



Universidad
de Navarra

Contemporary History (Fcom)

Guía docente 2025-26

PRESENTACIÓN

Breve descripción: The course offers an introductory survey of the main dynamics that shaped the contemporary world. Its time framework starts around 1945 with the rise of the bipolar world divided into the West and the East. It follows with the Cold War, the decolonisation, the processes of globalisation and the fall of the Soviet Bloc. Contrary to predictions of some, the History did not end there and so the course continues with the events of the last three decades, when the Past blends with the Present.

By using different learning tools focused on content, interaction, critical thinking and problem solving, we are going to look into how the world changed on both national and international level as well as into the role the media played in these transformations. Although the main emphasis is going to be put on politics, we will not lose sight of the social and economic dimensions, for they are indispensable for a solid comprehension of the contemporary world.

- **Titulación:** Degrees in Journalism, Audiovisual Communication
- **Módulo/Materia:**
- JOURNALISM
 - Módulo II: Entornos del Periodismo
 - Materia 3: Entorno histórico-cultural
- AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION
 - Modulo II. Entornos de la Comunicación Audiovisual
 - Materia 1. Entorno Histórico y Sociocultural
- **ECTS:** 3
- **Curso, semestre:** 1st (First Term)
- **Carácter:** Compulsory
- **Profesorado:** Santiago de Navascués
- **Idioma:** Inglés
- **Aula, Horario:**
 - Viernes de 10 a 12, Aula 3. Fcom

RESULTADOS DE APRENDIZAJE (Competencias)

AUDIOVISUAL COMMUNICATION DEGREE (COMPETENCES)

1. KNOWLEDGE

RA1 - Students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject area based on a general secondary school education. They should have a general level that is well supported by advanced texts, but that also encompasses aspects that suggest knowledge of the leading edge of their field of study.

RA2 - Understanding and valuing the impact of audiovisual communication on society, culture, history, economics, business, law, science, ethics and technology.

2. SKILLS

RA12 - Accurately expressing knowledge and ideas in speech and writing in the field of audiovisual communication.



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2. COMPETENCES

RA19 - Students should be able to gather and interpret relevant data (normally within their field of study) in order to make judgments that encompass consideration of social, scientific and ethical topics.

RA21 - Understanding, analyzing and critically evaluating defining elements of human beings and contemporary society from anthropological, historical, cultural and social points of view.

JOURNALISM DEGREE (COMPETENCES)

1. KNOWLEDGE

RA1 - Students should demonstrate knowledge and understanding of the subject area based on a general secondary school education. They should have a general level that is well supported by advanced texts, but that also encompasses aspects that suggest knowledge of the leading edge of their field of study.

RA4 – Identifying the main forms of cultural, literary and artistic expression in Western culture from the beginning to the present day.

RA5 – Being familiar with the defining elements of modern society, specifically those pertaining to social, political and economic questions as they relate to current affairs.

RA6 - Defining and understanding the evolution of different contemporary journalistic forms and traditions in Spain, Europe and the world throughout history, as well the theories, concepts and schools of thought that address these forms and traditions.

2. SKILLS

RA13 - Expressing thoughts and ideas in speech and writing in an accurate, orderly, creative fashion in order to make information available to society.

2. COMPETENCES

RA22 - Students should be able to gather and interpret relevant data (normally within their field of study) in order to make judgments that encompass consideration of social, scientific and ethical topics.

RA24 - Understanding, analyzing and critically evaluating the defining elements of human beings and contemporary society from anthropological, historical, cultural, political, social and economic points of view.

RA27 - Interpreting and valuing the historic evolution of contemporary world affairs and understanding the political, economic, social and cultural parameters that affect a good communicator's work.

PROGRAMA

1. Presentation
2. The Legacy of War
3. Cold War
4. The End of European Empires
5. The European integration



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6. The Middle East
7. China since 1945
8. The Post-Cold War Order

ACTIVIDADES FORMATIVAS

Attendance

Regular attendance is crucial for success in this class. Attendance will be recorded during each session, except on days when a task is due or a test is scheduled. Students who **miss more than two lessons** without a valid excuse will not have the Attendance points. A medical absence can be excused with justification. Attendance contributes **10% to the overall grade**.

History Interview and Essay

As part of this course, students are required to conduct an interview with a distant relative and write an essay based on the collected material. The interview should focus on the life and times of the relative, addressing key aspects of Contemporary History, such as politics, ideology, social structures, cultural shifts, and more. Following the interview, students will write an essay that connects the personal narrative to broader historical themes. This essay constitutes **25% of the total grade**.

Midterm Exam

In addition to the final exam, there will be a mid-semester test, which will account for **15% of the overall grade**. Students must take this test as scheduled, and no exceptions will be made. It is highly recommended that students schedule at least one tutoring session during the semester to prepare effectively.

