

**Eve of Destruction:
Global Crises and World Organization in the 20th Century**
History 300 / Spring 2018

This is a course in international history. It is not about any particular country or region; rather, it traces an emerging global conversation about the most urgent world problems and their possible solutions. The emergence of such institutions as the World Health Organization, 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.

Although the course explores a wide range of case studies, it does not claim to present a comprehensive “world” history. Coverage is topical, resembling in many respects the potpourri of issues that have barraged the League of Nations and the United Nations over the past century. What matters ultimately is the *form* of cooperation. Why was the UN 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 over time?

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.

Learning Outcomes

Completing this course will enhance your ability to:

- comprehend, recall, and synthesize key interpretations presented in lectures
- read, analyze, and discuss historical documents as well as academic journal articles
- respond to complex paper assignments and exam questions with clearly written essays
- think historically about international problem-solving

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. Otherwise your casual meanderings around the World Wide Web would distract everyone 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%
First paper (due Feb. 4)	20%
Midterm exam (on Feb. 28)	20%
Second paper (due March 22)	20%
Take-home final exam (due May 4)	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.

Burdick, Eugene and William J. Lederer. *The Ugly American*. New York: Norton, 1999. ISBN-13: 978-0-393-31867-8.

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 several historical documents and 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: MW 10:00 - 11:15 or by appointment Office phone (765) 494-2772	TA: Renee Gaarder (rgaarder@purdue.edu) Office hours in REC 409: MW 12:15 - 1:15
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Class and Reading Schedule

Date	Class Topic	Associated Readings
Jan. 8	Introduction: the threat of destruction	
Jan. 10	The 19th-Century international system	
Jan. 12	Discussion: a decline in violence?	Pinker, Jervis, Snyder essays
Jan. 15	NO CLASS	
Jan. 17	The Great War and international society	
Jan. 19	Discussion: civilizing war?	Dunant; Geneva Convention; Brussels Conference; Fourteen Points
Jan. 22	The League at its best, 1919-1929	Gray essay; League Covenant
Jan. 24	The League at its worst, 1929-1936	Lytton Report (excerpts)
Jan. 26	The Axis challenge	
Jan. 29	Planning for victory – the United Nations	Meisler, 1-35; Atlantic Charter; UN Charter
Jan. 31	Declaring human rights	UNHDR; Genocide Convention
Feb. 2	Partitioning Palestine	Meisler, 36-54
[Feb. 4	FIRST PAPER DUE @ 11:59 pm]	
Feb. 5	The Bretton Woods system	
Feb. 7	“Uniting for Peace”: Korea and the Cold War	Meisler, 55-74; Uniting for Peace
Feb. 9	Discussion: <i>The Ugly American</i> , Part I	Burdick/Lederer, 11-143
Feb. 12	The Suez Crisis	Meisler, 75-114
Feb. 14	The UN and African decolonization	Meisler, 115-134
Feb. 16	Discussion: <i>The Ugly American</i> , Part II	Burdick/Lederer, 144-285
Feb. 19	The Cuban Missile Crisis	Meisler, 135-152
Feb. 21	The Non-Proliferation Treaty	NPT
Feb. 23	Discussion: the “Green Revolution”	Cullather article

Feb. 26	Cyprus and Nigeria: (mis)managing civil wars	
Feb. 28	MIDTERM EXAM	
Mar. 2	Polarization and terrorism: 1967 and its aftermath	Meisler, 153-184
Mar. 5	“Limits to Growth” and the Oil Shock	Limits to Growth
Mar. 7	The Radical 1970s	Meisler, 185-221; NIEO
Mar. 9	NGOs and international civil society	Iriye chapter
Mar. 19	The IMF and the rise of austerity economics	
Mar. 21	From détente to the second Cold War	
[Mar. 22	SECOND PAPER DUE @ 11:59 PM]	
Mar. 23	Discussion: the “Live Aid” effect	
Mar. 26	The democratic wave, 1985-95	Meisler, 222-256
Mar. 28	The Gulf War, 1990-91	Meisler, 257-277
Mar. 30	Debate in Somalia	Meisler, 278-311
Apr. 2	Intervention in Yugoslavia	Meisler, 312-333
Apr. 4	Genocide in Rwanda	Meisler, 334-344; Power article
Apr. 6	War crimes tribunals: The Hague & beyond	Wald <u>or</u> Koomen article (choose)
Apr. 9	The Kosovo Crisis: NATO at war	Webber article
Apr. 11	Globalization and the WTO	Yapa excerpts
Apr. 13	Discussion: the humanitarian 1990s	
Apr. 16	American unilateralism: the Bush years	
Apr. 18	The international politics of the Iraq War	Meisler, 345-370
Apr. 20	The Millennium Goals	Meisler, 371-390
Apr. 23	The Arab Spring and the Syrian Civil War	
Apr. 25	American withdrawals: Obama and Trump	
Apr. 27	Conclusion: a fracturing world?	