



Department of History
History 361: Seminar in History

Spring Semester

Prof. Thomas

Meetings

History 361 meets Monday and Wednesday, 2:00-3:50 in the Ballinger Room in Adams Library.

Catalog Description

This course builds upon the students' experience in History 200. Emphasis is placed on issues of historiography, the identification and definition of historical problems, the researching and writing of a substantial paper, and historical criticism. Various topics will be offered for analysis each semester.

Topic for spring semester 2010

Whose New World Order?
The West and the Muslim World, 1945-2005

The purpose of this seminar is to gain historical perspective on the emergence of the post Cold War world, or the "New World Order", as it has been called since 1917 by assorted political leaders, from American presidents to communist rulers, as well as pundits, intellectuals, academics from around the world. To this end, the seminar focuses on the political, cultural, economic and military relationships existing between Western states and societies –primarily the US and Britain, and Muslim states and societies from the end of World War II, through the American invasion of Iraq and beyond to 2005.

This 60 year period is notable for the degree to which there was sustained interaction between the western states and societies and the states and societies of the Muslim world. For example, in terms specifically of the U.S. and the Muslim world, this 60-year period was marked by numerous events which shaped history to the present. These

include, among others, the Truman Doctrine announced in 1947 which applied specifically to Turkey, Greece, and the Middle East, and, in the same year the creation of the state of Pakistan, a state meant specifically for the Muslim people of India, out of British ruled India, as well as the creation of the State of Israel in 1948 out of Palestine, at this time ruled also by the British; With U.S. support, the emergence from Dutch rule, of an independent Indonesia, then as well as now the largest country in terms of population in the Muslim world; the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 which sparked the rapid emergence of Arab nationalism, the Iranian nationalization of its oil resources in 1952 and the subsequent American intervention in Iran in 1953, the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1955 which sparked the Suez War of 1956, an event which led the U.S. to take a leading role in the Middle East and the Muslim world from then to the present, the Algerian War of Independence which resulted in the defeat of France in 1962, the Six-Day War of 1967 resulting in a total Israeli victory which in turn shaped the Middle East conflict to the present, the emergence in its aftermath of active Palestinian resistance to Israeli which continues to the present, the 1973 October War fought between Israel, Syria and Egypt which in turn led to the end of hostilities between Israel and Egypt and set the basis for a peace initiative which resulted in the Camp David Accords of 1978, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 which in turn led to the invasion of the American Embassy in Tehran, a dramatic and traumatic event for the U.S., but one which soon shared the headlines with the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, precipitating a Muslim inspired and US supported Jihad (holy War) against the Soviet Union during the 1980s, a far-reaching development that finally forced the Soviet Union to abandon Afghanistan in 1991 even while the Soviet Union itself was tottering toward dissolution, a process which finally took place on Christmas Day of 1992 when the government of the Soviet Union announced its demise and reconstituted Russia as one of a Commonwealth of Independent States a confederation which exists to the present. The latter was a dramatic event to say the least as it marked the end of the Cold War, a development which took place simultaneously with the U.S. led coalition of states in a war in the Persian Gulf to force Iraq to abandon Kuwait which it had invaded in August of the previous year. Hence by the beginning of the last decade of the twentieth century the U.S. emerged victorious in the Cold War and by any measure the single most powerful state on the planet, a condition which was almost immediately challenged by radical Muslim groups which attacked U.S. interests both within the U.S. and throughout the world, culminating in a spectacular attack on the U.S. on 9/11/2001. 9/11 in turn precipitated a U.S. invasion of Afghanistan in October, 2001, followed by the invasion of Iraq in April, 2003, which brings us almost to the present and as such makes it difficult to write a seminar paper that can be considered historical, or at least, have an historical perspective.

At the very least, as the foregoing list illustrates, the period between the end of WW II and the present illustrates the degree to which the U.S. and many of the countries of the Muslim World found themselves involved with one another on many levels, and on these many levels, often at odds with one another. What it does not illustrate, except indirectly, are the changes which were taking place in the U.S. and the Muslim world while these events unfolded of which the social upheaval of the 1960's in U.S. and the parallel resurgence emerging at the same time of an increasingly militant Islamic identity are only two examples.

The collective work of the seminar will consist of reading and discussing a series of articles reflecting different historiographical perspectives on important aspects of internal development of Western and Muslim states and societies, and the interchange between the United States, the United Kingdom, and other Western states and the Muslim world, culminating with the emergence of an American dominated 'global world order' following the end of the Cold War in 1991, a world order which, at least until September 11, 2001 was presumed to be irreversible. These readings will provide a framework, context and departure for individual seminar papers on an aspect of the political, cultural, ideological, military or economic relationships existing between Western nations, and the Muslim peoples of Afro-Eurasia since 1945. Students will have the opportunity to write their seminar papers on the basis of any doable approach, social, cultural, political, ideological, and/or country, institution (e.g. UN, World Bank, global corporations, etc.) vis-à-vis the Muslim world from 1945 to the present, which can be supported by Adams/HELIN holdings.

