

COURSE SYLLABUS



European History II

Course code: HIS 122/1

Term and year: Spring 2026

Day and time: Wednesday, 8.00-10.45

Instructor: Dr. Gerald Power

Instructor contact: gerald.power@aauni.edu

Consultation hours: Wednesdays, 14-15.00 (Room 4.02), or by appointment

Credits US/ECTS	3/6	Level	Bachelor
Length	15 weeks	Pre-requisite	
Contact hours	42 hours	Grading	Letter grade

1. Course Description

This course provides an overview of European history from approximately 1500 to 2000. It discusses a broad and rich array of themes in a narrative fashion, including the Renaissance and Reformation; the French Revolution; the Industrial Revolution; the emergence of national identities and states; the First World War; the inter-war period; World War II; the Cold War in Europe and post-Cold War Europe.

Instruction is via reading, class presentations and both teacher- and student-led discussions of primary sources, documentaries and podcasts. The key concerns of these different activities are to facilitate the in-depth exploration of important problems in modern European history and to encourage the intellectual development of each student.

2. Student Learning Outcomes

Upon completion of this course, students should be able to:

- Identify the outline historical 'facts' that have defined Europe from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century.
- Describe decisive political, economic, social and political forces which have shaped modern Europe.
- Reflect on knowledge gained in terms of alternative interpretations/explanations and students' own experiences/understanding of the world.
- Analyse and contextualise historical developments in European history, identifying patterns and continuities in addition to changes.
- Offer evaluations of European history based on critical thinking and an understanding of historical methodology.

3. Reading Material

Required Materials (Library and/or via MyLearning LMS)

- Merriman, John. *A History of Modern Europe: From Renaissance to the Present*. New York: 2010. This is a textbook to help you through the course. It is on desk-reserve in the library; the library also has multiple copies for loan.

Group Seminar, Research Paper Materials (in the Library, on MyLearning LMS or by following links)

Explaining 'The Rise of the West': Luck or Superiority?

- Crosby, Alfred. *Ecological Imperialism: The Biological Expansion of Europe, 900-1900*. New edn. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004.
- Goldstone, Jack. *Why Europe? The Rise of the West in World History, 1500-1850*. New York: McGraw-Hill, 2009.
- Parker, Geoffrey. *The Military Revolution: Military Innovation and the Rise of the West, 1500-1800*. 2nd ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996.
- Pomeranz, Kenneth. *The Great Divergence: Europe, China*

How Can We Explain the End of the European Witch-Hunt?

- Easlea, Brian. *Witch Hunting, Magic and the New Philosophy: An Introduction to the Debates of the Scientific Revolution, 1450-1750*. Brighton: Harvester, 1980, <https://archive.org/details/witchhuntingmagi0000easl/mode/2up>
- Israel, Jonathan. *Radical Enlightenment: Philosophy and the Making of Modernity, 1650-1750*. Oxford: OUP, 2001.
- Levack, *The Witch-Hunt in Europe*. Abingdon: Routledge, 2015.
- Thomas, Keith. *Religion and the Decline of Magic* (London: Penguin 1971).

Account for the Violence of the French Revolution

- Arendt, Hanna. *On Revolution*. London: Penguin, 1963.
- Lefebvre, Georges. *The French Revolution: From its Origins to 1793*. London: Routledge, 1962.
- Popkin, Jeremy. *A New World Begins: The History of the French Revolution*. New York: Basic Books, 2019.
- Schama, Simon. *Citizens: A Chronicle of the French Revolution*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1989. [In Library]

Was the Irish Famine a Case of Genocide?

- Coogan, T.P. *The Famine Plot: England's Role in Ireland's Greatest Tragedy*. New York: Palgrave, 2012.
- McGowan, Mark G. 'The Famine Plot Revisited: A Reassessment of the Great Irish Famine as Genocide.' *Genocide Studies International* 11, no. 1 (2017): 87-104
- Taylor, A.J.P. *Essays in English History*. London: Penguin, 1976.
- O Gráda, Cormac. *The Great Irish Famine*. Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1989.

