HIST 4117
Winston Churchill

Course Director: Prof. C. M. Bell
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Fall 2013

Course Description:

Winston Churchill is one of the most important and controversial figures in modern British history. This course is not designed to examine every aspect of Churchill’s life; rather, it focuses on major events in British (and world) history in which Churchill was a leading actor. Subjects for discussion may include: social reform and the welfare state; the return to the gold standard; the 1926 general strike; the Middle East; Ireland; India, empire, and decolonisation; appeasement; Allied grand strategy in the two world wars; strategic bombing; intelligence; the Anglo-American ‘Special Relationship’; and the Cold War. This course will also examine the historiography of these subjects, and the impact of Churchill’s own extensive writings in shaping the historical record.

Required readings

Winston S. Churchill, The Gathering Storm
Course reader (available for purchase from Julia’s Photocopy Service, 1525 Le Marchant St. – Cash or Cheque only)

Course Evaluation: Marks will be distributed in the following manner:

- Book Review (due: 7 October) 20%
- Research essay (due: 2 December) 40%
- Debate 20%
- Seminar participation 20%

Research Resources (On reserve in the Killam Library):


Reserve Readings

- Blake, Robert and Wm Roger Louis (eds), Churchill (DA 566.9 C5 C476 1992)
Assignments and Grading

1. Seminar Participation

This is an advanced seminar class that requires intensive reading and informed discussion. All members of the seminar are expected to attend class and participate actively in seminar discussions. Common weekly reading assignments will provide the background needed for seminar participation. Additional individual readings may be assigned for some classes. You must come to class prepared to discuss all the assigned readings for the week. Attendance does not equal participation. To earn marks you must take part in discussions and respond to questions, so come to class with your own questions and observations.

2. Debates

Every student will take part in one formal debate. A list of topics will be provided by the instructor. Students are encouraged to discuss their topics in advance with the instructor. Additional guidance will be given in class.

3. Book Review

Students will review Book I (“From War to War”) of Winston Churchill’s The Gathering Storm, covering the years 1919-1939. These reviews must not be simply a summary of the book. A well-balanced review will identify the work’s main arguments, provide a synopsis of its contents, and comment on the author’s use of evidence and the strengths and weaknesses of the work. Students are allowed to draw on published works when framing their critique. David Reynolds’ essay in the course reader, “Churchill and the Gathering Storm”, will be particularly useful in this respect. Further guidance on writing a book review will be provided during class time. Students who remain unclear on what is required are encouraged to meet with the instructor. Length should be approximately 2000-2500 words.

4. Research Essay

Students will choose their essay topics in consultation with the instructor, and are welcome to seek advice at any point during the research or writing process. Essays must be approximately 4000-5000 words in length (approximately 15-20 typed, double spaced pages) and conform to the Department of History guide Doing History at Dalhousie. Students are expected to use primary source materials whenever these are readily available.
Accommodation Statement:

Students may request accommodation as a result of barriers related to disability, religious obligation, or any characteristic under the Nova Scotia Human Rights Act. Students who require academic accommodation for either classroom participation or the writing of tests and exams should make their request to the Advising and Access Services Center (AASC) prior to or at the outset of the regular academic year. Please visit www.dal.ca/access for more information and to obtain the Request for Accommodation – Form A.

A note taker may be required as part of a student’s accommodation. There is an honorarium of $75/course/term (with some exceptions). If you are interested, please contact AASC at 494-2836 for more information.

Please note that your classroom may contain specialized accessible furniture and equipment. It is important that these items remain in the classroom, untouched, so that students who require their usage will be able to participate in the class.

Academic Integrity Statement:

All students in this class are to read and understand the policies on academic integrity and plagiarism referenced in the Policies and Student Resources sections of the academicintegrity.dal.ca website. Ignorance of such policies is no excuse for violations.

Any paper submitted by a student at Dalhousie University may be checked for originality to confirm that the student has not plagiarized from other sources. Plagiarism is considered a serious academic offence which may lead to loss of credit, suspension or expulsion from the University, or even to the revocation of a degree. It is essential that there be correct attribution of authorities from which facts and opinions have been derived. At Dalhousie there are University Regulations which deal with plagiarism and, prior to submitting any paper in a course, students should read the Policy on Intellectual Honesty contained in the Calendar or on the Online Dalhousie website. The Senate has affirmed the right of any instructor to require that student papers be submitted in both written and computer-readable format, and to submit any paper to be checked electronically for originality. As a student in this class, you are to keep an electronic copy of any paper you submit, and the course instructor may require you to submit that electronic copy on demand.
Seminar Topics & Readings

Week 1  (September 9)

Introductory meeting: how the seminar will work

Week 2 – Churchill’s personality and reputation  (September 16)

Required readings:

• Anthony Storr, “Churchill the Man” [Course Reader]
• Christopher Hitchens, “The Medals of his Defeats”
  Available electronically through the Killam Library.

