

**Eve of Destruction:
Global Crises and World Organization in the 20th Century**
History 300 / Fall 2015

This is a course in international history. It is not about any particular country or region; rather, it concerns problems that commanded worldwide attention over the past 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, the social sciences, or any other major – 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.

Please refrain from using any electronic devices in class – no iPhones, iPads, or laptops. Srsly. We’re meeting in a small room, so your casual meanderings around the World Wide Web are certain to distract those around you. If you want to take notes, use pen/pencil and paper. Old school is real school.

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 course grades will be calculated as follows:

Participation (includes quizzes)	10%
Midterm exam	20%
First paper	20%
Second paper	20%
Take-home final exam	30%

Disclaimer: In the event of a major campus emergency, the above requirements, deadlines and grading policies are subject to changes that may be required by a revised semester calendar. Any such changes in this course will be posted, once the course resumes, on the course website or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email or phone.

Course Readings

The following books should be purchased at Follett’s, the University Bookstore, or Amazon.

Mazower, Mark. *Governing the World: The History of an Idea*. New York: Penguin, 2012. ISBN-13: 978-0-143-12394-1

Meisler, Stanley. *United Nations: A History*, revised ed. New York: Grove Press, 2011. (Please do not buy the 1996 edition; the new version is substantially different.) ISBN-13: 978-0-871-13656-5.

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.

Contact Information

Prof. Gray (wggray@purdue.edu)
Office hours in University Hall 328:
TTh 3:00 – 4:30 (or by appointment)
Office phone (765) 494-4132

Class and Reading Schedule

Date	Class Topic	Associated Readings
Aug. 25	Introduction: the decline of violence?	Pinker, Jervis, Snyder essays
Aug. 27	The 19th-Century international system	Mazower, 3-64
Sept. 1	The Great War and international society	Mazower, 65-115
Sept. 3	The League at its best, 1919-1929	Gray piece
Sept. 8	The League at its worst, 1929-1936	Mazower, 116-153
Sept. 10	The Axis challenge	Mazower, 154-188
Sept. 15	Planning for victory – the United Nations	Meisler, 1-35
Sept. 17	Bretton Woods and the new international economy	Mazower, 191-213
Sept. 22	Partitioning Palestine	Meisler, 36-54
Sept. 24	Declaring human rights	Mazower, 214-43
Sept. 29	“Uniting for Peace”: Korea and the Cold War	Meisler, 55-74
Oct. 1	MIDTERM EXAM	
Oct. 6	Bandung and Suez	Meisler, 75-114 Mazower, 244-72
Oct. 8	The UN and African decolonization	Meisler, 115-152
Oct. 13	OCTOBER BREAK	
Oct. 15	The Non-Proliferation Treaty	Gavin article
[Oct. 19	FIRST PAPER DUE – 11:59 pm]	
Oct. 20	Polarization and terrorism: 1967 and its aftermath	Meisler, 153-184
Oct. 22	Asian Development: the “Green Revolution”	Mazower, 273-304 Cullather article

Oct. 27	“Limits to growth” and the oil shock	“Limits to Growth”
Oct. 29	The radical 1970s	Meisler, 185-221 Mazower, 305-342
Nov. 3	The IMF and the rise of austerity economics	Mazower, 343-377
Nov. 5	NGOs and international civil society	Meisler, 222-238
Nov. 10	The democratic wave, 1985-95	Meisler, 239-256
Nov. 12	Saddam’s Iraq and the international community	Meisler, 257-277 Mazower, 378-405
[Nov. 16	SECOND PAPER DUE – 11: 59 pm]	
Nov. 17	The “Live Aid” effect and intervention in Somalia	Meisler, 278-311
Nov. 19	Civil wars and foreign interventions in Yugoslavia	Meisler, 312-333
Nov. 24	Genocide in Rwanda	Meisler, 334-344 Power article
Nov. 26	THANKSGIVING	
Dec. 1	Seeking justice – The Hague and beyond	Wald, Wigglesworth, & McCargo articles
Dec. 3	“Globalization”: the world flattens	Mazower, 406-427
Dec. 8	Bush’s America vs. the UN	Meisler, 345-370
Dec. 10	The Millennium Goals	Meisler, 371-390
[Dec. 18	TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM DUE – 5:00 pm]	