Explain the Attraction of the Nazi Movement to German Women

- Koonz, Claudine. *Mothers in the Fatherland: Women, the Family and Nazi Politics*. Abingdon: Routledge, 1986.
- Lower, Wendy. *Hitler's Furies: German Women in the Nazi Killing Fields*. New York: Houghton Mifflin, 2013.
- Pine, Lisa. *Nazi Family Policy, 1933-1945*. Oxford: Berg, 1997.
- Stephenson, Jill, *Women in Nazi Germany*. London, Routledge, 2001.

Group F Presentation: Was the Soviet Union an Empire?

- Beissinger, Mark. 'Rethinking Empire in the Wake of the Soviet Collapse' in *Ethnic Politics after Communism*, ed. Zoltan Barany and Robert Moser. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2005: 14-45.
- Lieven, Dominic. 'The Russian Empire and the Soviet Union as Imperial Polities,' *Journal of Contemporary History* 30 no. 4 (1995):607-36.
- Martin, Terry. *The Affirmative Action Empire: Nations and Nationalism in the Soviet Empire*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001.
- Strayer, Robert. 'Decolonization, Democratization, and Communism Reform: The Soviet Collapse in Comparative Perspective,' *Journal of World History* 12, no. 2 (2001): 375-406.

Documentary/Educational Films

- *What is History? E.H. Carr, Then & Now* (YouTube channel)
- *Cold War* (CNN, 1998)
- *The Lost World of Communism* (BBC, 2013).

Podcasts

- *All You Need to Know About European History* – <https://shows.acast.com/all-you-need-to-know-about-european-history/episodes>
- *The Rest is History* - <https://therestishistory.com/club>

Primary Source Collections

- The Internet History Sourcebook – Primary Sources on Nazism and Fascism

4. Teaching methodology

The course combines lectures and seminars. Lectures are delivered by the instructor and students are expected to take notes, ask questions and respond to the instructor's calls for ideas and answers. Seminars are guided discussions concerning assigned material; for seminars it is essential that the assigned material has been studied. See the schedule below for details of when seminars take place.

Two classes are reserved for Group Presentations.

A note on attendance: This class is not delivered in hybrid mode. Students cannot join online without formal prior approval from the dean of their school or the vice president for student affairs.

5. Course Schedule

Date	Class Agenda
Session 1 4 Feb. 2026	Topic: Introduction Description: Students will receive an introduction to the course aims, structure and methods of evaluation. History as an academic discipline will be discussed. Instructor will divide the class into groups for the Group Presentations. Reading: Syllabus. Assignments/deadlines: None.
Session 2 11 Feb. 2026	Topic: The Late-Medieval World and Renaissance Description: Seminar Session: The Renaissance is explored based on our study of the assigned podcast. We look at the wider European world, particularly the development of overseas Empire and the rise of the Ottoman presence in the East. Reading: All You Need to Know podcast, episode 'Renaissance'. Assignments/deadlines: All groups: Preliminary Work 1: Breakdown of Tasks (in print).
Session 3 18 Feb. 2026	Topic: Reformation Description: Seminar Session: We explore why Europe became split into Catholic and Protestant blocs. We will also look at society, in particular the phenomenon of peasant uprising. How did religious radicalism spill over into social, economic and political radicalism – and how did people decide what could and could not be challenged? Reading: Merriman, ch. 3 to p. 103. Assignments/deadlines: All groups: Preliminary Work 2: Reading Report (in print).
Session 4 25 Feb. 2026	Topic: Counter-Reformation and Wars of Religion Description: Seminar Session: This session is devoted to discussing the era of religious wars which rocked Europe from the later sixteenth to the mid-seventeenth centuries. We try to comprehend Calvinism and the nature of the Catholic response: Catholic Reformation or Counter-Reformation? Reading: Merriman, ch. 3, pp 114-25. Assignments/deadlines: Research Paper Outline.
Session 5 4 March 2026	Topic: Absolutism & Enlightenment Description: Lecture Session: The unit looks at the rise of the absolutist state in much of Europe including Russia, contrasting this form of polity with the liberal constitutions of Poland-Lithuania, the Dutch Republic and Britain. The intellectual revolution known as the Enlightenment is introduced. Reading: None. Assignments/deadlines: All groups: Preliminary Work 3: Presentation Outline (in print) 2) Class Participation 1/3 points awarded.
Session 6	Topic: The French Revolution and Revolutionary Europe

