

Twentieth Century Europe

Last Updated: Mon, 01/05/2026

Course prefix: HTS

Course number: 2037

Section: R

CRN

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.

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