



HISTORY 3714F (570)
SOCIAL BASES OF FASCISM
Fall/Winter 2025 - 2026

Instructor: Dr. Nicolas Virtue
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Course Information

Calendar Description:

This course is a comparative history of fascist movements and fascist states in the 20th century. Topics include theories of fascism, social origins of fascist movements, the seizure of power in Italy and Germany, unsuccessful European fascist movements, fascism outside Europe, and neo-fascism.

Prerequisite(s): 1.0 course in History at the 2200 level or above, or permission of the department.

Antirequisite(s):

Extra Information: 1 lecture hour, 2 seminar hours.

Course Weight: 0.50

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.

HISTORY 3714F

SOCIAL BASES OF FASCISM

Instructor: **Nicolas Virtue** (nvirtue2@uwo.ca)

Mode of Instruction: **in-person**

Over a century since the founding of the first fascist movement in Milan, the spectre of fascism continues to fascinate and to fuel polemical debate. This course is a comparative history of fascist movements and fascist states in the twentieth century. Focusing primarily on the cases of Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany, students will engage with competing definitions of fascism while gaining a historical understanding of the origins of fascist movements, their bases of support, and the social, political, ideological, and cultural forces that informed the violent dynamics of fascist regimes. The course will also consider other European and non-European fascist movements of the 1930s, as well as the legacies of fascism and its contested applicability to politics in the present day.

This is a seminar-based course that demands active participation. Students will be expected to read and discuss on average two article-length readings each week. Over the course of the term, students will produce an original research essay and will be evaluated through a series of oral and written checkpoints (primary source research; paper proposal; paper presentation; final essay). Half of the course grade comes from oral participation and presentations; the other half comes from written work.

LEARNING OUTCOMES

By the end of this course students will be able to:

- understand and explain the leading definitions and interpretations of fascism
- distill and explain key debates and interpretations in the historiography of Italian Fascism and Nazi Germany
- apply comparative approaches and methods of historical analysis in seminar discussions and in their research
- draw knowledgeable and empirically based comparisons between past and present
- conduct academic research using primary and secondary sources
- communicate and express their ideas clearly, convincingly, and confidently in oral and written form

COURSE TEXTS

All required reading for this course will be made available online through the OWL course site.

COURSE EVALUATION

Seminar Participation	30%	weekly
Primary Source Presentation	10%	October 2 or 9
Research Paper Proposal	15%	due October 16
Lightning Round Presentation	10%	November 13 or 20
Research Paper	35%	due December 4

Seminar Participation (30%)

It is expected that students will come to class each week having completed the assigned readings and prepared questions or points they would like to discuss. Students will be graded out of 10 for each seminar, according to the following rubric:

0/10 — student failed to attend class

3/10 — student attended class but did not participate or contribute

5/10 — limited participation with little evidence of preparation or comprehension of material

7/10 — active participation demonstrating preparation and comprehension of reading material

8/10 — active participation, comprehending and connecting readings to broader topics/ideas

9/10 — active, thoughtful, and respectful participation, taking initiative to stimulate discussion

10/10 — expert-level understanding of readings, taking leadership role to extend discussion

Note: Students may request an update on their participation grade at the mid-point of the term (Reading Week).

Primary Source Presentation (10%)

The presentations and written work for the course are all related to the final research paper. Students should get an early start on the research process by identifying a general topic and locating at least one primary source related to their topic within the first three weeks of class. By Week 3 (September 18), students will inform the instructor of their topic and selected primary source via the OWL Assessments portal. Based on these submissions, the instructor will assign each student a date when they will be expected to provide a brief presentation on their primary source to the class. The presentation schedule will be announced on Week 4, with presentations being held in class during Weeks 5 and 6. The primary source presentation itself will be about five minutes long. Students will briefly summarize their source, explain how they found it and what drew them to it, and why they think it is historically significant. The use of visual aids, such as PowerPoint slideshows or handouts, is encouraged.

Research Paper Proposal (15%)

Having selected a topic and done some preliminary research, students will write a formal research proposal. The 500-word proposal will summarize the topic, survey its historiography, identify research questions, and offer a working thesis statement. It should be accompanied by a list of at least five primary and secondary sources (the ratio may vary but a minimum of two secondary sources are required) that students expect to use for the research paper. The proposal must be submitted to OWL by 11:55pm on October 16.

