

# Vesalius College

## Course description

**Course title:** History of Postwar Europe

**Course code:** HIS 213E

**Teacher responsible:** Michael F. Palo, Ph. D., Associate Professor of History at Vesalius College

**Course description:**

This course is designed to offer undergraduate students a comprehensive survey of the political, economic, social, diplomatic, and cultural developments in Europe since the Second World War. Among the subjects that will be dealt with in depth are: the Cold War and its aftermath; the origins and development of the European Union; the NATO alliance, its enlargement, and its relation with the EU Security Policy; the rise and the decline of the welfare state; the end of empire and decolonization; the revival of nationalism and growth of ethnic tensions; and the development of transnational movements and institutions. Though there will be an emphasis on the major states of Western Europe, Central and Eastern Europe (including the Balkans), the Iberian Peninsula, and Scandinavia will not be neglected.

**Course objectives:**

In addition to providing factual information about the topics treated in the lectures and discussed in the readings, this course aims to help students to improve both research and analytical skills (see more on this below) and to appreciate the complexity of the historiography (i.e., the varying interpretations that historians make on the basis of their study of the subject in question) that exists on the topics examined. As will be seen from the explanation of the written assignments, students in this course are expected to address the problem of historical interpretations in a comparative way in their papers. They are also expected to pay close attention to interdisciplinary approaches to the study of European society. Courses in the social sciences (i.e., Communications, Economics, Politics, Psychology, and Sociology) as well as those in the humanities, such as Philosophy, may contain insights into the topics being studied that should not be ignored. Particularly important are concepts, definitions, hypotheses, and theories from other disciplines that have a bearing on the subject that is being investigated. The basic format of this course is lecture-discussion.

**Grade weighting scheme:**

Written Assignments-----	-----Subtotal = 50%
Topic Proposal Essay for Research Paper-----	-----05%
Article Abstract-----	-----10%
Title, Thesis Statement, Outline, and Bibliography (Research Paper)-----	-----05%
Final Research Paper-----	-----30%

Examinations-----	Subtotal = 50%
Midterm-----	20%
Final-----	30%
Total-----	= 100%

**Used course material (handbooks, readers, readings, newspapers, magazines) and references:**

Tony JUDT, *Postwar: A History Europe Since 1945* (London: William Heinemann, 2005). ISBN: 0-434-00749-8

Rosemary WAKEMAN, ed., *Themes in Modern European History since 1945* (London and New York: Routledge, 2003). ISBN: 0-415-21988-4