

Brief Course Outline

Course Title: Europe and the Paradoxes of Modernity

Course Number and Section:

HISTORY

2413E 550

Instructor Name(s): Tim Compeau

Instructor Email(s): tcompea@uwo.ca

Disclaimer: Information in the brief course outline is subject to change. The syllabus posted on OWL is the official and authoritative source of information for the course.

Course Description:

This course examines the concept, history, and experience of modernity in Europe from the seventeenth century to the present. We begin by discussing the roots of modernity in the context of European cultural and political history. The course will then focus on a selection of themes that highlight the paradoxical nature of modernity as both liberating and repressive force, highlighting the role of European cities as centers of modern politics, of new forms of capitalism, of critiques of existing orders, of changing social relationships and of innovative artistic cultures and subcultures.

Learning Outcomes:

- identify and explain the significance of key events, people, and ideas in European history.
- understand the concept of modernity and its paradoxes.
- connect events from the European past to current political and social issues.
- solve research problems by identifying a topic, refining it to a significant and answerable historical question, determining the essential components of the argument, organizing the parts of the essay, and drawing conclusions.
- analyze primary source texts, utilizing them in writing a research essay.
- analyze secondary sources, including their sources, methods, argument, strengths, limitations, potential implications and significance for the field; and use secondary sources to consider why questions asked and topics studied by historians have changed over time.

Textbooks and Course Materials:

Bernard Wasserstein, *Barbarism and Civilization: A History of Europe in Our Time* (Oxford University Press, 2009). Print: 33.65; eBook: \$21.00.

Methods Of Evaluation:

Assignment	Due Date mm/dd/yy	Weight - %
Participation		20
Primary Source Assignment	10/27/2025	15
Midterm	12/01/2025	20
Essay Proposal	01/21/2026	5
Essay	03/06/2026	20
In-class Essay Assignment	03/23/2026	20

In solidarity with the Anishinaabe, Haudenosaunee, Lūnaapéewak, and Chonnonton peoples on whose traditional treaty and unceded territories this course is shared.

Friday, July 25, 2025