Final Exam

Students are also required to take a final exam, which will constitute **50% of the overall grade**. The final exam will not only assess students' understanding of the subject matter but also evaluate the clarity of their writing, precision of vocabulary, and relevance of the content and arguments presented in their responses. Students who do not pass the final exam in December will have the opportunity to retake it in June.

- Attendance: 26h

- Evaluation: 4h

- Tutorials: 1h

- Student study hours: 44h

EVALUACIÓN

CONVOCATORIA ORDINARIA

Grading Breakdown

- Participation in Class: 10%



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- **History Interview and Essay:** 25%
- **Midterm Exam:** 15%
- **Final Exam:** 50%

Multiple Choice Questions (50% of the Final Grade)

- **Format:** You will be required to answer 50 multiple-choice questions, each with four options (a, b, c, d).
- **Scoring:**
 - Each correct answer adds 1 point.
 - Each incorrect answer deducts 0.25 points.
 - Unanswered questions neither add nor subtract points.
- **Duration:** The time limit for this section is 50 minutes.
- **Weight:** This section accounts for 50% of the final exam grade.

Long Answer Questions (50% of the Final Grade)

- **Format:** You will select two out of four provided topics and write detailed responses to open-ended questions.
- **Sample Questions:**
 - "Describe and compare the independence movements in India and South Africa."
 - "What was the Sino-Soviet split?"
 - "Describe the origins of the European Union."
 - "What were the main factors that led to the origins of the Cold War?"
- **Weight:** This section accounts for the remaining 50% of the final exam grade.

CONVOCATORIA EXTRAORDINARIA

For the June retake exam, the entire final grade (100%) will be based on a comprehensive exam covering the full course content. The structure and content will be identical to the December exam, including both multiple-choice and long answer questions.

HORARIOS DE ATENCIÓN

Prof. Dr. Santiago de Navascués (sdenavascue@unav.es)

- Despacho 2140 Edificio Ismael Sánchez Bella
- Horario de tutoría: jueves de 9 a 11:30h. [Schedule your appointment.](#)

Prof. Juan Diego Molina (jdmolinam@unav.es)

BIBLIOGRAFÍA

Course book

McMahon, Robert J. (2003) The Cold War: A Very Short Introduction. [Find it in the Library](#)

General Bibliography



Gaddis, J.L., *The Cold War: A New History* (2007) [Find it in the Library](#)

Bell, P.M.H., *The World since 1945: An International History* (2001) [Find it in the Library](#)

Blanning, T.C.W. (ed.), *The Oxford Illustrated History of Modern Europe* (1998) [Find it in the Library](#)

Burrows, T. (ed.), *The History of the Modern World* (2012) [Find it in the Library](#)

Cohn-Sherbok, D. & El-Alami, D.S., *The Palestinian-Israeli Conflict: A Beginner's Guide* (2008) [Find it in the Library](#)

Fenby, J., *The Penguin History of Modern China* (2009) [Find it in the Library](#)

Hobsbawm, E., *The Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914-1991* (1996) [Find it in the Library](#)

Judt, T., *Postwar: A History of Europe since 1945* (2005) [Find it in the Library](#)

Lukacs, J., *A Short History of the Twentieth Century* (2013) [Find it in the Library](#)

Mazower, M., *Dark Continent: Europe's Twentieth Century* (1998) [Find it in the Library](#)

Stone, D. (ed.), *The Oxford Handbook of Postwar European History* (2014) [Find it in the Library](#)

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Townson, D., *Dictionary of Contemporary History: 1945 to the Present* (1999) [Find it in the Library](#)

Woodruff, W., *A Concise History of the Modern World: 1500 to the Present. A Guide to World Affairs* (2002) [Find it in the Library](#)

Westad, Odd Arne, *The Cold War: a world history* (2017) [Find it in the Library](#)

Young, J.W. & Kent, J., *International Relations since 1945: A Global History* (2013) [Find it in the Library](#)

Complementary Bibliography

Atlas of Modern World History (1989) [Find it in the Library](#)

Best, A. (et al.), *International History of the Twentieth Century* (2004) [Find it in the Library](#)

Fulbrook, M. (ed.), *Europe since 1945* (2009) [Find it in the Library](#)

Gildea, R., *Barricades and Borders: Europe 1800-1914* (1991) [Find it in the Library](#)

Lindemann, A. S., *A History of Modern Europe: From 1815 to the Present* (2013) [Find it in the Library](#)

Merriman, J., *A History of Modern Europe: From the Renaissance to the Present* (2010) [Find it in the Library](#)

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Palmowski, J., *A Dictionary of Contemporary World History: from 1900 to the Present Day* (2008) [Find it in the Library](#)

Neff, S. C., *War and the Law of Nations: A General History* (2007) [Find it in the Library](#)

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The Penguin Book of Twentieth-Century Speeches (1999) [Find it in the Library](#)

Young, J.W., *The Longman Companion to the Cold War and Détente* (1993) [Find it in the Library](#)