

**Eve of Destruction:  
Global Crises and World Organization in the 20th Century**  
History 300 / Fall 2009

This is a course in international history. It is not about any particular country or region; rather, it concerns problems that commanded worldwide attention in the 20th Century. The term “worldwide” requires some qualification: it is not always the case that billions of people around the globe pondered these situations at any given time. But the emergence of such institutions as the United Nations, the International Monetary Fund, non-governmental organizations, and global media outlets created new venues for identifying and communicating about issues that affected international life. This course considers historical turning points – often violent ones – in an emerging global conversation about the most urgent world problems and their possible solutions.

Although the course explores a wide range of case studies, it does not claim to present a comprehensive “world” history of the 20th Century. Little will be shared here about the internal development of various societies. Instead, coverage is topical, resembling in many respects the potpourri of issues that have barraged the United Nations (and its predecessor, the League of Nations) in the course of the 20th Century. What matters ultimately is the *form* of cooperation. Why was the United Nations to prove reasonably effective in addressing some problems, while NATO or informal groupings like the G-7 prevailed in other circumstances? How did ideas about the use of force for conflict resolution change across the course of the 20th Century?

For students with a serious interest in international affairs – whether in history or in the social sciences – this course aims to provide an orientation to some of the most contentious decisions of the past century.

### **Course Policies**

Attendance is essential. You are allowed *four* unexcused absences; after that, each absence may be counted against your course grade. Obviously if you are representing Purdue in an official capacity (sports, band, etc.) you are excused; likewise, certain leeway can be granted for medical emergencies. However, if you miss too much of the course, no matter what the reason, I will insist that you withdraw.

Common courtesy suggests that you should arrive on time. If you must leave early, please inform us ahead of time and then raise your hand at the appropriate time. A lecture is not the same thing as a television viewing! Your coming and going may represent a significant distraction.

Academic integrity: The assignments in this course require you to formulate complex thoughts in your own words. Attempts to pass off another’s words as your own – be it on an exam or in your primary source exercise – will carry harsh penalties. Plagiarized papers will earn a “zero” for the assignment and may lead to further consequences, including notification of the Dean of Students Office. The “University Regulations” handbook contains further information on dishonesty.

## Course Requirements

Final grades will be calculated as follows:

Midterm exam	20%
First paper	25%
Second paper	25%
Final exam	30%

As noted above, excessive absences may have a negative impact on one's course grade.

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances.

## Course Readings

The following books should be purchased at Follett's, the University Bookstore, or your favorite on-line venue.

Frieden, Jeffrey. *Global Capitalism: Its Fall and Rise in the Twentieth Century*. New York: Norton, 2007. ISBN-13: 978-0393329810.

Glendon, Mary Ann. *A World Made New: Eleanor Roosevelt and the Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. New York: Random House, 2002. ISBN-13: 978-0375760464.

Meisler, Stanley. *United Nations: The First Fifty Years*. New York: Atlantic Monthly Press, 1995. ISBN-13: 978-0871136565.

Please note that on a few occasions, additional article-length readings will be distributed to the class in PDF format. These readings do constitute course material and are subject to coverage on the midterm and final.

Also, the course **website** will feature lecture outlines and supplementary material that students may wish to consult in advance of each class session.

<http://web.ics.purdue.edu/~wggray/Teaching/His300/index.htm>

## Contact Information

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Office hours in University Hall 328: Tuesday & Thursday 2:30 – 4:00

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## Reading and Lecture Schedule

<b>Date</b>	<b>Class Topic</b>	
Aug. 25	Introduction: anarchy and intervention	
Aug. 27	The 19th-Century international system	
Sept. 1	The Great War and international society	Frieden, 127-54
Sept. 3	The League at its best, 1919-1929	Gray (online) Frieden, 155-172
Sept. 8	The League at its worst, 1929-1936	Frieden, 173-194
Sept. 10	The Axis challenge	Frieden, 195-250
Sept. 15	Planning for victory – the United Nations	Meisler, 1-35
Sept. 17	Planning for victory – Bretton Woods and the new international economy	Frieden, 253-300
Sept. 22	Declaring Human Rights (I)	Glendon, preface, 3-98
Sept. 24	Declaring Human Rights (II)	Glendon, 99-191
Sept. 29	Partitioning Palestine	Meisler, 36-54
Oct. 1	Korea: “uniting for peace”	Meisler, 55-74 Glendon, 193-219
Oct. 6	Suez: canal and crossroads [FIRST PAPER DUE]	Meisler, 75-114
Oct. 8	The UN and Decolonization	Meisler, 115-134 Frieden, 301-320
Oct. 13	OCTOBER BREAK	
Oct. 15	Khrushchev at the UN	Meisler, 135-152
Oct. 20	MIDTERM EXAM	
Oct. 22	The Non-Proliferation Treaty	Gavin article

Oct. 27	Polarization and Terrorism: 1967 and its Aftermath	Meisler, 153-184
Oct. 29	“Limits to growth” and the oil shock	Limits to Growth Frieden, 321-360
Nov. 3	The radical 1970s	Meisler, 185-221
Nov. 5	The IMF and the rise of austerity economics	Frieden, 363-391
Nov. 10	NGOs and international civil society	Glendon, 221-241 Meisler, 222-238
Nov. 12	The collapse of the “Second World”	Meisler, 239-256
Nov. 17	War in the Gulf, 1990-91	Meisler, 257-277
Nov. 19	The “Live Aid” effect and intervention in Somalia	Meisler, 278-311
Nov. 24	The civil wars in Yugoslavia	Meisler, 312-329
Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING	
Dec. 1	Genocide in Rwanda	Power article
Dec. 3	Beyond Nuremberg: seeking justice at the Hague	Wald & Wigglesworth articles
Dec. 8	“Globalization”: the world flattens [SECOND PAPER DUE]	Frieden, 392-456
Dec. 10	Conclusion: international cooperation since 9/11	Frieden, 456-476