declaration and policy under Student Resources on course homepage). **Students writing at the UM Fort Garry campus do not need to declare an exam location.**

The Registrar's Office is responsible for the [final exam schedule](#) which is available approximately one month after the start of the course.

Note: If you are unable to submit an assignment on time, contact your instructor well in advance of the due date, for we cannot guarantee that the instructor will accept late assignments.

Course requirements

There are three requirements for completing the course successfully: a reading program, a set of written assignments, and the final examination.

Reading program

The books by Keylor & Bannister and Stavrianos are to be read in conjunction, as each author attempts to accomplish something a bit different from the other. The texts of the course thus complement rather than duplicate each other, and both need to be mastered. The order of readings is indicated at the beginning of each unit, but in the meantime it might be useful to consider exactly how Keylor & Bannister and Stavrianos differ.

Keylor & Bannister

W. R. Keylor and Jerry Bannister provide the basic framework for the course: a narrative account that outlines the chronology of global history and keeps everything clear. It is important to have such a framework, because knowing the order of events obviously is the first step to explaining them, and it is essential for distinguishing cause and effect. But there are other features of *The Twentieth-Century World* that are worth noting as well.

Although Keylor & Bannister empathize with the plight of the less-developed countries of the world, they concentrate on the nations that have most affected the course of global history—the so-called “great powers,” for example, the United States or Russia. It is an unavoidable fact that some countries have more influence than others. All nations are not equal in this respect, and so the author distinguishes between the more powerful and the less powerful and shapes his narrative accordingly. The same is true of leaders as compared to the common people. Keylor & Bannister discuss the activities of the elite more than those of ordinary persons, because it is the leaders of government, business, and the military who most directly affect events on a global scale.

There is a great deal of history written about the everyday lives of ordinary people; it is a specialized field of study in its own right. Yet Keylor & Bannister's concern is with those who had the power to act not just locally but nationally or internationally, so the emphasis is well-adapted to the subject at hand.

In addition, Keylor and Bannister tend to highlight political, economic, and strategic considerations rather than the social, cultural, or intellectual sources of change. Once again, this is related to their goal of outlining the basic framework. Politics, economics, and military affairs provide ready access to the recent past. They provide clear signposts for following developments through time. Of course, such an emphasis has the effect of accentuating the role of power politics and of international competition. Although this tends to bring out the divisions and conflicts that exist in the world, it is possible to lose sight of the bonds of community and of unifying forces. Keylor & Bannister would argue, however, that conflict is more characteristic of global reality than cooperation, so that a book on world history must reflect this fact. The point is not whether the author is in some sense right or wrong, but only that you should be aware of his approach to our subject. All books have a point of view, whether they are candid about it or not, and we shall consider the question of objectivity in history later.

Stavrianos

Perhaps to an even greater extent than Keylor & Bannister, L. S. Stavrianos is concerned with conflict. This is because *Global Rift* is written from the perspective of the Third World—in other words, from the perspective of the less powerful countries whose opportunities so often were usurped by the industrially more developed nations. (A definition of the “Third World” is one of the subjects covered in our first unit.) Stavrianos gives less space than Keylor & Bannister to the great powers, and goes in greater detail into the history of the world outside Europe and North America. He argues that although most of the Third World attained independence after 1945, the legacy of the colonial past still persists. This is because the colonial powers deliberately structured their empires so as to make other countries

(colonies) serve their needs by supplying cheap raw materials and labor, and by serving as markets. Wealth thus flowed out of the Third World, and patterns of trade and dependency developed that were difficult to escape even after independence. The result was that economic under development remained endemic despite decolonization. This is the keynote of *Global Rift*.

Stavrianos adds another important dimension to our program of study—the social. Because he is writing about the impact of foreign rule on the Third World, he is drawn to a study of the consequences for society, including the impact on workers in cities and on the peasant population in the countryside. Stavrianos emphasizes the history of the common man and not just the elite. He thus conveys a sense of the class structure of society much more than Keylor & Bannister. Whereas Keylor & Bannister show how the interests of nations are often in conflict, Stavrianos goes on to look at how the interests of different groups or classes within a society also clash. His subject is the Third World, but the same point holds true for the industrialized nations as well.

Another feature of *Global Rift* is its identification of the Western powers and Japan as the principal external influences affecting the Third World. It was these countries that at one time or another made colonies of virtually all of Africa and Latin America, and parts of Asia, the Pacific, and the Middle East. Accordingly, Stavrianos argues that they were in the best position to dominate the Third World when it became independent. This, of course, raises some interesting questions about the role of the Soviet Union once it had emerged as the world's first communist country in 1917. As we shall see, some of the answers may be surprising, but Stavrianos is empirically accurate in directing our attention to Western and not just Russian imperialism as a major force in twentieth-century history. It is an important contribution of his book, one with policy implications for the present. What is the relative balance of Western versus Russian power in the Third World today?

Taken together, Keylor & Bannister and Stavrianos provide as complete an overview of twentieth-century world history as one is likely to find in the space of a thousand pages of reading. The authors do not cover everything that ever happened in the recent past, but they include a remarkable amount of material. If at the end of this course you know a fair percentage of what is in their books, you will know a great deal indeed.