11 March 2026	Description: Seminar Session: This module looks at how a political reform movement in France turned that country into creative, idealistic and bloody turmoil, and before long influenced the rest of the continent with passionate ideas of liberalism, nationalism, socialism and conservatism. Reading: The Rest is History podcast, episode 'The French Revolution: The First Feminist' (Apple podcasts) / here via Spotify. Assignments/deadlines: None.
Session 7 18 March 2026	Topic: Group Presentations Description: Group A on The Rise of the West / Group B on Early Modern Witch Trials / Group C on the French Revolution and Violence. Reading: None Assignments/deadlines: Group presentation for those involved.
Session 8 25 March 2026	Topic: The Industrial Revolution + Mid-Term Exam Description: Lecture Session: We explore the second great revolutionary process in modern European history, with a particular emphasis on the political and social impacts – most importantly the advent of class politics. After the break we will have an in-class exam. Bring pens! Reading: None. Assignments/deadlines: Mid-Term Exam
1 April 2026	Mid-term break
Session 9 8 April 2026	Topic: Progress and Reaction in 19th-century Europe Description: Seminar Session: The unit examines the 19th century in the context of the struggle between progressive/revolutionary and conservative/reactionary forces and social groups. The central, dramatic focus of attention is the 1848 'spring of nations'. We will also consider the strange hybrid of authoritarianism (including so-called patriarchy) and liberalism that characterized European states in the second half of the 19th century. In the seminar, we review Merriman's discussion of the impact of the Industrial Revolution. Reading: Merriman, ch. 14, pp 547-68. Assignments/deadlines: Class Participation 2/3 points awarded.
Session 10 15 April 2026	Topic: From Belle Époque to Great War Description: Lecture: We will chart the descent of Europe into total war, and consider why the First World War took the catastrophic course it did. Reading: None. Assignments/deadlines: Research Paper deadline.
Session 11 22 April 2026	Topic: The Era of World War II Description: Seminar Session: We begin by looking at Merriman's chapter and consider the question of German responsibility for World War I. Then we turn to era of World War II, surveying the causes, course and consequences of the most devastating conflict in human history, including a consideration of the Holocaust and the morality of Allied victory. Reading: Merriman, ch. 22, pp 863-88. Assignments/deadlines: None.
Session 12	Topic: Cold War Europe, 1945-1989: From Division to Unity

29 April 2026	Description: Seminar Session: The Cold War was the single greatest fact of life in Europe after World War II. This session looks at the establishment of Communist regimes and on contrasting conditions between East and West Europe. Yet we should not be blind to some commonalities between both sides of the Iron Curtain, such as youth movements and a culture of protest and dissent. Eventually, dissent helped to bring down Communist rule in the East. Reading: View the CNN <i>Cold War</i> documentary episode 'Comrades, 1917-1945'. Assignments/deadlines: Essay grades and feedback.
Session 13 6 May 2026	Topic: Group Presentations Description: Group D on the Irish Famine / Group E on Women and the Nazis / Group F on the character of the Soviet Union. Reading: None. Assignments/deadlines: Group presentation for those involved
Session 14 13 May 2026	Topic: Review + Final Exam Description: A final session will explore the major themes addressed in the course, and suggest ways of approaching contemporary European history. After the break we will have the final exam – bring pens! Reading: View the BBC <i>Lost World of Communism</i> documentary episode 'The Kingdom of Forgetting' Assignments/deadlines: Final Exam.

6. Course Requirements and Assessment (with estimated workloads)

Assignment	Workload (hours)	Weight in Final Grade	Evaluated Course Specific Learning Outcomes	Evaluated Institutional Learning Outcomes*
Class Participation	42	15% (3 x 5%)	Demonstrate awareness of the major processes and developments of European history, based on a close reading of assigned materials. Reflect on knowledge gained in terms of alternative interpretations/explanations and students' own experiences/understanding of the world.	1, 3
Group Seminar Presentation	24	20%	Demonstrate critical thinking based on thorough engagement with a variety of historiographical approaches and interpretations. Presentation and communication skills necessary for fluent and	1, 2

