

History 4810 : US Military History

Fall Semester 2007

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Office Hrs. Tues. 10-12; by appointment

Course Scope: Examination of the history and the development of the United States military from the early Republic (1787- 1815), through the Civil War and World Wars to the post-Cold War period.

Course Objectives:

1. To encourage the student to know the major wars, battles, military leaders in US history.
2. To help the student realize that the US military, as much as the “West” and other such factors, have helped shape this country. As Geoffrey Perrett, one military historian, has noted in the title of his book, *America is A Country Made by War*.
3. To encourage the student to improve his/her writing style (through constant writing assignments) as well as to feel confident in expressing his/her point of view .
4. To inspire you with stories of America’s greatest military figures, as well as stories of sacrifice by ordinary, little-known figures in US military history
5. To enable the student to realize the important role that technology, geography, governmental policy has played in the evolution of US military might.

Classroom Pedagogy: I am a “non-traditional” professor; I prefer visual material to lectures and writing papers to taking exams. Every one begins the class with an A, and one must work hard to knock down that grade! One is expected to attend class but not sleep, talk to neighbors, read newspapers, check voice messages, leave the room frequently, etc. Doing the above will reduce your final grade. The student is expected to tell me ahead of time if he/she must leave early. I don’t mind a student coming in late—as long as it is not 40 minutes late and occurs frequently. Obviously, I cannot cover every exigency, but the point should be obvious: I want the student to attend class, be well-behaved, respectful, courteous—not just to me but to one’s classmates. Given the subject matter and the current lack of consensus in US society, classroom discussions can become heated. Therefore, I am reminding the student that appropriate behavior is expected. If such is not possible, drop the course now or expect a lowered grade.

Requirements:

1. Unspecified number of class exercises (written responses, quizzes, etc.) (100 points or more)
2. Textbook writing assignments (at least 100 points) (a more extensive reading assignment schedule to be given during first week)
3. Take-home essay final (100 points) (questions given during 15th week)

Textbooks:

Allison, *American Military History*

Boot, *Savage Wars of Peace*

Huchthausen, *America’s Splendid Little Wars*

Williamson, *War in the Air: 1914-1945*

Tentative Topic/Reading Schedule:

First Week: Revolutionary War (read Allison, chapters 1-3)

Second Week: Revolutionary War/War of 1812 (Allison, chapters 4-5)

Third Week: Role of Military before Civil War (Mexican War) (Allison, chapters 6-7)

Fourth & Fifth Weeks: Civil War (Allison, chapter 8)

Sixth Week: US Military 1865-1917 (Allison, chapter 9)

Seventh Week: US in World War I (Allison, chapter 10)

Eighth Week: Interwar Period (Allison, chapter 11)

Ninth & Tenth Weeks: US in WWII (Allison, chapter 12)

Eleventh Week: Post-WWII Military; Cold War (Korea) (Allison, chapter 13)

Twelfth Week: Cold War Conflicts and Vietnam War (Allison, chapters 14, 15)

Thirteenth Week: Rebuilding the Military, 1975-1990; Gulf War (Allison, chapter 15); Gulf War and Military in Post-Cold War (Allison, chapter 16)

Fourteenth Week: US Military in “Age of Terrorism” (Allison, chapter 17)

Fifteenth Week: Assessment of US Military in US History; Take-home exam essays questions provided by Friday, Dec. 7

Sixteenth Week: Final exam week: Take-home essay exam due Dec. 14 at noon (History Department front desk, Main 323)