

HISTORY 3823G
Global Twenty-First Century History
Fall/Winter 2020-21
Synchronous online meeting hours Wednesdays 11:30-1:30 pm, Winter Term

Instructor: Professor William J. Turkel

Office Hours: Mondays through Thursdays, 5-5:45pm or by appointment, meeting online only

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Course Description:

A thematic introduction to 21st-century history focused on phenomena that characterize our age: the global connectivity of supply chains, planetary-scale computation, the War on Terror, and unprecedented ecological change. Contemporary events are contextualized in an interdisciplinary fashion at time scales ranging from days to millions of years.

Prerequisite(s):

Any 0.5 or 1.0 Essay course.

Unless you have either the prerequisites for this course or written special permission from your Dean to enroll in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. The decision may not be appealed. You will receive no adjustment to your fees in the event that you are dropped from a course for failing to have the necessary prerequisites.

Course Syllabus:

Expected Preparation

You will be given a short collection of readings to do before each scheduled online meeting. It is crucial that you take this requirement seriously and read the materials carefully. Since teamwork is an essential component of this class (and your grade), students who are not prepared for class will not only be letting themselves down, but some of their classmates, too.

Participation and Professionalism

You are required to participate in each scheduled online meeting. *Failure to participate in more than two online meetings without prior approval or a note from your academic counsellor will result in a failing grade.* Since you will be working closely with others using teleconferencing and shared online documents, it is important to be respectful, to share your own ideas and to listen carefully to the ideas of others.

Teamwork and Peer Evaluation

Each scheduled online meeting you will be randomly assigned to a team of about 7 people for that day's in-class activities, which are conducted using Zoom breakout rooms. Towards the end of each class, your team will submit a brief report for group discussion. I read all of these reports and offer general feedback but do not grade them. You will also be randomly assigned to a team of about seven people for each of five graded assignments. These assignments are conducted online using Zoom, MS Teams, and other collaboration tools. The grade for each has an individual component, a team component, and a component that is determined by peer evaluation. I will use these assessments, in conjunction with my own, to determine your individual contribution to team assignments.

Learning Outcomes

At the conclusion of this course students will be able to

- Recognize and analyze agency problems, transaction costs, network effects, nonlinearity and complexity in the historical development of contemporary events and processes
- Situate aspects of the present moment with respect to historical explanations from a range of specialist literatures
- Navigate a variety of contemporary sources
- Use computational tools that allow small teams to collaborate in the analysis of digital sources

Course Materials:

All readings will be provided electronically on the OWL site for the course.

Methods of Evaluation:

<i>Assignment</i>	<i>Worth</i>	<i>Handed Out</i>	<i>Due Date</i>	<i>Zero Date</i>
01. War on Terror (text mining)	20% (individual 8%, team 8%, peer 4%)	Week 02	Week 03	Week 04
02. Black Box Society (algorithmic bias)	20%	Week 04	Week 05	Week 06
03. Global Supply Chains (networks)	20%	Week 06	Week 07	Week 08
04. Anthropocene (geospatial analysis)	20%	Week 08	Week 09	Week 10
05. After Now (real time monitoring)	20%	Week 10	Week 11	Week 12

Each assignment has a suggested due date and, a week later, a zero date. If you hand in your assignment before the zero date, you will receive full credit for your work. After the zero date, it will be worth nothing.

If you are unable to meet a course requirement due to illness or other serious circumstances, you must provide valid medical or other supporting documentation to Academic Counseling as soon as possible.

Accommodation for missed assignment deadlines with a Self-Reported Absence:

If a student reports an SRA for an assignment (i.e. an essay) the new due date will be 48 hours after the SRA was submitted. For example, if you complete an SRA on March 19 at 3pm, your new due date will be March 21 at 3pm.

Course Schedule:

- **Week 01. Introduction (13 Jan).** Defining the 21st Century; Five Global Phenomena; Concepts and Methods.
- **Week 02. The Terrorist's Dilemma (20 Jan).** Al Qaeda and 9/11; Agency Problems; Transaction and Information Costs; Global Outlaws; Following the Money.
- **Week 03. Everything Becomes War (27 Jan).** War in the Age of Intelligent Machines; Drones; Cyberwar and Active Measures.
- **Week 04. Black Box Society (03 Feb).** Moore's Law; Identity by Algorithm; Social Sorting and Network Inequality; Spam, Spyware and Trolls; Transparency and Conspiracy.
- **Week 05. Secrecy, Privacy and Anonymity (10 Feb).** Mass Surveillance; Cryptography; Hacktivism and the Dark Web.
- NO CLASS – READING WEEK (17 Feb)
- **Week 06. Consent of the Networked (24 Feb).** Social Production; Contested Expertise; Enclosure of the Commons; Protest and Social Change.
- **Week 07. Global Supply Chains (03 Mar).** Licit and Illicit Flows; the Deadly Life of Logistics; Connectography; Extrastatecraft.
- **Week 08. Capitalist Ruins (10 Mar).** Stuff; Attention and Advertising; Neoliberalism; Financial Crisis; Ordinary Affects.
- **Week 09. Global Governance (17 Mar).** Paperwork; Seeing like a State; Expertise and Struggle.
- **Week 10. Anthropocene (24 Mar).** Urbanization; Fossil Fuel Dependency; the Dispossessed; Risk, Catastrophe, Collapse and Extinction.
- **Week 11. Deep History (31 Mar).** Coevolution and Domestication; Companion Species; Contagion and Chaos; Food Security.
- **Week 12. After Now (07 Apr).** Technosphere; the Stack; Utopia; Posthumanities; Superintelligences.

Additional Statements:

Please review the Department of History Course Must-Knows document,

<https://www.history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/Docs/Department%20of%20History%20Course%20Must-Knows.pdf>,

for additional information regarding:

- Academic Offences
- Accessibility Options
- Medical Issues
- Plagiarism
- Scholastic Offences
- Copyright
- Health and Wellness