Course Specifics

My office is located in Gaige 304. My office phone is: 456-8765; the department phone is 456-8039. You can also get in touch with me through college or webct **email**. *In terms of students in my classes, I prefer the latter.* My webct email is handled within webct; my college email is: dthomas@ric.edu. I prefer to talk face to face but will try to respond as quickly as possible to email messages. All students are issued an email account and will be expected to use it within the framework of WebCT.

Office Hours. I keep regular office hours M. 1-2 & 4-5 W. 4-5, TTh. 11-12 & 4-5. I am also available at most other times during the week when I am not preparing classes or otherwise engaged in professional or institutional obligations. I also keep "virtual", on-line office hours during which I will respond to emails or telephone calls. My "virtual" (online) office hours are MW, 9:00-9:30 pm, ThF 9:00-10:00 am, Th. 8:30-9:30 pm. Sunday, 8:30-9:30 pm.

Using Webct. The readings, apart from Turabian which you are to purchase, will be available over webct. In addition students will submit their written work through webct and email will be handled though webct as well. The History 361 site has been running for several years and seems to work well; its use will be reviewed in the first week of the seminar.

Required Readings. The following are required reading. Other materials which may be consulted collectively or individually will be on reserve at Adams Library or available over webct.

- ◆ *New World Order Readings available on WebCT*
- ◆ Kate Turabian, *A Manual of Style for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations* (Chicago, 9th edition, 2008)

Approach and Structure of the Seminar

The approach and the structure of the seminar differs substantially from the other courses you take in your undergraduate career. Essentially the objective of the seminar is to have the student produce knowledge in the form of a substantial paper on a topic requiring focused research around a general issue or question, in this case, the relationship of the Muslim world and the West within a world dominated by western wealth and power. The history seminar at Rhode Island College is directly modeled on the history seminar as it was originally developed in Germany in the nineteenth century under the direction of the great historian, Leopold von Ranke. Foremost, everybody reads everything, including what your fellow students write. Each student will present her or his research and writings, and will read, critique and discuss other students' writings and the seminar as a whole will discuss and debate the ideas that emerge out of the writings and the critiques. This process will take place in each class period but it can also take place outside of class through face-to-face conversation and/or email, or through a discussion forum set up within webct.. Hence, the purpose of the seminar is to be a framework for a community of learners each of whom will produce a seminar paper focused on a particular topic and from that perspective will contribute to the discussion, the exchange of ideas and thereby to each other's learning and education, as they themselves learn.

To this end, the work of the seminar is divided into four cycles. The **first** will be devoted to common readings and discussion of the common readings. In this cycle, each member of the seminar will be responsible for a specific reading and leading the discussion of that reading. This will include the preparation of a written précis of the reading to be shared with the seminar. The précis will be made available through webct to each member of the seminar no later than the class previous to the class in which it will be presented. Further information on how this takes place will be discussed in the first week of the seminar. A major purpose of this cycle is to provide the members of the seminar with a historiographical framework and context for identifying and elaborating a research topic. The **next** cycle will be devoted to the preparation of research topics. During this cycle each member of the seminar will systematically develop their research topic, and will meet individually with the instructor to discuss the ongoing development of their specific research topic. In addition, students will be encouraged to use the support offered by a member of Adams Library reference department. Further information on this will be forthcoming. During this cycle, the seminar will not meet on a regular basis but will meet collectively several times to listen to a report on the progress each member of the seminar is making in their research and to discuss research and writing generally. In the **third** cycle, once again all members of the seminar meet together to formally present and discuss their seminar papers. Each paper presented will receive a commentary by a member of the seminar followed by discussion. The **final** cycle consists of an individual evaluation conference with the instructor. **Note**, detailed instruction will be provided for each of the foregoing components and the process to be followed in each of these cycles as a cycle begins.

The pedagogical emphasis throughout is on collaborative learning. Collaborative learning, by definition, requires the regular and predictable participation of all members of the seminar. Hence, each student is responsible for producing her or his work at the time it is scheduled; regular attendance is expected as individual unexcused absences will delay or even stop the collective work of the seminar, and thus hinder the learning and effort of every member of the seminar. The success of the seminar as a whole thus depends on your individual efforts; your efforts will make you successful and contribute to the overall success of the seminar. Knowing what is expected of you is your responsibility so be sure to seek clarification for any aspect of the structure and expectations of the seminar that may not clear to you after reading this syllabus.

