This survey course will introduce students to the most important events, ideas, and individuals in the history of western civilization since the Renaissance, concentrating primarily on European societies. The course is designed to give the undergraduate student a general understanding of major intellectual and economic trends which have appeared in the West since the 16th century. Major topics to be examined will be: religion in European society from the Reformation through the 18th century; the birth of the nation state; the advance of modern science and its application not only to technology but also to thinking about society; the development of capitalism and the creation of new social classes and conflicts that shaped every aspect of people's daily lives and lead steadily towards globalization; the growth of intellectual and social movements or "isms" that have shaped people's understanding of the world and directed their efforts to change it; the evolvement of new methods by which states and other political actors have mobilized, controlled, or eliminated mass populations (propaganda, warfare, genocide, ethnic cleansing).

Over the semester we will explore what is often called "modernity" and how the Western tradition evolved during the past 500 years. Furthermore, we shall discuss the legacy of the modern West.

Approved for Arts & Sciences CORE: Historical Context

For more course descriptions go to: http://srap.colorado.edu/