Assignments

This course includes six assignments. Each assignment consists of three parts. Parts I and II need to be submitted by using the drop boxes supplied for each assignment part.

- Part I is a short essay of 1,000 words (about five pages typed with double spacing between the lines).
- Part II is a list of five identification questions that require you to write about 300 words on each, explaining why the person or event named is significant.
- Part III consists of 20 self-test questions in which you name the item (person, date, place) indicated (to be done online).

For the essay questions, you have a choice of one out of five alternatives, whereas all the identification and self-test questions should be completed. Refer to the texts while preparing the assignments.

The purpose of the graded assignments is to help you master the factual materials and to provide practice in the art of writing and interpretation. In the case of the self-test questions, do not submit your answers to the instructors, but check them yourself, using the key to the correct answers is contained in this course manual. The final exam will include all three types of exercises: essays, identifications, and short-answers.

While all the above exercises will add to your knowledge of recent history, the essay questions are particularly important. This is because they ask about large issues or require comparing developments in different parts of the world. In other words, they help you to see the general pattern of twentieth-century history. Remember that history is not just a list of names and dates. The issue is what the facts mean, so we need to see the relationships among different bits and pieces of information. If you see how an individual datum relates to the whole picture, then its meaning becomes clearer. The facts are the basic raw materials of history, and it is for this reason that your assignments include identification and self-testing sections. Yet the facts only take on their full meaning when we see how they fit

together. The purpose of the essay questions, therefore, is to cultivate a broad view of the subject of world history, so as to extract the fullest possible meaning from the course.

Your assignments will be graded by an instructor who will not only correct errors but also write comments on your work and offer suggestions for improvement. If you encounter problems, the instructor's comments will help identify the source of difficulty. You may correspond with the instructor about any aspect of the course or of your performance. Follow the instructions in the section on contacting your instructor in the *Distance and Online Student Handbook*. If you plan to be in Winnipeg and wish to meet your instructor in person, call or email for an appointment.

Depending on how much you write at work or in school, you may take some time to become comfortable with writing essays. Do not be discouraged if it takes a while to realize your potential. The purpose of taking a course is to learn something new, and for some students this may include mastering the essay form. If you work with the texts, practice, and take the comments of the instructor seriously, you should obtain a good result.

We shall go into the question of objectivity later, but it bears some mention in the present context. Do you have to agree with the authors of our texts, or with the interpretations the instructor may suggest when commenting on your essays? As we shall see, the test of objectivity is not whether we come to the same conclusion as our authors or teacher, but whether we can cite the facts relevant to the question asked and whether we can use logical analysis to make a case for our interpretation of what the facts mean. In other words, it is how you deploy facts and how you argue, not what you conclude, that constitutes the criteria of judgment in this course. This is not to suggest that history is totally relative, but only that in the study of human affairs—past or present—a case can be made for different views of the subject.

Final examination

The examination will be three hours in length. It will consist of essay questions, identification questions, and short-answer questions. It will thus reflect the type of assignments practised during the course, and it will also sample subject matter taken from the entire program of study. Section VII of our *Study Guide* contains suggestions for preparing for the examination, and also includes a copy of a sample exam. The format of your exam will be the same as the sample. Please note that textbooks or other aids are not allowed during the final examination.

A word of caution about the assignments and the final examination

Some students find that they do very well on the assignments, but they do not do nearly as well on the final examination. While your grades on the assignments will give you some idea of how well you are mastering the material, they may not indicate how well you will do on the examination, because the examination is written under very different circumstances. Because the assignments are open book, they do not require the amount of memorization that a closed-book examination requires nor are they limited to a specific time period. Some students have told us that, based on the high marks they received on the assignments, they were overconfident and underestimated the time and effort needed to prepare for the final examination.

Please keep all this in mind as you prepare for the examination. If your course has a sample exam or practice questions, use them to practice for the examination by setting a time limit and not having any books available. Pay careful attention to the description of the type of questions that will be on your final examination. Preparing for multiple choice questions involves a different type of studying than preparing for essay questions. Don't underestimate the stress involved in writing a time-limited examination.

Plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation

You should acquaint yourself with the University's policy on plagiarism, cheating, and examination impersonation as detailed in the General Academic Regulations and Policy section of the University of Manitoba *Undergraduate Calendar*. Note: These policies are also located in your *Distance and Online Education Student Handbook* or you may refer to Student Affairs at <http://www.umanitoba.ca/student>.

Distance and Online Education (DE) Student Resources

In your course website there are links for the following:

- Contact Distance and Online Education Staff
- Distance and Online Student Handbook
- Distance and Online Education Website

Acknowledgments

Content specialist: Thomas Vadney, Ph.D.
Department of History
Faculty of Arts
University of Manitoba

Editor: James B. Hartman
Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba
1997

Desktop publisher: Lorna Allard
Distance and Online Education
University of Manitoba

Copyright © 1992 Revised 1996. Revisions April 2002, July 2008

All rights reserved. No part of the material protected by this copyright may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying, recording, or otherwise without the prior written permission from the copyright owner.

University of Manitoba, Distance and Online Education