Required Work for the Seminar

- Regular participation in discussion and the work of the seminar.
- Preparation and completion of a précis of one of the readings, and informed discussion of the précis as they are presented.
- Preparation of a seminar paper which includes defining a topic, conducting research, preparing drafts, writing the final paper, and presentation of the paper. The paper must be original writing following the usual conventions for documentation. The typical length of a seminar paper is 5-7,000 words of text (about 20-30 pages), though shorter and longer papers may be perfectly acceptable. In addition, of course, the paper must include the critical apparatus of end-notes or footnotes, bibliography, appendices in the style(s) specified by Turabian.
- Preparation of a commentary or précis on another seminar paper.
- Individual evaluation conferences following the successful completion of the required work for the seminar.
- **Note:** In addition to the foregoing, students in 361 who will be graduating seniors in spring, 2010 are required to complete a portfolio. This is a departmental/college requirement and further information on it will be given in the seminar, along with the presentation of a model portfolio.

Grading

The principal work of the seminar is the completion and presentation of the seminar paper. The seminar paper will be assigned a grade in the final evaluation conference, but all other aspects of the seminar are important. Hence, your final grade for the seminar is based upon the **overall quality of the total required work accomplished**. A rubric is posted on webct which indicates how quality for the work produced is measured. A percentage breakdown for each assignment follows. **Note:**

this breakdown will be incorporated into the webct grade book and students will be able to view their ongoing progress on a regular basis.

Précis Written	10%
Précis Presented	5%
Discussion of précis	5%
Seminar Paper	50%
Presentation of Seminar paper	10%
Critique/précis of a seminar paper	10%
Discussion of seminar papers	10%
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Total	100%

Calendar

I. Discussion and Formulation of a Research Topic (five weeks)

1. Jan. 25. Seminar meets in Gaige 165. Introduction to the Seminar. What is the purpose and value of the history seminar? Using the webct seminar site. Accessing articles and course materials, doing, presenting and posting a précis. Using WebCT. Readings” (R). Everyone is to read for the next class, “The Fourteen Points” and “How to do a Précis”. Everyone is to download and begin to read a copy of Esposito, *Ten things Everyone Should know about Islam*. These are found on webct under respectively “Seminar Readings” and “Student Writings”.
2. Jan. 27. If necessary seminar meets in Gaige 165. Otherwise the seminar will meet in the Special Collections Ballinger Room of Adams Library. Discussion of reading and the historiography of The New World Order. Interpretation of the “Fourteen Points”. Perspectives on the Muslim world in the twentieth century. Reading and precis assignment from Esposito For Feb. 1. Readings assigned.
3. Feb 1. Class meets in the Ballinger Room. Individual précis on one of the ten things everyone should know about Islam. **Note:** all members of the class are to download a copy of the précis from the Discussion Board and bring a copy to class. Discussion on what constitutes a good seminar paper. First readings précis to be posted by Feb. 1.
4. Feb.3 Two précis presented and discussed. Discussion on formulating a research topic.
5. Feb. 8 The seminar will meet in the Adams Library computer lab for a session on locating and using research materials for preparation of seminar papers.
6. Feb. 10: Two précis presented and discussed. By this time you should try to have a preliminary proposal for your seminar paper formulated, described to some extent and outlined as far as possible. Beginning with this class, these are

to be posted on webct and brought to class for discussion. **Note:** all members of the seminar are to download a copy of any seminar paper proposal to bring to class.

7. Feb. 15: Two précis presented. Continue posting written proposals for seminar papers
8. Feb. 17: Two précis presented and discussed.
9. Feb. 22: Two précis presented and discussed.
- 10 Feb. 24: Remaining two précis presented and discussed. Summary of your individual research topics are due. General discussion of readings in the context of your individual topics. By this time at the latest, you have your final written summary of your research topic, complete with a preliminary bibliography to be shared with all members of the seminar. You are by now actively engaged in research and writing preliminary drafts.

II. Research, Writing and Conferences (four weeks)

Individual conferences will be scheduled on the days the seminar does not meet.

11. March, 2 and 4: Individual conferences.

12. March 3: Presentation of 4 research topics, seminar meets. Discussion of what makes a good seminar paper. General discussion of where you are with your research and writing.

13. March 8, 9 and 10. Individual conferences

Week of March 15, Spring Break

14. March 22. Presentation of 4 research topics

15. March 23, 25 Individual conferences,

16. March 24. Presentation of 4 research topics

III. Presentation of Seminar Papers (five weeks)

17. March 29, Seminar meets in the Ballinger Room of the Special Collections department of Adams Library. **seminar paper drafts (1st, 2nd or 3rd!) are due and are to be submitted to Prof. T and posted to the discussion board on webct.** General discussion of where you are with your research and writing. Discussion on how to present, discuss and do a critique of a seminar paper. Schedule of presentations and commentators specified.

18.: March 31 through April 28, **Presentation, commentator's critique and discussion of seminar papers. Detailed colander of presentations and commentaries will be posted on webct. Papers and commentator's critiques are to be submitted to Prof. T and posted on the discussion board.**

19: April 28-May 5: submission, posting and exchange of final drafts of seminar papers and final general critique of each paper.

IV. Evaluation Conference

20.To be scheduled beginning on May 6 through May 13.By this time all seniors will have submitted their portfolio which must be signed by me and will include the seminar paper.