

Twentieth Century Europe

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: HTS

Course number: 2037

Section: R

CRN (you may add up to five):
91855

Instructor First Name: Timothy

Instructor Last Name: Stoneman

Semester: Spring

Academic year: 2026

Course description:

For the first time in several generations, Europe is at war again, now on its outside border in Ukraine. The war in Ukraine throws into the question the long-term viability of the postwar democratic order established in Europe after 1945. HTS 2037 looks at the course of war and peace during the long twentieth century in Western Europe from 1870 through 1970 by examining its three major military conflicts: the Franco-Prussian War of 1870, WWI, and WW2. We will study these wars through the combined lenses of geopolitics, ideology, and technology. The arrival of Germany as a nation-state in 1871 culminated the centuries-old geopolitical rivalry between France and its eastern neighbor; the “German question,” would dominate European diplomatic and military affairs through the outbreak of WWI. A tenuous, and ultimately unstable peace, resulted from the war. The ideological conflict between the competing visions of fascism, communism, and liberal democracy fueled a bitter thirty-year civil war that further fanned the flames of armed conflict. In terms of the sheer scale and technological complexity of its organized violence, WW2 that followed made the twentieth century the most destructive in world history for soldiers but especially civilians. Out of the ashes of the total destruction wrought by WW2 (what Germans called “zero hour”) came the rudiments of a lasting peace, constructed through Franco-German reconciliation and shared economic prosperity – the European Union.

Course learning outcomes:

Students will accomplish the following objectives:

- Students will demonstrate the ability to describe the social, political, and economic forces that have historically influenced social behavior.
- Students will be able to judge factual claims and theories on the basis of evidence.

- Students will demonstrate proficiency in the process of articulating and organizing rhetorical arguments in written, oral, visual, and nonverbal modes, using concrete support and conventional language.

Required course materials:

There are no required textbooks (and associated costs). All reading material will be provided through Canvas. The course will utilize Canvas as its class website and management tool. You should see the course website for all assigned texts.

Grading policy:

I will conduct grading on a point basis according to the following scheme. Students can accumulate points through the following assignments: attendance, reading responses (RR), field trip responses (FTR), leading class discussion (LCD), in-class assignments (ICAs), scavenger hunt, and final project (see table below). There are no required quizzes, tests, or final exam. Students must receive 90% of expected points to receive an A.

Assignments -

- *Attendance* - Students are expected to attend all classes and arrive on time. I will register attendance electronically at the start of each class through Roll Call (Canvas). Please let me know in advance if you will miss class – excused absences for medical or other official reasons will not count.
- *Reading responses* - Students are expected to prepare the reading for each class and participate actively in class discussion based on their interpretation and notes from the reading. Grading is on a completion basis.
- *Field trip responses* - You must complete FTRs from our field trips. See Canvas Assignments for a more detailed description of the assignment. FTR's are graded on a completion basis.
- *Leading class discussion* - Everyone will lead class discussion of a daily assigned reading, working with a partner. See Canvas for a detailed description of the assignment as well as grading criteria (i.e., rubric). You will sign up for LCDs on the Collaborations feature of Canvas.
- *In-class assignments* - We will have a series of in-class team assignments, beginning on the first day of class. ICA's are graded based on completion and must be done the day of class. Students who miss class may make up ICA's for 50% credit within one week.
- *Scavenger hunt* - The scavenger hunt is a required class team activity that will begin mid semester and last for five weeks. See Canvas Assignments for further description (but no clues!). The scavenger hunt is a completion assignment. (NB: You must complete the scavenger hunt or lose double the missing points (500 pts.) from your overall point total.)

- *Final project* - You will have a group research project, which includes an annotated bibliography and final presentation (April 1). Look at Canvas for the final project overview, grading rubric, and presentation guidelines.

General - I will accept late work for one week for 50% credit; excused work with an Institute-approved absence will receive full credit. After one week, no late work will be accepted except under extraordinary circumstances. There will not be any opportunity for revisions or extra credit. All assignments should be turned in through Canvas, including late work.

Calculating your grade - Students can calculate their point totals each week by consulting the weekly total on Canvas gradebook (i.e., Week 1, Week 2, Week 3, etc.). Students will have to add their weekly totals together to provide their running total. I will post total possible weekly point totals to help you track your pace.

Attendance policy:

Attendance policy is included in the course grading policy.

Academic honesty/integrity statement:

Students are expected to maintain the highest standards of academic integrity. All work submitted must be original and properly cited. Plagiarism, cheating, or any form of academic dishonesty will result in immediate consequences as outlined in the university's academic integrity policy.

Core IMPACTS statement(s) (if applicable):

This is a Core IMPACTS course that is part of the Social Sciences area.

Core IMPACTS refers to the core curriculum, which provides students with essential knowledge in foundational academic areas. This course will help master course content, and support students' broad academic and career goals.

This course should direct students toward a broad Orienting Question:

- How do I understand human experiences and connections?

Completion of this course should enable students to meet the following Learning Outcome:

- Students will effectively analyze the complexity of human behavior, and how historical, economic, political, social, or geographic relationships develop, persist, or change.

Course content, activities and exercises in this course should help students develop the following Career-Ready Competencies:

- Intercultural Competence

- Perspective-Taking
- Persuasion