

**HIST 420/520
The Idea of Europe
CRN 36501/36502**

Spring Term 2017

**189 Prince Lucien Campbell Hall (PLC)
Tuesday and Thursday, 2:00 – 3:20 pm**

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Office Hours: Tuesday 3:45 – 5:00 and, by appointment only, Thursday after 4:00

COURSE DESCRIPTION

The Idea of Europe is a multi-disciplinary course that explores the meaning(s) of Europe past and present, and the conundrum that is European identity. Guest faculty from a variety of disciplines on campus (humanities, social sciences and music) make presentations and lead discussions on diverse cultural, historical, political and social topics pertaining to the European legacy. While the overall framework is historical, the course invites a creative investigation into different perspectives, texts, issues, and disciplinary assumptions--often incompatible or competing--that shape “Europe” as an object of study. While the course is taught in English, exploration of original materials in the European languages is encouraged. Students will be required to keep a journal and to complete a major term paper on some aspect of Europe. Details of both of these requirements are described below.

Faculty from various disciplines and areas of expertise will offer lectures and assign selected readings to explore aspects of Europe and its “productions” – cultural and otherwise -- over time. Students are not expected to demonstrate mastery of the different topics presented in these lectures and readings, and may reflect on the material from disciplinary perspectives that are more familiar to them. The lectures and readings are nonetheless designed to challenge students beyond their comfort zone of familiarity and knowledge, opening them up to a variety of perspectives or “ideas” of Europe.

This year’s course will emphasize three themes. One is interfaith encounter in the historical experience of Europe. Three faith traditions will be the focus of this theme: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. Related to this theme is the music of Johann Sebastian Bach and the historical tradition it represents, in particular the *St. John Passion*. The

interfaith theme was in fact inspired by an invitation of the Oregon Bach Festival to develop student-centered learning activities relating to the two Bach *Passions*, one of which, the *St. Matthew Passion*, will be performed at this summer's festival. Music and its broader cultural ramifications will also be the focus of a week devoted to nineteenth-century European opera. A third theme of the course will be reflection upon World War I and the social and cultural universe of Europe in which the war took place and that the war generated, in turn, as its aftermath. In addition to these main themes of the course, various topics will be addressed pertaining to the long-term geo-political and cultural legacy of Europe, and to some contemporary issues.

METHOD OF THE COURSE

- **Lectures and Readings:** Each week is organized around a set of topics, which are developed in lectures and readings. The **lectures** will be offered by a team of faculty from several different fields of study throughout the university. Normally each lecture will be accompanied by specialized readings related to the lecture topic. Students are required to attend all lectures, to do all the required readings, and to provide journal entries on each lecture as well as for the week's readings, as described below. The readings are indicated on the syllabus, along with their sources and locations. Readings on *Canvas* are located both with each session's assignment and in the "Files" section of the *Canvas* website.
- **Written Assignment: the Journal:** Students will keep a **weekly journal** of reflections on the material of each week's lectures and readings. The journal is a core requirement of the course and will count for about 60% of the course grade. The **minimum requirements for journal entries for each week** are the following:
 1. A summary, one or two paragraphs in length (about 200 words), of **each class session identified with a presenter or presenters** (sessions identified as "the class" do not require a summary; the two film-showing sessions of Week 8 also do not require a summary but do require a personal reflection on the film). The summary should indicate in the student's own words the content of the class; normally this means the content of the lecture. Even if a student has difficulty understanding the material or does not grasp all of its detail, this summary should at least reflect the student's best sense of that content. It should provide evidence of attendance at class and a conscientious effort to grasp key points. The summary may be either an overall synthesis of the main themes of the class, or a more detailed elaboration of a few points. **Three "absences" (that is, three class sessions not recorded in the journal) are allowed for the entire term, without grade penalty; beyond three, failure to provide the summary will lower the grade progressively for this item.**
 2. An **extensive reflection** (1-2 pages, or minimum 250 words) on the week's assigned reading. For certain weeks, specifications regarding the readings to include in the reflection and, in some instances, on a specific issue to be addressed, are indicated on *Canvas*. Where no such indication is provided, the reflection must address at least **one** of the **main** readings of the **week** assigned on the syllabus. This must be one of the more lengthy readings of the week, or an

elaboration of two or more of the shorter passages of text. The reflections should indicate some independent assimilation of the content of the reading, not a mere summary. Creative references to readings or class sessions from previous weeks are also welcome. In all instances the reflection on the readings must demonstrate careful attention to the text of the reading and will be evaluated on this basis. The reflection should also demonstrate an effort to relate the reading in some way to one of the lectures or discussion topics of the week. Students are encouraged to combine themes of the different readings assigned in the same week, where this is relevant and possible.