			cogent delivery of complex historical information.	
Research Paper Outline	10	5%	Offer evaluations of European history based on critical thinking and an understanding of historical methodology and the critical use of sources.	1, 3
Research Paper	46	20%	Offer evaluations of European history based on critical thinking and an understanding of historical methodology and the critical use of sources.	1, 3
Mid-Term Exam	14 (preparation time)	10%	Describe decisive political, economic, social and political forces which have shaped modern Europe. Identify the outline historical 'facts' that have defined Europe from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century.	2
Final Exam	14 (preparation time)	30%	Describe decisive political, economic, social and political forces which have shaped modern Europe. Identify the outline historical 'facts' that have defined Europe from the Renaissance to the twenty-first century.	3
TOTAL	150	100%		

*1 = Critical Thinking; 2 = Effective Communication; 3 = Effective and Responsible Action

7. Detailed description of the assignments

Assignment 1: Participation

Consistent preparation and participation are all essential for those wishing to pass the course and to score high grades. The instructor will monitor levels of participation of each student in each class. Points are awarded for making regular contributions throughout the semester. The grade is split into three parts. 5% is awarded by the end of Week 5, 5% by the end of Week 9 and the final 5% at the end of Week 14. Points are gained by offering oral contributions (questions, answers or comments) and for the levels of originality, collegiality and depth.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Offering three separate contributions in each phase of the semester	90%

Quality of contributions (depth, originality, relevance, collegiality)	10%
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Note: students can earn additional participation marks (2-4%) by attending one or more of the History & Philosophy Discussion Series talks and, within 48 hours after each event, sending by email a brief reflection paper of about 3 sentences on the impact their attendance at the discussion has made to their understanding or appreciation of the subject area.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Awareness of issues discussed	50%
Ability to respond to questions and promote discussion	50%

Assignment 2: Group Seminar Presentation

History is about ideas, interpretations. No 'final' account of European history will ever be written; instead historians will continue to offer different interpretations in an ongoing – though hopefully a progressive – discussion. We need, therefore, to become familiar with what historians argue (the 'historiography') and reflect upon it using our critical faculties, independent research and empathy. The Group Presentation invites students to consider and explore the central arguments of leading historians on a set of central topics in European history, from the so-called Rise of the West to the imperial character of the Soviet Union.

At the beginning of the semester students will be divided into groups. According to the schedule in this syllabus, each group will deliver a 30-minute presentation, outlining their understanding of the topic based on their reading of important contributions to historiography. Some form of visual aid ought to be used.

Preliminary work will have to be done, specifically every group will submit, in print, the following items:

- 1) Breakdown of tasks for each team member. Due in Class 2.
- 2) A one-page report on the reading progress accomplished. Due in Class 3.
- 3) A one-page outline of the Presentation (rough structure, assigned speaking responsibilities, key ideas/thesis). Due in Class 5.

Full descriptions of each Group Presentation are in the MyLearning course page under 'Resources', where you will also find the assigned materials.

Delivering the presentation can be the responsibility of a single student, but it is probably better if responsibility is shared. All members of the group ought to take part in the Q and A session.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Completing preliminary work (breakdown of tasks; report on reading; working outline)	15%
Effective presentation (oral and visual); evidence of genuine teamwork	45%
Level of critical thinking and comprehension of assigned materials including the conceptions and methodologies adopted by the assigned historians; dealing with Q and A.	40%

Assignment 3: Research Paper Outline

This is an exercise designed to aid the student in preparing well and preparing early for the final paper, and to give me a valuable opportunity to give some early input into the student's individual research process.

Students are required to email me an essay outline, either as an attachment or as a shared Google document. It should contain the student's name, the title of the essay, a list of the sources you have consulted so far, a sentence statement of your basic argument ('In this essay I wish to argue that ...') and a basic outline of your main points. It should not exceed one page.

Tips/Notes. 1) Before doing the Essay Outline, ensure that you have read and understood the assignment description for the Essay. There are certain parameters that you must work within. You will lose marks if your outline doesn't reflect those.

2) In considering your outline, don't structure the essay in terms of main argument followed by counter-argument. This makes the essay look unsure of itself. Generally speaking, if your argument has a cogent and persuasive counter-argument, then you need to change your argument.

