HISTORY 3735G
Global History of Populism

Winter 2024

Thursdays, 2:30-4:30 p.m.

STVH 3166

Instructor: Professor Keith Fleming
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Office: Department of History, Lawson Hall 1208
Office hours: Thursdays, 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.

This is a draft syllabus. Please see the course site on OWL for a final version.

Course Description:
This lecture and seminar course surveys the global history of populism and its main populist actors from the early 19th Century to the present, focusing on Russia, the United States, Canada, Argentina, Brazil, Australia, New Zealand, France, Italy, Ghana, Burkina Faso, South Africa, Zambia, and India.

Prerequisite:
1.0 History course at the 2200 level or above

Course Syllabus:
Populism is one of the most controversial and fervently discussed topics in the social sciences today. While there is much scholarly debate over how precisely populism should be defined, it is generally agreed that all forms of populism include a critique of ‘the establishment/the elite’ and adulation of the ‘common people.’ It is also conventional wisdom that populism originated in the late 19th century as agrarian protest movements in Russia (where narodnichestvo or ‘populism’ appeared in response to hardships encountered by the peasantry in feudal tsarist Russia), and in the United States (where rural discontents were expressed politically via the People’s Party). Today, populism affects almost all continents and political regimes but is most prevalent in the democracies of Europe and the Americas.

The course begins by considering how best to define ‘populism.’ Next, some recent and high-profile manifestations of populism, including Trumpism, Brexiers, France’s National Front, and Venezuela’s Hugo Chávez will be studied to provide a contemporary context. The principal focus of the course surveys the global history of populism and its main populist actors over the past 150 years, focusing specifically on Russia, the United States, Canada, Latin America (especially Argentina and Brazil), Australia and New Zealand, France, Italy, Africa (Ghana, Burkina Faso, South Africa, and Zambia), and India.
LEARNING OUTCOMES:

Students will be able to

• identify major events, concepts, and personalities associated with early manifestations of populism globally
• interpret information about a wide range of people, groups, events, and documents discussed in the assigned readings and explain their significance
• strengthen skills of oral and written communication
• analyze primary and secondary sources, including their origins, methods, arguments, strengths, limitations, potential implications, and significance for the study of the global history of populism
• 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
• effectively integrate primary and secondary sources within class presentations, discussions, and research essays
• analyze academically the impact of historical precedents that contextualize present day expressions of populism globally

Course Materials:
The course Required Readings are available either in digital format at the Western Libraries site for History 3735G (which can be accessed via the ‘Course Readings’ link on the course OWL website), or on two-hour reserve at D.B. Weldon Library.

Methods of Evaluation:

| Research Essay Proposal (due Thursday February 8th) | 5% |
| Research Essay (due Friday March 14th) | 30% |
| Primary Source Presentation and Report | 15% |
| Seminar Participation | 20% |
| Assigned Readings Written Responses (10 x 3%) | 30% |

Students must pass all elements of the course (research essay proposal; research essay; primary source presentation and report; seminar participation; assigned readings written responses) to achieve a passing grade in the course.

Each student must submit electronically to kfleming@uwo.ca a formal and brief (1-2 page typewritten) essay proposal no later than Thursday February 8th at 11:55 p.m. Students who fail to meet this deadline will not be permitted to submit an essay and will receive a grade of “0” on the assignment. Approved essay topics cannot subsequently be changed without the instructor’s prior consent.

Each student will write a research essay (13-15 typewritten pages in length). Essay topics will be assigned by the instructor in consultation with each student. An electronic copy of the completed research essay must be submitted via the course OWL website no later than Friday March 14th at 11:55 p.m. In addition, the essay must be submitted by the due date and time to Turnitin.com via the course OWL website.

Each student, in consultation with the instructor, will make a 15-minute seminar presentation discussing a minimum of three primary sources that the student has identified as providing clarity and context to central themes in that week’s required readings. The types of sources to be consulted could include, but are not limited to, government documents, speeches, newspaper articles, personal diaries, excerpts from novels, advertisements, photographs and other illustrations, or radio and television broadcasts.
Presentations must not exceed the maximum 15-minute allotment. An electronic copy of the primary source presentation and accompanying written report must be submitted to kfleming@uwo.ca no later than noon on the day that the class presentation takes place. In addition to including all images of the primary sources being discussed in class, the written report must describe your reasons for selecting those primary sources and how they provide clarity and context to the week’s assigned readings. The written report should be approximately 5 pages in length. The course instructor will post the primary source presentation on the “Resources” section of the History 3735G OWL website for other students in the course to access prior to the presentation being made.