In addition to the above minimum requirements for journal entries, students are encouraged to add their own personal reflections about Europe or about any topic related to Europe as inspired by the readings or lectures of the week. Because the journal is the only means for assessing a student's regular engagement with the course material, these personal reflections should be done after completing items (1) and (2) above, both of which are necessary for making this assessment. For personal reflections, students are encouraged to write creatively, and in an ongoing way (that is, week-by-week, with flashback to preceding journal entries), about major topics of interest to them as these emerge in their encounter with the topics and the material of this course. In most instances these creative reflections, if done systematically, will enhance the journal grade.

As the moment of individualized assimilation and synthesis of course material, the journal should be kept on a weekly basis, ideally following each class session with its corresponding reading.

Journal entries may be done in handwritten form (legible writing please), or they may be typed and printed. In all instances only hard-copy (printed paper) versions of journals will be accepted – no electronic versions of journals in any form are acceptable.

Journals will be collected in class and evaluated at mid-term (**May 4**) and again at the end of the term (**June 8**). Journals at mid-term should include all material through the class session of April 25 (of Week 4). Journals at the end of the term should include all class sessions through June 1 and the readings assigned for Week 10. Journals submitted late will receive a progressive grade penalty for lateness. Journals submitted late for final evaluation may delay the student's receiving a grade for the course.

- **Written Assignment: Research Paper:** Each student will write, in addition, a major paper on a topic of choice related to any aspect of Europe, contemporary or historical, in any discipline or field. A written statement of the paper topic and list of sources to be used in the paper are due **Thursday, May 11**. This statement may be sent to Prof. Sheridan by email. The length of the paper is to be 8-12 pages (a paper of slightly greater length is acceptable), double-spaced, 12-point type, or the equivalent (about 2700 words). The paper is due on **Thursday, June 1** in printed, paper form.

Besides the length specified above, minimum requirements for the paper are as follows:

- At least 2 books other than books or material on the syllabus of weekly readings must be used as the core for the paper. These must be serious scholarly works, not popular accounts, and not textbooks. One book may be an original source for a period or topic, such as a book-length work of philosophy or theology, political or social or artistic theory, or a novel. The other book must be a scholarly study or a collection of scholarly essays.
- Note 1: Students in European Studies who intend to use the paper to satisfy the project requirement for the minor must use 3 books, or 2 books and, in addition, at least 2 scholarly articles or original document sources. Such students should inform Prof. Sheridan at the outset of the course of their wish to use the paper for this requirement.
- Note 2: Variations on the above requirement of 2 books will be considered, but these require (1) full explanation of the nature of the materials used for the paper, and justification for substitution of one or both books; and (2) advance approval by Prof. Sheridan before beginning work on the paper. Such variations may include substitution of articles in scholarly journals or the use of original documentary materials in place of one book, or a paper based largely on numerous primary source materials. Students considering such an approach to sources for their paper must provide references and relevant explanations on the paper topic statement due May 11. Only with Professor Sheridan's explicit and written approval of their statement and sources may students take this approach. Students considering a project of this kind should consult him early in the term.
- The 2 books must be identified, with complete publication details, on the list of sources submitted with statement of paper topic due on May 11. Publication details include at least the following: full name of author or editor, complete title and subtitle of each book, name of publisher and date of publication. If the book is a collection of separately authored articles, the names of authors and titles of each article that will be used should be specified.
- The statement of paper topic should indicate, to the extent possible, the precise focus of the paper and the manner in which the two books and other

sources will most likely contribute to the content paper. Statements and sources not meeting the minimum requirements of the paper as indicated above will be returned to the student for revision.

