



HISTORY 1404E (670)
Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini: The Totalitarian Age
Summer 2026

Instructor: Dr. Oleksa Drachewych
Email: odrachew@uwo.ca

Course Information

Calendar Description:

An introduction to the theory and practice of totalitarianism through a comparative study of regimes established by Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini. Topics include the seizure of power, personality cults, culture, education and propaganda, bio-politics, terror, war, the Holocaust, resistance movements.

Prerequisite(s):

Antirequisite(s): [History 2147A/B](#).

Extra Information: 3 hours.

Course Weight: 1.00

Breadth: Category A

Subject Code: History

Notice: Unless you have either the requisites for this course (fulfilment of pre-requisites, no anti-requisite conflicts), or special permission from your Dean to enrol in it, you may be removed from this course and it will be deleted from your record. This 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.

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Instructor Information:

Professor: Oleksa Drachewych

Email: odrachew@uwo.ca

Office Hours: TBA and by appointment via Zoom

Course Times and Format:

This class will be wholly online and completely asynchronous (including the exams). As a result, you will be required to keep up with course materials by following along, module by module on Brightspace. As this is a summer course, the course pace is faster than a usual fall/winter term course. Students should expect to spend between four to six hours during an average week on this class by watching lectures, finishing course readings, and engaging in forum discussion or completing lecture quizzes.

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An introduction to the theory and practice of totalitarianism through a comparative study of regimes established by Hitler, Stalin and Mussolini. Topics include the seizure of power, personality cults, culture, education and propaganda, bio-politics, terror, war, the Holocaust, resistance movements.

Antirequisites: History 2147 A/B

Prerequisites: N/A

Unless you have either the requisites 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. This 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 Summary:

In a time where concerns over the rise of fascism and of totalitarianism underpin discussions on the polarization of today's political landscape, it is important to look back at the history of the regimes focused on in this course to understand how they came to be, how they operated, and the leading figures behind them, whether Joseph Stalin, Benito Mussolini or Nazi Germany.

In this class, students will come to understand how these regimes become established and gain a general comprehension of what made these regimes "totalitarian" and to understand the totalitarian paradigm as an analytic tool, including evaluating its strengths and weaknesses. By looking at society, culture, economics, politics, diplomacy and war, students should come to

appreciate the nature of these regimes. Furthermore, through a wide variety of sources, students will learn important techniques to evaluating documents, diaries, articles and books as historians. In addition, by looking at three different regimes, with differences in starting points, execution and ideology, comparison will be a prominent feature of this course, as will be an examination at the legacies of Stalinism, Nazism and Fascism after their demise.

Learning Outcomes:

By the end of this class, students will:

- Be able to define totalitarianism, use the term to analyze certain regimes, discovering the strengths and limitations of the paradigm
- Understand the key events, causes, ideas, and concepts in the history of Nazi Germany, Fascist Italy, and the Soviet Union 1917-1953
- Learn how to analyze primary and secondary sources
- Appreciate and understand historical writing and research
- Develop their own arguments through short analytical pieces and larger assignments
- Interact and discuss historical concepts with other students through written forum posts and other workshop activities
- Be introduced and practice proper sourcing and citations
- Enhance their writing skills through a variety of different assignments

Course Texts:

The following books are available for purchase through the Bookstore at Western.

Required:

- Sheila Fitzpatrick, *The Russian Revolution*, Updated Edition (Oxford University Press, 2017) \$16.00-\$26.55
- Lydia Chukovskaya, *Sofia Petrovna* (Evanston: Northwestern University Press, 1994) \$31.65

Recommended:

- Bruce F. Pauley, *Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini: Totalitarianism in the Twentieth Century*, 4th ed. (Chichester: Wiley Blackwell, 2015) \$29.00-\$45.85

Bookstore link: https://bookstore.uwo.ca/textbook-search?campus=KC&term=N2026&courses%5B0%5D=670_KC/HIS1404E

It is recommended you use the newest editions. Both the Fitzpatrick and Pauley books are available digitally through Western Libraries too.

Additional readings for discussions will be posted on Brightspace.

Course Evaluation:

- 10% - Lecture Quizzes
- 10% - Forum and Other Participation
- 15% - Literature Analysis (due June 3)
- 15% - Article Analysis (due June 30)
- 20% - Research Paper (due July 17)
- 30% - Final Exam

There are many assignments to this course. While this may seem like a lot, they all serve to focus on specific skills or to help ensure students are following course content.