Students will submit each week a written response (maximum 500 words per weekly response) to a question based on the assigned readings for that week. The response questions will be posted on the “Assignments” section of the course OWL website 24 hours before the written response is due. Students will submit their weekly written responses via the course OWL website no later than the beginning of that day’s class (2:30 p.m.). Late submissions will not be accepted or graded. Since students are not required to submit an assigned readings written response the same week as they make their primary source presentation, a total of ten response questions in total will be submitted.

A late penalty of 5% for the first day and 2% per day thereafter (weekends included) will be assessed against written work (including the book review; research essay; and primary source presentation report) submitted after the due date.

Students are expected to attend and participate actively in all seminar discussions, thereby demonstrating their comprehension of the Required Readings. This course syllabus also lists numerous Supplementary Readings which students are not required to read but are useful for providing context or examining in greater detail the weekly discussion topics.

Sample discussion questions based on the Required Readings will be posted on the History 3735G OWL website (under the ‘Resources’ link) before each class to assist students in preparing to participate meaningfully in the seminar. All students will be assigned a participation grade on a 10-point scale following each seminar. Failure to attend a seminar will result in a score of “0” for that class. Merely attending a seminar without participating in the discussion will result in a score of “2” for that class. The assignment of a participation grade from “3” to “10” will be determined by the quality of the student’s contributions to discussion during any given seminar.

In instances when absence from class is unavoidable, students are expected, when possible, to inform the instructor in advance of their pending absence.

Non-illness absences from seminars are unacceptable. Any student attending fewer than nine of the twelve scheduled discussion seminars (an absence rate of approximately 25%) for non-illness reasons will be assigned a failing grade for seminar participation and a failing grade in the course.

NOTE: All work submitted in this course must be your own. You may not make use of generative AI tools like ChatGPT for any assignments in this course.

Course Schedule and Readings:

Session One: Thursday 11 January 2024
Introduction to History 3735G

Session Two: Thursday 18 January 2024
Topic: What is Populism?

Required Readings:
https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/13510487/v26i0003/418_pwbnoagh.xml

https://doi.org/10.1093/oxfordhb/9780199585977.013.0026

https://www.theatlantic.com/international/archive/2020/03/what-is-populism/607600/

Supplementary Reading:


Session Three: Thursday 25 January 2024
Topic: Global Populism in 2024

Required Readings:


Laura Silver, “Populists in Europe – especially those on the right – have increased their vote shares in recent elections,” Pew Research Centre, October 6, 2022.
https://www.pewresearch.org/fact-tank/2022/10/06/populists-in-europe-especially-those-on-the-right-have-increased-their-vote-shares-in-recent-elections/

Supplementary Readings:

https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/details/00384941/v102i0001/107_tpatnttorpic.xml


https://journals-scholarsportal-info.proxy1.lib.uwo.ca/pdf/01925121/v38i0004/399_piwpaccp.xml

Session Four: Thursday 1 February 2024
Topic: Populism in Russia
Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:
Deepanshu Mohan and Abhina Padmanabhan, “From the Tsars to Gorbachev,” in *Strongmen Saviours: A Political Economy of Populism in India, Turkey, Russia and Brazil* (Routledge, 2023), pp. 115-128.

Session Five: Thursday 8 February 2024
Topic: Populism in the United States

Required Readings:


**ESSAY PROPOSAL DUE TODAY**

Supplementary Readings:

Session Six: Thursday 15 February 2024
Topic: Populism in Canada

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:

Session Seven: Thursday 29 February 2024
Topic: Populism in Latin America (Brazil and Argentina)

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:


Session Eight: Thursday 7 March 2024
Topic: Populism Australia and New Zealand

Required Readings:


Supplementary Reading:

Session Nine: Thursday 14 March 2024
Topic: Populism in France

Required Readings:


ESSAY DUE TOMORROW (FRIDAY MARCH 15TH)

Supplementary Reading:

Session Ten: Thursday 21 March 2024
Topic: Populism in Italy

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:
Session Eleven: Thursday 28 March 2024
Topic: Populism in Africa

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:

Session Twelve: Thursday 4 April 2024
Topic: Populism in India

Required Readings:


Supplementary Readings:
Deepanshu Mohan and Abhina Padmanabhan, “India’s Transformation: From Nehru to Vajpayee,” in Strongmen Saviours: A Political Economy of Populism in India, Turkey, Russia and Brazil (Routledge, 2023), pp. 21-35.
Additional Statements:
Please review the Department of History’s shared policies and statements for all undergraduate courses at:
https://history.uwo.ca/undergraduate/program_module_information/policies.html
for important information regarding accessibility options, make-up exams, medical accommodations, health and wellness, academic integrity, plagiarism, and more.