Sources for Course Paper

Engaging Europe has a bibliographical essay devoted to a variety of topical areas pertaining to the “Idea of Europe.” The essay can provide a useful guide to initiating a search for topics and materials. Since the publication of this essay, there have been a large number of new publications on similar or related topics. In addition, occasional bibliography relating to certain topics of weekly presentations will be provided on *Canvas*.

REQUIREMENTS AND GRADES

- 1) **Attendance** at all class sessions is mandatory. Journal entries will be used as evidence of such attendance and must make use of the material as presented in class sessions as well as in the readings for each session.
- 2) **Journal entries**, as described above, demonstrating assimilation of each week's lectures and associated readings. Journals will be collected for mid-term evaluation on Thursday, May 4 and for final (end-of-term) evaluation on Thursday, June 8.
Note: Continue your journal entries, on a separate sheet or in separate notebook, after submitting your journals for mid-term evaluation; do not wait for mid-term evaluations to be returned to you before continuing your entries.
- 3) **Course paper** of 8-12 pages in length (about 2700 words), written according to the above specifications. The statement of paper topic and list of sources you intend to use is due on Thursday, May 11. The paper is due Thursday, June 1.

In the determination of course grades, the journal will be weighted about 60% of the course grade, and the paper about 40%.

COURSE MATERIALS

The following books are available for purchase at the UO Bookstore, Textbook Department:

- *Engaging Europe: Rethinking a Changing Continent*, ed. Evelyn Gould and George J. Sheridan, Jr. (Rowman & Littlefield, 2005)
- *The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare* (Folger Shakespeare Library, Updated Edition), eds. Barbara A. Mowat and Paul Werstine (Simon & Schuster)

Assigned readings are posted on the *Canvas* website for the course. The *Canvas* site is the main channel of communication outside of class. Consult the site frequently (at least once a week) for announcements and further specifications pertaining to assignments and recommended readings

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SYLLABUS OF TOPICS AND ASSOCIATED READINGS

References:

- *Engaging Europe: Rethinking a Changing Continent*, ed. Evelyn Gould and George J. Sheridan, Jr. [abbreviated ***Engaging Europe***]
- *The Merchant of Venice by William Shakespeare* [abbreviated **Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice**]
- **Canvas**: Assigned readings other than the above, specifications for journal entries for certain topics; textbook references for optional background reading on certain topics; occasional short bibliography for select topics and themes

Week 1: Making Europe

April 4: Introduction to the Course

April 6: The Bible and the Greeks

George Sheridan and Prof. Evelyn Gould, Romance Languages (French)

- ***Engaging Europe***, Forward (pp. ix-xii), ch. 2 (pp. 27-39)
- Emmanuel Levinas, “The Bible and the Greeks” [**Canvas**]
- Europa and Noah [**Canvas**]

Week 2: Locating Europe

April 11: Relocating Europe

Prof. Alexander Murphy, Geography

- Michael Heffernan, *The Meaning of Europe: Geography and Geopolitics*, ch. 1 [**Canvas**]
- ***Engaging Europe***, ch. 4

April 13: Europe as Christendom: Isidore of Seville
George Sheridan

- *Engaging Europe*, ch. 2 (pp. 39-58)
- Varro on Agriculture (Table of Contents) [[Canvas](#)]
- Cicero on Varro [[Canvas](#)]
- Isidore Etymologies [[Canvas](#)]
- Denys Hay on Christendom [[Canvas](#)]

Week 3: Medieval Europe - Muslims, Christians, Jews

April 18: The Rise and Expansion of Islamdom in Multi-Regional and Multi-Ethnic Contexts

Prof. Rick Colby, Religious Studies

- Ernst on *Following Muhammad* [[Canvas](#)]
- Hodgson on “The Role of Islam in World History” [[Canvas](#)]

April 20: Jews and Muslims in Christian Iberia during the Later Middle Ages

Prof. Lisa Wolverton, History

- Nirenberg on *Communities of Violence* [[Canvas](#)]
- *Siete partidas*: The Legal Status of Jews and Muslims in Castile [[Canvas](#)]
- Harvey on *Islamic Spain* [[Canvas](#)]