Lecture Quizzes: There will be four **Online Quizzes** in this course. They will go live on Brightspace during Modules 3, 6, 8 and 11. They will be available until the end of the module. They are there to ensure students are keeping up with class content, while also helping ensure students are comprehending it. These quizzes will be a mix of 10 true/false and multiple choice questions based entirely from lecture material. These quizzes will only be open for the duration of the module they take place and are open book; no late submissions will be accepted.

Discussion Participation: Another activity many weeks will be forum discussion with other students enrolled in this course. These readings may take the form of primary sources (including images, documents, memoirs, speeches, and so forth) or secondary sources (book chapters, articles, shorter analysis). Students will have a series of guiding questions which will help them tackle the readings and will be expected to engage in discussion with fellow students in forum posts and other activities. Each module will clearly delineate when student comments must be posted in order to receive full credit (usually the scheduled end of the module). Late posts will be accepted following the deadline and will be assessed a late penalty. Students are expected to back up their thoughts with reference to the readings or lecture, but also to interact with other students respectfully. There will be two marks given for participation – one given after Module 6 and one given after Module 12. One's participation mark will be determined by an average of the two marks.

Final Exam: See Brightspace.

Essay Component:

Three separate assignments make up the essay component of this course. Each assignment will focus on one skill important for the development of historical research and analysis. Each assignment will also build on the skills emphasized in previous assignments. All assignments can be completed fully using course materials and online sources available through King's Libraries.

- **Literature Analysis:** Students will write a **750-1000 word (this word count does not include citations)** analytical discussion of *Sofia Petrovna* (this book is available via the bookstore) and the diary of Stepan Podlubny, both which provide an account, one fictionalized, one not, of a person's life during The Great Terror in the Soviet Union. In this review, students will answer a guiding question which will require them to develop an argument using the content of the book and the diary to answer. Students can also use

the assigned textbook and lecture material to develop their analysis. This assignment will focus on argumentative skills and analytical skills of primary sources. Further instructions will be posted on OWL Brightspace.

- **Article Analysis:** Students will be assigned an article, made available on OWL Brightspace, and need to analyze its content. In **750 words (this word count does not include citations)**, students will need to identify the article's main arguments, its methodology, and its conclusion. Marks will be given to the quality of the analysis and the clarity and effectiveness of its writing. This assignment will focus on writing skills and analytical skills of secondary sources. Further instructions will be posted on OWL Brightspace.
- **Research Essay:** Students will write a **1,250 to 1,500 word argumentative research paper (this word count does not include citations)**. Students will have a series of questions to choose from; each question will require use of at least one of the readings assigned in History 1404E. As such, it rewards students who keep up with the readings as they will already have a sense of some of item's arguments and content and how it can be used in support of their paper! Students will then need to find and cite at least five *additional* academic sources, one of which must be a book, in their research paper. Further instructions will be posted on OWL Brightspace.

Course Specific Policies:

All assignments should be submitted online via Brightspace at 11:59:59 pm ET on its due date. The timestamp on Brightspace will be considered final for any disputes regarding the punctuality of submissions. All written assignments will require citations (endnotes/footnotes and bibliography) in the most recent version of Chicago Style. All written assignments will require accurate page numbers for citations. Hardcopies are not required nor will be accepted.

Late Policy: As per the King's University College Department of History guidelines – a penalty of five marks will be assessed for essays submitted the first day after deadline, followed by a penalty of one mark per day including weekends. *Late assignments will be accepted until the final day of classes – July 26. Late assignments may be returned with reduced feedback.*

Email Policy: Students are welcome to speak to the professor by appointment via Zoom. Regarding email, he will aim to respond within 24 hours.

Turnitin: This class will use Turnitin on all submitted assignments to check for plagiarism.

AI Policy: King's is committed to fostering a culture of professionalism, honesty, and academic integrity, and all members of our community—faculty, staff, and students—have a role to play in promoting an ethical learning environment. Furthermore, through the work they submit for academic evaluation, students develop important habits of critical thinking, independent inquiry, and creativity. Thus, it is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor.

Course Schedule (Summer 2026)

A full reading list will be posted on Brightspace to start the course.

NOTE: In this class there may be some discussion or content that may upset some students, such as topics of antisemitism, genocide, violence, terror etc. Should students feel uncomfortable discussing these issues, they should speak with the professor.

