

History 229: 1968 in Europe, National and Transnational Perspectives

Lecture: TR 11:00 am-12:15 pm
Location: 1121 Mosse Humanities

Instructor: Dr. Ben Shannon
Email: btshannon@wisc.edu
Office: 5269 Mosse Humanities
Office Hours: T, 1:00-3:00 pm (and by appt.)

Course Description

The year 1968 witnessed an explosion of protest activity in Europe. From student demonstrations to the growing counterculture, it appeared that the youth of the continent (and the world) had united in revolt. Even today, the idea of a unified “68er” generation still occupies historians and evokes visions of young leftists, struggling against the authority of police and parents. This course will test the validity of these images, by examining the unrest of 1968 within a number of different contexts. By comparing both national and transnational perspectives, this course will demonstrate the ways in which it is possible to speak of a European-wide experience of 1968, as well as the limitations of such narratives. Likewise, it will encourage students to avoid teleological understandings of 1968, by conveying *both* the incredible sense of possibility, as well as the crucial missed opportunities, which characterized this volatile period. Finally, it will explore the important legacies of 1968, in order to demonstrate its lasting impact and relevance to the present day.

Course Objectives

Upon completing this course, students should be able to:

- Identify the national and transnational origins, manifestations, and legacies of 1968 in Europe
- Understand the concept of teleology and its danger to historical analysis
- Analyze primary sources related to 1968 in Europe and understand their historical significance
- Construct an argument by comparing two or more primary source documents
- Clearly communicate knowledge, both verbally and through the written word

Student Workload

This 4-credit course meets as a group for 4 hours per week (according to UW-Madison's credit hour policy, each 75-minute class counts as 1.5 hours). The course also carries the expectation that you will spend an average of at least 2 hours outside of class for every hour in the classroom. In other words, in addition to class time, plan to allot an average of at least 8 hours per week for reading, writing, preparing for discussions, and/or studying for quizzes and exams for this course.

Assessment

Grades are based on the following scale:

100-93 = A
92-88 = A/B
87-83 = B
82-77 = B/C
76-70 = C
69-60 = D
59-0 = F

Final grades will be calculated accordingly:

Paper 1 (500 words, due 9/25) = 5%
Paper 2 (750 words, due 10/19) = 10%
Paper 3 (1500 words, due 11/25) = 20%
Midterm Exam (10/23) = 20%
Final Exam (TBD) = 20%
Discussion = 15%

(For the full version of this syllabus, please contact me at btshannon@wisc.edu)