Week 4: 16th -Century Europe- Christianity, Judaism, Islam

April 25: Between Faiths and Confessions in Christian-Dominated Europe

Prof. David Luebke, History

- Peace of Augsburg 1555 [[Canvas](#)]
- Regulating Jewish Life 1585 [[Canvas](#)]
- Religious Peace Swiss Village 1616 [[Canvas](#)]
- “The Complaint of the Poor Folk” 1530 (*image*) [[Canvas](#)]
- “Turkish Soldiers abduct Christians from Venice” 1577 (*image*) [[Canvas](#)]
- “Luther” (*image* linking the Reformer to the Turks) [[Canvas](#)]

April 27: Reading Bach
The Class

- *St. John Passion*, libretto [[Canvas](#)]

Week 5: Jews in Christian Europe, 15th – 17th Centuries

May 2: William Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice

Prof. Steven Shankman, English and UNESCO Chair

- **Shakespeare's Merchant of Venice**
- **Engaging Europe**, ch. 3

May 4: The St. John Passion

Prof. Marc Vanscheeuwijck, School of Music

- Melamed on Bach's St. John Passion [*Canvas*]

THURSDAY, MAY 4: JOURNAL DUE (MID-TERM REVIEW)

Week 6: The European Enlightenment, 18th Century

May 9: Idea of Rome, Idea of Europe

Prof. John Nicols, History

- **Engaging Europe**, ch. 5

May 11: Correcting the Grand Tour in Eighteenth-Century Europe

Prof. Nathalie Hester, Romance Languages and Director, European Studies

- Giuseppe Baretti, *An Account of the Manners and Customs of Italy* (1769) [*Canvas*]. Read prefatory material, chapter descriptions, chs. I (pp. 1-16) and V (pp. 56-77), and one additional chapter of your choosing.

THURSDAY, MAY 11: PAPER TOPIC STATEMENT AND SOURCES LIST DUE

Week 7: Operatic Europe, 19th Century

May 16: Richard Wagner

Prof. Marian Smith, School of Music

May 18: Remaking Carmen: Community, Politics and Representation on the European Stage

Prof. Evelyn Gould, Romance Languages (French)

- Evelyn Gould on *The Fate of Carmen* [[Canvas](#)]
- Synopsis of the opera *Carmen* [[Canvas](#)]

Week 8: Europeans Before 1914

May 23: “The White Ribbon” (Das weisse Band): Film of Michael Haneke (2009)

In-class film showing

May 25: “The White Ribbon” (Das weisse Band), Part II

In-class film showing

JOURNAL ENTRY FOR THIS WEEK (Required): Your personal reflection on, or reaction to, the story or theme of the film as a whole, or on any one or several of its characters, settings, or interactions. Summary of the film is neither required nor sufficient.

Week 9: Europe’s World Wars - Lessons and Legacy

May 30: Rearing Children in Pre-War Europe: Reflection on “The White Ribbon”

Prof. Kenneth Calhoon, German

- Alice Miller, *For Your Own Good* (selections) [[Canvas](#)]

June 1: Remembering the “Great War”

George Sheridan

- Woodrow Wilson Papers [[Canvas](#)]
- Paul Valery on Aftermath [[Canvas](#)]
- Count Coudenhove-Kalergi on Pan-Europa [[Canvas](#)]

THURSDAY, JUNE 1: RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Week 10: Europe Today

June 6: Europe’s “Hot Button” Issues: Immigration, Terrorism, Brexit

The Class

- Enoch Powell on “Rivers of Blood” [[Canvas](#)]
- *Murder in Amsterdam* (selections) [[Canvas](#)]
- Angela Merkel on Refugees [[Canvas](#)]
- The Euro Crisis [[Canvas](#)]
- Brexit Explained [[Canvas](#)]

June 8: The Idea of Europe – Reflecting on the Course

The Class

- *Engaging Europe*, chs. 1, 11

THURSDAY, JUNE 8: JOURNAL DUE (FINAL REVIEW)

Course Learning Objectives:

- Engage your mind and your heart in reflecting upon Europe: what it means, what it is, what it has been
- Demonstrate your engagement with what is conveyed in class and with the reading assigned for each class, through your weekly entries in the Journal
- Exhibit your independent assimilation of the themes of this course, in whatever manner suits you best (creative, logical, imaginative, empirical, etc.): the Journal
- Identify a specific topic pertaining to Europe that elicits your interest, and elaborate your knowledge and ideas on the topic: Research Paper