Module 1: May 4 - 9– What is Totalitarianism?; Context: Roots and Trends: 1890 to Versailles

Discussion Topic – Introduction/Defining Totalitarianism

LENINISM

Module 2: May 10-16– The Russian Revolutions: The Bolsheviks Come to Power; The Russian Civil War

Discussion Topic – Reading Secondary Sources and Taking Notes

STALINISM

Module 3: May 17 – 23 - The Rise of Stalinism: From Lenin to Stalin; the Revolution from Above: Collectivization, Industrialization and the Cultural Revolution

Lecture Quiz 1 Due May 23

Discussion Topic – Stalinist Propaganda and the First Five Year Plan

Module 4: May 24 – May 30 - Protecting Stalinism: The Great Terror; Creating a Soviet State

Discussion Topic – The Great Terror

Module 5: May 31-June 6 – Resistance under Stalinism; Stalinism and the Second World War, 1939-1945;

Discussion Topic – Understanding Resistance under Stalinism

LITERATURE ANALYSIS DUE June 3

Module 6: June 7-13 - From High Stalinism to Destalinization

Lecture Quiz 2 due June 13

NO FORUM POSTS OR DISCUSSION – CATCH UP WEEK

FIRST PARTICIPATION MARK CUTOFF

MUSSOLINI

Module 7: June 14-20– The Rise of Mussolini; Fascist Italy at Home

Discussion Topic – Mussolini’s Rise to Power

Module 8: June 21-27 - Fascist Italy Abroad; Biopolitics in Fascist Italy

Discussion Topic – Living under Fascism

Lecture Quiz 3 due June 27

HITLER

Module 9: June 28 – July 4 – The Rise of Hitler and the Nazi Seizure of Power; The Nazi Party, Bureaucracy and State

Discussion Topic – The Nazi Takeover & Nazi Propaganda

ARTICLE ANALYSIS DUE June 30

Module 10: July 5-11 – Nazi Cultural and Gender Policies; Nazi Racial Policies and the Holocaust

Discussion Topic – The Holocaust

COMPARISONS AND LEGACIES

Module 11: July 12-18 – Resistance under Fascism and Nazism; Nazism and Fascism at War

Lecture Quiz 4 due July 18

RESEARCH PAPER due July 17

NO FORUM POSTS OR DISCUSSION

Module 12: July 19-26 – The Aftermath of War: Denazification in Germany and After Fascism in Italy; The Legacies of Fascism and Totalitarianisms Compared

Discussion Topic – The War and Hitler’s Cult of Personality

SECOND PARTICIPATION MARK CUTOFF

July 27-July 30 – Final Take-Home Exam

King's University College

General Course Policies

2025-2026

1. Academic Accommodations, Consideration for Absences

Academic Accommodation (Accessibility)

Accessibility Services works to ensure that academic programs are accessible to all students, and supports students who may have a condition related to, but not limited to, vision, hearing, mobility, different ways of learning, mental health, chronic illnesses, chronic pain, autism spectrum disorder, ADD/ADHD, and temporary conditions (beyond short-term academic consideration). Accessibility Services provides recommendations for accommodation based on medical documentation or psychological and cognitive assessment. The accommodation policy can be found here [Academic Accommodation for Students with Disabilities](#). Information on Accessibility Services at King's can be found [here](#).

Academic Consideration for Student Absence

If a student is unable to meet a course requirement due to substantial but temporary extenuating circumstances (medical or compassionate), they should follow the procedures below.

In some cases, where instructors have built flexibility into their assessments, this flexibility will already address consideration needs.

Requests for academic consideration should be directed to the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration. Requests must be made as soon as possible and no later than 48 hours after the missed assessment.

As a rule, documentation is required for academic consideration. For academic consideration requests on medical grounds, the Student Medical Certificate is available at [here](#).

Students are permitted one academic consideration request without supporting documentation per term per course. Instructors may designate one assessment per half-course weight as requiring formal supporting documentation. Please refer to the course outline for each course. For further information, please see:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising/academic-consideration-requests-and-student-absence-portal>

Absences from Final Examinations

If you miss the Final Exam, contact the Academic Advising Office of your faculty/college of registration as soon as you are able to do so. They will assess your eligibility to write the Special Examination (the name given by the University to a makeup Final Exam).

You may also be eligible to write the Special Exam if you are in a “Multiple Exam Situation” (e.g., more than 2 exams in 23-hour period, or more than 3 exams in a 47-hour period).

If a student fails to write a scheduled Special Examination, the date of the next Special Examination (if granted) normally will be the scheduled date for the final exam the next time this course is offered. The maximum course load for that term will be reduced by the credit of the course(s) for which the final examination has been deferred. See the Academic Calendar for details https://academicsupport.uwo.ca/accessible_education/exams/index.html.

Please note, Friday Make-Up Exams may only be written with the instructor's consent.

Religious Accommodation

Students should consult the University's list of recognized religious holidays, and should give notice in writing to the instructor and Academic Advising Office if a course requirement will be affected by a religious holiday/observance. Notice must be given as early as possible, and no later than two weeks prior to an examination, and one week prior to a midterm test date. It is the responsibility of such students to inform themselves concerning the work done in classes from which they are absent and to take appropriate action.

