

HIST 420/520
The Idea of Europe
CRN 36382/36383

Spring Term 2019

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

Prof. George Sheridan
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Office Hours: Wednesday, 11:00 – 12:00 (in 359 McKenzie) and Thursday 3:45 - 4:30 (in PLC)¹

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 make presentations and lead discussions on diverse cultural, historical, political and social topics pertaining to Europe and 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 non-English European languages is encouraged. Students will be required to keep a journal and to complete a major term paper on some aspect of Europe.

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 the theme of encounter in the European experience. This means both encounter within Europe and encounter with cultures and parts of the world outside of Europe. Religious encounter, involving both exchange and conflict, will be give special attention, in particular situations and moments of encounter among Christians, Jews, and Muslims. This means that, in many of the topics and common readings, understanding the meaning and identity of Europe and Europeans over time implies relationships with others who are, in some sense, "different." Encounter is not limited to religion, however. For example, an important dimension of the course will address Europe's relations

¹ Location in PLC to be announced

with other parts of the world, such as Africa, and intra-European encounter between opposing sides, both European, in World War I.

METHOD OF THE COURSE

- **Class Presentations and Readings:** Each week is organized around a set of topics, which are developed in class presentations and readings. The **presentations** 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 topic of the presentation. Students are required to attend all classes, to do all the required readings, and to provide journal entries on each presentation 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 posted on **Canvas** are to be found in "Modules" for each week of the course.
- **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 presentation**. This includes presentations by the course instructor (George Sheridan). 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 must provide evidence of attendance at class and should demonstrate a conscientious effort to grasp key points. The summary may be either an overall synthesis of the main themes of a lecture or 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 300 words) on at least one of the more substantial (longer) assigned readings for each week, ideally on several readings of the week. At a minimum, the reflection should indicate thoughtful attention to the reading or readings. This is best done through a close discussion of the text of the reading, either as a whole or for a selected part of the text. The reflection should not be a mere summary of the reading, but should indicate some independent assimilation of the content. One useful way of doing this is to relate the reading to points presented in the class associated with the reading, although this is not required. Another way is to use the reflection on the reading as a means of suggesting its relationship to an aspect of Europe, European identity, idea of Europe or personal experience of Europe of special interest. Creative references to readings or class sessions from previous weeks are also welcome. The reading reflection will be evaluated for the care taken in assimilating the reading and the personal engagement with the subject of the chosen reading.

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 2**) and again at the end of the term (**June 6**). 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 May 30 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 9**. 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, May 30** 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 9. 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 9. 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 of the 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. Additional readings will be provided on **Canvas** for certain topics.

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 class presentations and associated readings. Journals will be collected for mid-term evaluation on Thursday, May 2 and for final (end-of-term) evaluation on Thursday, June 6. **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 9. The paper is due Thursday, May 30.

In the determination of course grade, 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)

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SYLLABUS OF TOPICS AND REQUIRED 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

Week 1: Making Europe

April 2: Introduction to the Course

April 4: Ideas of Europe from Antiquity
George Sheridan

- *Engaging Europe*, Forward (pp. ix-xii), ch. 2 (pp. 27-39)
- Europa and Noah [*Canvas*]

Week 2: Locating Europe

April 9: Relocating Europe

Prof. Alexander Murphy, Geography

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

April 11: Rome and Constantinople

Prof. Stephen Shoemaker, Religious Studies

- John Meyendorff, *Rome, Constantinople, Moscow: Historical and Theological Studies*, chapters 1 (“Rome and Constantinople”) and 2 (“Byzantium as Center of Theological Thought in the Christian East”) [*Canvas*]

Week 3:

April 16: From Romanitas to Christianitas: Isidore of Seville

George Sheridan

- *Engaging Europe*, ch. 2 (pp. 39-46), ch. 5 & poem (pp. 102-116)
- *Life of Varro* [*Canvas*]
- Varro on Agriculture (Table of Contents) [*Canvas*]
- Isidore Etymologies [*Canvas*]

April 18: 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: Europe ‘Between’ Christianity, Judaism, Islam

April 23: Europe’s Christendom and Its Others

George Sheridan

- *Engaging Europe*, ch. 2 (pp. 46-55)
- Denys Hay on Christendom [*Canvas*]
- On Christendom [*Canvas*]
- Carole Hillenbrand, “How the Muslims Saw the Franks: Ethnic and Religious Stereotypes,” in *The Crusades: Islamic Perspectives* [*Canvas*]
- Augustine of Hippo and Bernard of Clairvaux on the Jews, in Jeremy Cohen, *Living Letters of the Law: Ideas of the Jew in Medieval Christianity* [*Canvas*]

April 25: William Shakespeare's *Merchant of Venice*

Prof. Steven Shankman, English and UNESCO Chair

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

Week 5: Europeans in Motion

April 30: In Search of the Golden Scepter: France and West Africa in the Sixteenth Century

Prof. Brett Rushforth, History

- William Towrson, "Voyages, "1555-1556 [*Canvas*]
- "The Vallard Atlas: An Upside Down World [Youtube video on *Canvas*]

May 2: 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 2: JOURNAL DUE (MID-TERM REVIEW)

Week 6: Uniting Europe: Challenges Present and Past

May 7: How Brexit Has Strengthened the European Union

Prof. Craig Parsons, Political Science

- Craig Parsons, "A Brief History of the European Union" [*Canvas*]
- Michael Kimmage, "What Happened to the European Union?" *The New Republic*, January 8, 2018 [*Canvas*]

May 9: Ottoman Europe: Is Turkey in Europe?

George Sheridan

- Readings to be announced

THURSDAY, MAY 9: PAPER TOPIC STATEMENT AND SOURCES LIST DUE

Week 7: European Nationalisms

May 14: Nations and Nationalisms: Histories and Typologies

George Sheridan

May 16: Spanish Nationalism as Memory of a Medieval Past

Alejandro García-Sanjuán, History, University of Huelva, and
Visiting Scholar, Princeton University

- Alejandro García-Sanjuán, “Rejecting al-Andalus, Exalting the Reconquista: Historical Memory in Contemporary Spain,” *Journal of Medieval Iberian Studies*, 2018 [*Canvas*]

Week 8: Europeans in World War I

May 21: The Great War: A Sketch

George Sheridan

- Naming the War [*Canvas*]
- Paul Valéry, “The Crisis of the Mind” [*Canvas*]

May 23: World War One between Sleepwalkers and Witnesses

Massimo Lollini, Romance Languages and Italian

- Emilio Lussu, and Gregory Conti, *A Soldier on the Southern Front : The Classic Italian Memoir of World War I* (selections) [*Canvas*]

Week 9: Jews in Modern Europe – the Dreyfus Moment

May 28: Turning Around Dreyfus: Bernard-Lazare and Friends

Evlyn Gould, Romance Languages and French

- Reading to be announced

May 30: Christians and Jews: Reflections of Charles Péguy

George Sheridan

- “Péguy’s Portrait of Bernard-Lazare,” from *Notre Jeunesse* (Our Youth), and “A Brief Sketch of the Dreyfus Affair” in Annette Aronowicz, *Jews and Christians on Time and Eternity* [*Canvas*]

THURSDAY, MAY 30: RESEARCH PAPER DUE

Week 10: Encountering Europe

June 4: Europeanness

The Class

- *Engaging Europe*, ch.11
- Mircea Cărtărescu, “Europe Has the Shape of My Brain” [*Canvas*]

June 6: Europe in the Course

The Class

- *Engaging Europe*, ch. 1

THURSDAY, JUNE 6: 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