3) Here are some useful guides to how to approach a history essay assignment:
<https://www.historytoday.com/archive/how-write-your-first-undergraduate-essay>
<https://www.historytoday.com/archive/how-write-essay>

The deadline is on the day of Session 4 by 18.00.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Basic elements presented	50%
Showing evidence of preparation of at least some assigned materials and knowledge of the essay requirements	50%

Assignment 4: Research Paper

It is a take-home assignment which tests your critical thinking skills, in addition to more basic skills of comprehension and synthesis. It is one of the supreme intellectual challenges to master.

Deadline

In print by 18.00 on the day of Session 10. It can be handed to me during class or left in my mailbox at Reception. It must also be submitted as a Turnitin assignment.

Research Paper Topics

CHOOSE ONE OF THE FOLLOWING TITLES

- 1) Was the 'Rise of the West' more the result of European luck or of European superiority?
- 2) Why did the European witch-hunt phenomenon end?
- 3) Account for the violence of the French Revolution
- 4) Was the Irish Famine a case of genocide?
- 5) Explain the attraction of the Nazi movement to German women
- 6) Was the Soviet Union an empire?

These essay titles are chosen very deliberately. They complement the six group presentation topics and are well furnished with reliable secondary source material (freely available via the Library and/or the Resources section of the NEO course-page). These sources are sufficient for the essay research but you are of course at liberty to supplement or replace them – but be warned: **not all sources are reliable**: check with me if in doubt.

Please do not attempt an essay that relates to your own group assignment.

Preparation Advice

My advice for those preparing for the essay is to begin by reading the essay titles above to get a sense of what appeals the most. Then, read Topic Descriptions (on MyLearning under 'Resources' or at the bottom of this document), to get a better sense of the issues in play. This might be the moment to reconsider your choice and look into doing one of the other topics. Once you have settled – at least provisionally – on your chosen question, start looking through the assigned materials – at this stage this means especially introductions and conclusions – and try and get a sense of what themes are relevant and which interpretations are the subject of discussion among historians. Note that most of the materials are available in PDF but others are to be found in print in the Library. Some require that you register to Archive.org; some are in e-reader format. Finally, start digging a little deeper in the assigned material with a view to understanding these topics in more depth. Having completed this process, you ought to be able to draw up an essay outline, laying out your ideas for the purpose and scope of the essay.

Essay Submission Details

The essay is to be 4-6 pages of double-spaced Times New Roman (excluding cover page and bibliography) which offers an evaluation, or judgment, of your chosen research topic.

The Criteria

1) Constructing an argument: The essay ought to have a major idea, revealed in the introduction and followed through in the main body. The argument (or interpretation) is not to be arbitrary, but the result of careful consideration of relevant secondary literature (the historiography). Making direct references to the historiography and how your own argument relates to it will enhance the sophistication and persuasiveness of your essay. Avoid presenting a main argument followed by a counter-argument. Instead, absorb any valid objections into a more robust main argument.

2) Data use: The essay needs a reliable foundation. But working out what sources are good and which are not can be very difficult. To simplify matters, the policy is very simple: **use the assigned material described above**. Should you find other sources that you think are valid and helpful, just get in touch with me and send me the details.

You must substantiate the various points offered in your essay by providing **references**. You can use MLA or Chicago referencing systems, but ensure that you provide page numbers where appropriate. I recommend Chicago-style footnotes (see this website for a guide:

https://owl.purdue.edu/owl/research_and_citation/chicago_manual_17th_edition/cmoss_for_mattng_and_style_guide/chicago_manual_of_style_17th_edition.html

Knowing when to give a citation or reference is sometimes difficult, but the rule of thumb is that every substantial idea or piece of data or quote requires a footnote. NB: no references will mean your essay can be construed as plagiarism.

3) Structure: The essay must have three sections: introduction, main body and conclusion. Please note that in this short essay there is no need for section headings. Instead, simply using paragraphing effectively will indicate the divisions between intro, main body and conclusion, as well as the divisions within the main body. Within the main body the rule is quite simple: each major point deserves its own paragraph (possibly, depending on the essay, you might devote more than a single paragraph to a main body point; but it is almost certainly going to be bad practice if you put more than one major point in the same paragraph). Good structure also involves consistency. Contradictory points which are not properly flagged and explained, or sudden changes of emphasis or direction are evidence of structural weaknesses and will lose points.

