This course explores some major issues in European history in the twentieth century. It will be a lecture and discussion course, with weekly discussions of the readings (and two films). It’s intended for sophomores, juniors, and seniors in any major. Some familiarity with the basic history of the period will be helpful; I’ll provide background in my presentations each week.

The work will include a midterm and final exam, and a 12-15 page essay.

Unit 1: Thinking about Europe’s Twentieth Century
Charles Maier, “Consigning the Twentieth Century to History: Alternative Narratives for the Modern Era”

Unit 2: World War I on the Home Front: Women and the Politics of Everyday Life
Belinda Davis, Home Fires Burning: Food, Politics, and Everyday Life in World War I Berlin

Unit 3: Understanding Fascism
Robert Paxton, The Anatomy of Fascism

Unit 4: Coping with the Great Depression
Wolfgang Schivelbusch, Three New Deals: Reflections on Roosevelt’s America, Mussolini’s Italy, and Hitler’s Germany
OR George Orwell, The Road to Wigan Pier

Unit 5: Genocide and Political Mass Murder I: The Big Picture
Timothy Snyder, Bloodlands: Europe Between Hitler and Stalin

Unit 6: Genocide and Political Mass Murder II: On the Ground
Christopher Browning, Ordinary Men: Reserve Police Batallion 101 and the Final Solution in Poland

Unit 7: Decolonization: France and Algeria
viewing of Gillo Pontecorvo’s film “The Battle of Algiers”

(continued)
Unit 8: The Unravelling of Communist Eastern Europe: East Germany and Yugoslavia
viewing of Florian Henckel von Donnersmarck, “The Lives of Others” (about the East German Stasi)

Unit 9: After the Postwar: Europeans Respond to Globalization
Herman Lebovics, Bringing the Empire Back Home: France in the Global Age

Unit 10: Migration, Multi-ethnicity, and Muslims in Europe
Ian Buruma, Murder in Amsterdam: Liberal Europe, Islam, and the Limits of Tolerance