2. Support Services

Accessibility, Counselling and Student Development at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University College: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/personal-counselling>

Good2talk is a good online and phone 24/7 resource for students and is available in English, Mandarin, and French: <https://good2talk.ca>, 1-866-925-5454

MentalHealth@Western provides a complete list of options about how to obtain help: <https://www.uwo.ca/health/psych/index.html>

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/academics/academic-advising>

GBSV Support:

King's is committed to reducing incidents of gender-based and sexual violence and providing compassionate support to anyone who has gone through these traumatic events. If you have experienced sexual or gender-based violence (either recently or in the past), you will find information about support services for survivors, including emergency contacts at: <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/gender-and-sexual-violence>

You can reach someone supports at Kings by emailing Care@kings.uwo.ca or calling 519-930-4640 to reach a social worker who can offer help.

You can also reach Western's Gender-Based Violence & Survivor Support Case Manager by email or by calling 519-661-3568.

See also https://www.uwo.ca/health/student_support/survivor_support/get-help.html

University Students' Council offers many valuable support services for students, including the health insurance plan: <http://westernusc.ca/services/>

3. Statement on Use of Electronic Devices

Use of Electronic Devices: Unless explicitly stated otherwise, you are not allowed to have a cell phone, or any other electronic device, with you during tests or examinations. Unauthorized possession of such a device during a test or examination constitutes an academic offence.

Use of Laptops, Tablets, and Smartphones in the Classroom: King's University College at Western University acknowledges the integration of new technologies and learning methods into the curriculum. The use of electronic devices such as laptop computers, tablets, or smartphones can contribute to student engagement and effective learning. At the same time, King's recognizes that instructors and students share jointly the responsibility to establish and maintain a respectful classroom environment conducive to learning.

The use of electronic devices by students during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., shall be for matters related to the course at hand only. Students found to be using electronic devices for purposes not directly related to the class may be subject to sanctions under the Student Code of Conduct; see <https://mykings.ca/intranet/app/#/student-supports-and-services/campus-safety-and-reporting/student-code-of-conduct>

Inappropriate use of electronics (e.g., laptops, tablets, smartphones) during lectures, seminars, labs, etc., creates a significant disruption. As a consequence, instructors may choose to limit the use of electronic devices in these settings. In addition, in order to provide a safe classroom environment, students attending in-person class sessions are strongly advised to operate laptops with batteries rather than power cords.

4. Statement on Academic Offences

King's is committed to academic integrity. Scholastic offences are taken seriously and students are directed to read the appropriate policy, specifically, the definition of what constitutes a Scholastic Offence, is posted at [here](#).

It is expected that students will submit work that is truly their own, completed without external assistance (human or artificial) except as explicitly permitted by the course instructor. Check with you instructor on what tools, including generative AI (ChatGPT, translation tools, grammar-checking tools) are permitted in the course. Because a tool is permitted in one course, that does not mean it is permitted in other courses.

All required papers may be subject to submission for textual similarity review to the commercial plagiarism detection software under license to the University for the detection of plagiarism. All papers submitted for such checking will be included as source documents in the reference database for the purpose of detecting plagiarism of papers subsequently submitted to the system; see <https://elearningtoolkit.uwo.ca/tools/OriginalityReports - TurnItIn.html>.

Computer-marked multiple-choice tests and/or exams may be subject to submission for similarity review by software that will check for unusual coincidences in answer patterns that may indicate cheating.

5. Copyright of Course Material

Lectures and course materials, including PowerPoint presentations, tests, outlines, and similar materials are protected by copyright. Faculty members are the exclusive owner of copyright in those materials they create. Students may take notes and make copies for their own use. Students may not allow others to reproduce or distribute lecture notes and course materials publicly (whether or not a fee is charged) without the express written consent of a faculty member.

Unauthorized sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

Similarly, students own copyright in their own original papers and exam essays. If a faculty member wishes to post a student's answers or papers on the course website, they should ask for the student's written permission.

6. Use of Recordings

Participants in this course are not permitted to record the sessions, except where recording is an approved accommodation and/or the participant has the prior written permission of the instructor. Unauthorized recording and/or sharing of class content is subject to academic discipline.

7. Policy on Attendance

Any student who, in the opinion of the instructor, is absent too frequently from class or laboratory periods in any course, will be reported to the Dean of the Faculty offering the course, after due warning has been given. On the recommendation of the department concerned, and with the permission of the Dean of that Faculty, the student will be debarred from taking the regular examination in the course.