4) Technical: Keep to the page count and present the essay as specified above. Spelling mistakes and inaccurate or clichéd language will lose points. Aim for prose that is concise and clear, avoiding prose which is repetitious or unnecessarily complex or florid.

NOTE: Any essay which suggests the use of AI will be scrutinized carefully. Students may be required to give an oral account of their research and writing if the instructor is not satisfied that the work is genuinely the result of the student's independent hard work.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Argument construction	30%
Data use	30%

Structure	30%
Technical (spelling, grammar, punctuation and syntax)	10%

Assignments 5 and 6: Exams (Mid-Term and Final)

The exam takes 60 minutes and features 10 x multiple choice questions, 5 x fill-in-the-blank questions and 1 paragraph question.

The mid-term exam takes place in Session 8 and is based on material covered up to that point; the final is based on material covered from Session 8 onwards.

The paragraph answer is to be about 1 page and tests knowledge of one of the issues addressed in the seminar discussions. Mid-term topics include the Renaissance, Reformation, Counter-Reformation and French Revolution. Final exam topics include the Industrial Revolution, World War I and World War II.

You prepare for the exam by completing the reading assignments before each class (see the Lesson plan, above), taking notes and participating in the in-class discussions.

Assessment breakdown

Assessed area	Percentage
Factual knowledge (short-answers)	20%
Depth and comprehension (paragraph)	80%

8. General Requirements and School Policies

General requirements

All coursework is governed by AAU's academic rules. Students are expected to be familiar with the academic rules in the Academic Codex and Student Handbook and to maintain the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity in their work. Please see the AAU intranet for a [summary of key policies](#) regarding coursework.

Course specific requirements

AI use is allowed but under strict parameters. See the following table

Scale Levels and Descriptions

1	NO AI	The assessment is completed entirely without AI assistance. This level ensures that students rely solely on their knowledge, understanding, and skills. AI must not be used at any point during the assessment.
2	AI-ASSISTED IDEA GENERATION AND STRUCTURING	AI can be used in the assessment for brainstorming, creating structures, and generating ideas for improving work. No AI content is allowed in the final submission.
3	AI-ASSISTED EDITING	AI can be used to make improvements to the clarity or quality of student created work to improve the final output, but no new content can be created using AI. AI can be used, but your original work with no AI content must be provided in an appendix.
4	AI TASK COMPLETION, HUMAN EVALUATION	AI is used to complete certain elements of the task, with students providing discussion or commentary on the AI-generated content. This level requires critical engagement with AI generated content and evaluating its output. You will use AI to complete specified tasks in your assessment. Any AI created content must be cited.
5	FULL AI	AI should be used as a “co-pilot” in order to meet the requirements of the assessment, allowing for a collaborative approach with AI and enhancing creativity. You may use AI throughout your assessment to support your own work and do not have to specify which content is AI generated.

Table 1 The AI Assessment Scale

Uses 1 and 2 are permitted (and even encouraged); but not uses 3-5. Students can incur serious sanctions if they transgress this policy.

The essay must be submitted in print (either in my hand or in my mailbox at reception) and as a Turnitin assignment via MyLearning.

Grading Scale

Letter Grade	Percentage*	Description
A	95–100	Excellent performance. The student has shown originality and displayed an exceptional grasp of the material and a deep analytical understanding of the subject.
A–	90–94	
B+	87–89	Good performance. The student has mastered the material, understands the subject well and has shown some originality of thought and/or considerable effort.
B	83–86	
B–	80–82	
C+	77–79	Fair performance. The student has acquired an acceptable understanding of the material and essential subject matter of the course, but has not succeeded in translating this understanding into consistently creative or original work.
C	73–76	
C–	70–72	
D+	65–69	Poor. The student has shown some understanding of the material and subject matter covered during the course. The student’s work, however, has not shown enough effort or understanding to allow for a passing grade in School Required Courses. It does qualify as a passing mark for the General College Courses and Electives.
D	60–64	
F	0–59	Fail. The student has not succeeded in mastering the subject matter covered in the course.

* Decimals should be rounded to the nearest whole number.