Lightning Round Presentation (10%)

By Week 11, it is expected that students will have completed outlines or first drafts for their research papers. During Weeks 11 and 12, the entire class will present their research in a series of lightning round presentations. Lightning rounds require presenters to sum up their topics, methodologies, and key findings in just five minutes each. A description of lightning round presentations is available [here](#). A schedule of presentations will be made available by Week 9.

Research Paper (35%)

Students will incorporate feedback from their paper proposals and lightning round presentations to complete the final draft of their research papers, to be submitted via OWL by 11:55pm on the last day of class (December 4). Research papers should be 3,000 words (+/- 500), exclusive of notes and bibliography. Papers should be based on a mix of 5–10 primary and secondary sources, cited in footnotes according to [Chicago Manual of Style](#) conventions.

CLASS POLICIES

Students should familiarize themselves with the College-wide and Departmental policies outlined in the pages appended to this syllabus. These appendices include useful information and links about late penalties, academic offenses, student absences, support services at King's, etc. In addition to these general policies, please note the following class-specific policies.

Essay Course Requirement

Because this is an Essay (F) course, **all written work must be submitted** in order to pass the course (even if late penalties would reduce an essay grade to zero). This policy applies to the Paper Proposal and Research Paper.

Late Essays

This course adheres to the History Department's policy regarding written work submitted after the deadlines indicated in the course schedule: **late essays receive a 5 percent penalty for the first day after the deadline; 1 percent for each subsequent day**, including weekends; essays submitted after the seventh day following the deadline will receive a grade of 0.

Attendance and Absences

Attendance will be taken during each meeting. Students with excused absences on dates of assessment will be offered extensions (for written work), make-up opportunities (for presentations), or alternative written work (for missed seminars).

AI/ChatGPT

Within this course, **use of generative artificial intelligence (AI) tools (such as Chat GPT) is not permitted** for written work submitted for evaluation. Unauthorized use of AI will be subject to academic discipline.

Turnitin Analysis

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. Use of the service is subject to the licensing agreement, currently between The University of Western Ontario and Turnitin.com (<http://www.turnitin.com>).

SCHEDULE AT A GLANCE (FALL 2025)

Note: a detailed schedule of seminar readings will be provided on OWL Brightspace.

Week 1 (September 4)	INTRODUCTION
Week 2 (September 11)	DEFINING FASCISM
Week 3 (September 18)	FASCIST TAKEOVERS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Source Submission Due
Week 4 (September 25)	FASCIST SUPPORTERS
Week 5 (October 2)	RESEARCH DAY <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Source Presentations
Week 6 (October 9)	FASCIST REVOLUTIONS <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary Source Presentations (continued)
Week 7 (October 16)	FASCIST TERROR <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research Paper Proposal Due
Week 8 (October 23)	FASCIST WOMEN
Week 9 (October 30)	FASCIST WARFARE
Week 10 (November 6)	NO CLASS (READING WEEK)
Week 11 (November 13)	FASCIST GENOCIDES <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lightning Round Presentations
Week 12 (November 20)	FASCIST INTERNATIONALISM <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Lightning Round Presentations (continued)
Week 13 (November 27)	FIGHTING FASCISM
Week 14 (December 4)	FASCISM TODAY? <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Research Paper Due

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 https://www.kings.uwo.ca/kings/assets/File/currentStudents/courses_enrollment/exams_and_tests/S_MC-Feb-2025.pdf.

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://uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/academic_consideration_Sep24.pdf

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 (under [Special Examinations](#)).

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://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-services/>

Students experiencing emotional or mental health distress can access services at King's University

College: <http://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/campus-services/student-support-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/mental_wellbeing/

Academic Support Services at King's University College:

<https://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/academic-resources/>

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://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/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.

Further supports can be found on this website: <https://www.kings.uwo.ca/about-kings/safe-campus/gender-and-sexual-violence/>

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://www.kings.uwo.ca/current-students/student-affairs/code-of-student-conduct1/>

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

http://www.uwo.ca/univsec/pdf/academic_policies/appeals/scholastic_discipline_undergrad.pdf

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/Originality Reports - 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.