

HIST 384: History of Aviation

Dr. Michael G. Smith

Fall 2020 | Monday, Wednesday, Friday | 9:30-10:20am | KRAN G016

This course explores the history of human flight and air power: from the early inventors and pilot heroes of the twentieth century to the institutions of aeronautics in the military and industrial networks of the twenty-first. Our approach is comparative and global. Our focus is on the applications and impacts of aviation in everyday life; in politics and governance; in science and business; and in the making of modern war. Topics include: the early pioneers and the Wright Brothers; the rise of the French aviation industry; the Zeppelins and dirigibles; Charles Lindbergh and the opening of the trans-Atlantic flights; aviation breakthroughs and strategic bombing in World War I and II; the "turbo-jet" revolution; the X planes and the Cold War; the Korean, Vietnam, and Iraq wars; several case studies of aviation disasters; and the multi-faceted development of commercial aviation.