

## **Syllabus for Fall 2015**

### **Modern Times: The World since 1914 (History 110)**

Wednesday 3:30-6:15 PM, 3 Units (45 hours of class)

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**CATALOG DESCRIPTION:** This course is a history of the world from 1914 (the start of World War I) until the present. While economic and social developments shall be covered, the focus will be on the great political events which continue to shape our world. The great events analyzed include the impact of the world wars, revolutions in Russia and China, the fall of European empires, the Cold War, the growth of bitter regional conflicts and the changing nature of power in the post-industrial world. (3 units)

**DETAILED COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This course is a history of the world from 1914 (the start of World War I) until the present. I shall examine the extraordinary events from 1914-1945 as a kind of introduction. The focus will be on the great political events which continue to shape our world since the end of World War II. The great events analyzed include the impact of the world wars, revolutions in Russia & China, the fall of European empires, the Cold War, the growth of bitter regional conflicts and the changing nature of power in the post-industrial world. The first half of the course will cover the period of 1914-89 (Wars and Cold War) and the second half will cover the accelerated globalization that took place after the demise of the communist bloc. Additional emphasis will be on basic reorientation of relationships: between the West and the world; between the genders; between the races; between producers and consumers; between political leaders and the population. We shall try to trace the origins of the major political problems of today to their origins during the turmoil of revolution and war. We will also analyze the complex and uncertain process of "Globalization."

**PURPOSE:** Today's students live in a world that has undergone unprecedented change in economics, demographics, political systems and cultural institutions of every type. Although the direction of change worldwide is not possible to predict, it is certain that structural changes will continue in the next generation. Powerful forces – economic, social, political and cultural, act both to bring societies and nations together and also drive them apart. This complex interaction contains great promise and potential threat. To understand the world as it exists today and divine possible routes of development in the near future history is a very important laboratory. And, in a very real way, we will be looking as it was shaped by the generations of a contemporary student's grandparents and parents. Unlike most history classes very many of the participants in events covered are still alive – a situation that offers both challenges and rewards.

**STUDENT RESPONSIBILITIES:** There are no prerequisites for this class. Attendance is mandatory. Students are urged to complete the appropriate reading assignments before the lectures. It is very important that students be attentive in lecture and take notes as the lectures will have a different emphasis than the readings. It is very important that each student is on the class mailing list so I can email supplemental readings and exam questions. Questions and discussions in class are strongly encouraged. It is very important to have an orderly atmosphere during lectures. Therefore cell phones should be turned off and conversation between students is discouraged. We will spend a long time detailing all aspects of responsibilities and grades during the first meeting of the class.

As no single text suits this class well we shall use chapters from William H. McNeill (author), *A History of the World Community* (ISBN 019511616X) and Daniel Yergin (author) *The Commanding Heights: The Battle for the World Economy* (ISBN 068483569X). The McNeill chapters will be available in the library. I will show students where very inexpensive copies of Yergin's book may be purchased. There will also be some copies on reserve in the library. We shall also be using various "open source" resources pertaining to events of our day which I will distribute. As I will be looking for current analysis, it is not possible to identify shorter pieces in advance, although I shall provide short explanations of each when emailed to the students several days before class. There are excellent documentary videos for this period which will also be used.

**CONTACT BETWEEN INSTRUCTOR AND STUDENTS:** I will have office hours between 2:30-3:30 on Monday at a room to be arranged. If you would like to arrange a different time that can be easily done. I check my email often so please feel free to let me know about any questions or problems that might arise. I ask that you use my home email address ([rickt2@prodigy.net](mailto:rickt2@prodigy.net)). My school email is [bergerud@lincolnuca.edu](mailto:bergerud@lincolnuca.edu) but this will be forwarded and it is easier to go direct.

**FORMAT AND GRADES:** This course will be based on a standard lecture format. Questions, comments and discussion are very welcome. The grades will be based on the outcome of one midterm and a final exam. The exams will be essay in nature. The essays will be very broad and I will discuss their scope prior to exams. We shall also discuss the basic writing techniques for building an orderly argument suitable for the exams. The Standard A-F grades will be given. Approximately 1/3 of the grade is based on the midterm and 2/3 on the final. However, I do take into consideration a favorable trajectory between the midterm and final when deciding the course grade. Bad attendance results in a grade penalty. Grading essays is necessarily subjective but the grades will be put into a numerical format:

### Point/Grade Conversion

100-95	A	76-74	C
94-90	A-	73-70	C-
89-87	B+	69-67	D+
86-84	B	66-60	D
83-80	B-		
79-77	C+	59 or <	F

**SCHEDULE:** (Chapter assignments given in [ ]) )

August 26: Introduction; The World in 1914-45

Sept 2: Cold War in Europe and Asia [McNeill Chapters 25, 26]

September 9: Economic Miracle in Capitalist West [Yergin, Ch 1, 2]

September 16: The Communist Mirage [Yergin Ch 3]

September 23: New Nations and Paths to Development [Yergin Ch 5]

September 30: World Crisis of 1970s [Yergin Ch 6]

October 7: Collapse of Soviet Bloc [Yergin Ch7] & Midterm

October 14: East Asian Models: Japan, Tigers, Change in China [Yergin Ch 8]

October 21: Debacle of the "Third Way": South America & Africa [Yergin Ch 9]

October 28: Post Industrial Society [Yergin Ch 10]

November 4: New Institutions for New Economy: EU, ASEAN, NAFTA [Yergin 11, 12]

November 11: Veterans Day Holiday

November 18: 21<sup>st</sup> Century Booms and Busts [Yergin Ch 13]

Nov. 25: Fall Recess

December 2: A Global Society? [Yergin Ch 14]

December 9: Final Exam

Syllabus updated: August 20, 2015