Additional readings:

• David Reynolds, In Command of History
• John Ramsden, Man of the Century: Winston Churchill and His Legend Since 1945
• David Dutton, Neville Chamberlain, chapter 4.
• Marvin Rintala, “The Love of Power and the Power of Love: Churchill's Childhood”,
  Political Psychology, vol. 5, no. 3 (Sep. 1984), 375-90.

Week 3 – Churchill and the Dardanelles/Gallipoli (September 23)

Required readings:

• Tom Curran, ‘Who was Responsible for the Dardanelles Naval Fiasco?’, Australian Journal of Politics & History, 57, no. 1 (March 2011), 17–33. Available electronically through the Killam Library.
• Christopher M. Bell, Churchill and Sea Power (chapter 2, excerpt)

Additional readings:

• Robin Prior, Gallipoli
• Robert Rhodes James, *Gallipoli*
• Alan Moorehead, *Gallipoli*

**Week 4 – Appeasement** (September 30)

**Required readings:**

• David Reynolds, ‘Churchill's Writing of History: Appeasement, Autobiography and *The Gathering Storm*’. [Course Reader]
• B.J.C. McKercher, ‘Churchill and the German Threat, 1933-1939’ [Course Reader]

**Additional readings:**

• R.A.C. Parker, *Churchill and Appeasement*.

**Week 5 – Churchill’s Finest Hour?: The Decision to Fight in 1940** (October 7)

**Required readings:**

• David Reynolds, ‘Churchill and the British ‘Decision’ to fight on in 1940: right policy, wrong reasons’. [Course Reader]
• Alan Clark, A reputation ripe for revision, *The Times*, 2 January 1993 [Course Reader]
• Paul Addison, ‘Churchill and the Price of Victory : 1939-1945’ From Blitz to Blair : A New History of Britain since 1939 [Course Reader]

**Additional readings:**

• John Charmley, *Churchill: The Price of Glory*

**Week 6 – Strategic Bombing** (October 21)

**Required readings:**

• Christopher Harmon, “Are We Beasts?: Churchill and the Moral Question of World War II “Area Bombing”’. Available online: http://www.winstonchurchill.org/images/pdfs/for_educators/Harmon__Are%20We%20B

**Additional Readings:**

• Frederick Taylor, *Dresden: Tuesday, February 13, 1945*
• Charles Messenger, “Bomber” Harris and the Strategic Bombing Offensive, 1939-1945

**Week 7 – The Fall of Singapore and the Loss of Force Z** (October 28)

**Required readings:**

• Christopher M. Bell, ‘Winston Churchill, Pacific Security, and the Limits of British Power, 1921-41’ [Course Reader]
• Geoffrey Regan, “The Fall of Singapore”, in *Someone had Blundered: A Historical Survey of Military Incompetence*, chapter 10. [Course Reader]

**Additional readings:**

• S. Woodburn Kirby, *Singapore: The Chain of Disaster*.
• James Neidpath, *The Singapore Naval Base and the Defence of Britain’s Eastern Empire*.

**Week 8 – The United States, FDR, and the ‘Special Relationship’** (November 4)

**Required readings:**

• John Charmley, ‘Churchill and the American Alliance’. [Course Reader]

**Additional Readings:**

• Martin Gilbert, *Churchill and America*.
• John Charmley, *Churchill’s Grand Alliance*.
Week 9 – The Mediterranean Strategy and the Second Front  (November 18)

Required readings:

• Douglas E. Delaney, “Churchill and the Mediterranean Strategy: December 1941 to January 1943”. Available electronically through the Killam Library: [link to PDF]

• Tuvia Ben-Moshe, ‘Winston Churchill and the “Second Front”: A Reappraisal’. Available electronically through the Killam Library. [link to JSTOR]

• Trumbull Higgins, *Winston Churchill and the Second Front*, chapter 10. [Course Reader]

Additional readings:

• John Grigg, 1943: *The Victory that Never Was*. 
• John Dunn, *Second Front Now, 1943*.

Week 10 – Stalin, the Soviet Union, and the Yalta Conference  (November 25)

Required readings:


• David Carlton, “Allied with Hell”, from *Churchill and the Soviet Union* [Course Reader]

• Anita Przemsowska, “Churchill and Poland” [Course Reader]

Additional readings:

• Klaus Larres, *Churchill’s Cold War*. 

• Robin Edmonds, “Yalta and Potsdam: Forty Years Afterwards”, *International Affairs* 62 (1986) [link to JSTOR]
Week 11 – The Holocaust (December 2)

Required readings:


Additional readings:

- Martin Gilbert, *Auschwitz and the Allies*
- Martin Gilbert, *Churchill and the Jews*

Comment [1]:

Week 13 – Détente and the Cold War (November 28)

Required readings:

- David Carlton, “Churchill and the Two ‘Evil Empires’”.
- John W. Young, “Churchill and the East-West Détente”.

Additional readings:

- David Carlton, *Churchill and the Soviet Union.*
- Klaus Larres, *Churchill’s Cold War*.
- John W. Young, *Churchill’s Last Campaign.*