

The Ohio State University
History 3561: American Military History, 1902 to Present

Semester Year

Time

Classroom

Instructor: Robert F. Williams
Office: Dulles Hall
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Office hours: T/R 11:15 to 1:15 or by appointment

Course Description

This course examines American military history from the aftermath of the Spanish-American War through the wars in Afghanistan and Iraq after the terrorist attack on the U.S. homeland on September 11, 2001. The course will focus on the interrelationship of foreign and military policy, the conduct of war, the genesis of national security policy and civilian control of the decision-making process, the experience of American service members at war, and the influence of American society upon the armed forces as social institutions. The course covers U.S. participation in World War I, the interwar period, World War II, the Cold War, the Korean War, the Vietnam War, the Gulf War, and the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Through readings, lectures, and in-class discussion, the class will study the growth of the United States and its armed forces from insular nation to global superpower.

HI 3561 fulfills the GE requirement in the “Historical Study (HS)” category.

Within the undergraduate history major, this course satisfies the following requirements:

Category B: Breadth – Chronological, 1750 to the Present

Category C (1): Geographical concentration: North America

Category C (2) Thematic concentration: Human Conflict, Peace, and Diplomacy.

Learning Goals and Objectives

Students recognize how past events are studied and how they influence today’s society and the human condition.

Expected Learning Outcomes:

1. Students construct an integrated perspective on history and the factors that shape human activity.
2. Students describe and analyze the origins and nature of contemporary issues.
3. Students speak and write critically about primary and secondary historical sources by examining diverse interpretations of past events and ideas in their historical contexts
4. Students acquire a perspective on the history of American military strategy and policy since the turn of the 20th century and to gain an understanding of factors that continue to shape the United States as a great power in the 21st century.
5. Students acquire knowledge about the nature of modern warfare and to develop a foundation for comparative understanding of the wars in which the United States is engaged today.
6. Students exhibit an understanding of the political, economic, cultural, physical, and social dynamics that have shaped the armed forces of the United States in the 20th and 21st centuries.
7. Students gain an appreciation of the ethical dilemmas generated by the use of force in international affairs.

Required texts:

Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*

West Point History of Warfare, selected chapters (online download – instructions on Carmen)

Eliot Mackin, *Suddenly We Didn't Want to Die*

Eugene Sledge, *With the Old Breed*

H.R. McMaster, *Dereliction of Duty*

Thomas Ricks, *Fiasco*

Sebastian Junger, *War*

*Readings must be completed by the date they are listed on the syllabus.

Assignments:

You will compose two 5-7 page papers over the course of the semester. The first of these will require you to conduct research and analyze the origins and causes of a conflict involving the United States. The second will involve a analysis of a piece of American military policy of your choice. Papers will be typed, at least 5 full but not more than 7 full pages in length not including the bibliography. Papers will use Times New Roman font, 12 point, left justified, with lines double-spaced, and with 1-inch margins. Students will put their name at the top of the first page on the right margin. Sources must include at least two books. Further details concerning these assignments are available through Carmen. Printed papers are due at the beginning of class on the due date.

Note: I will collect papers at the beginning of class periods for which they are due—before the lecture begins. Late papers will be subject to an automatic 10% penalty plus an additional 5% deduction from the final score for each late day. Assignments submitted more than one week after the original deadline will not receive any credit. As with all make-up assignments and examinations, extensions will be extremely rare and require written permission from the instructor in light of evidence concerning a legitimate excuse or absence.

Grading:

20% Conflict Origins Paper (Due. Feb. 20)

15% Midterm Examination (Mar. 5)

30% Policy Analysis Paper (Due Apr. 9)

30% Final Examination (TBD)

5% Class Attendance

Attendance policy:

Attendance in class is required. At five random class sessions during the semester, students will be required to sign an attendance sheet. Attendance at each of these sessions is worth 20 points, or 2 percent of the course grade. Students who coordinate with the professor in advance to miss class for a valid reason will receive the points for that class. Non-attendance due to illness requires a doctor's note in order for the student to receive attendance credit.

Lectures may deviate from the assigned readings, and material presented in class is testable. All students are expected to read the assignments and come to class prepared to actively listen and participate. You must take the midterm and final examinations and submit both required papers to receive course credit; otherwise, you will earn an "E." Students who are unable to take an examination because of unavoidable circumstances must make arrangements to take a makeup examination. If you must be absent due to extenuating circumstances, explain the reason to me, preferably in advance. Document the reason for your absence and we will make the necessary arrangements for a make-up exam. I will award a grade of "incomplete" only in truly exceptional circumstances

Electronic devices:

After having consulted the relevant literature on learning and memory, I am banning the use of laptops or tablets in lecture (except those necessitated by some documented special need). It should go without saying that phone use in class is prohibited, and violation of this policy will lead to your removal from class that day. As just one piece of evidence I offer you this: https://www.nytimes.com/2017/11/22/business/laptops-not-during-lecture-or-meeting.html?smid=fb-share&_r=0

Make-up examinations:

Should an absence be unavoidable, all make-up exams will take place in office hours (or by appointment if absolutely necessary) at the earliest possible opportunity.

Academic misconduct:

It is the responsibility of the Committee on Academic Misconduct to investigate or establish procedures for the investigation of all reported cases of student academic misconduct. The term “academic misconduct” includes all forms of student academic misconduct wherever committed, illustrated by, but not limited to, cases of plagiarism and dishonest practices in connection with examinations. Instructors shall report all instances of alleged academic misconduct to the committee (Faculty Rule 3335-5-487). For additional information, see the Code of Student Conduct (http://studentaffairs.osu.edu/info_for_students/csc.asp).

Students with disabilities:

Students with disabilities that have been certified by the Office for Disability Services will be appropriately accommodated and should inform the instructor as soon as possible of their needs. The Office for Disability Services is located in 150 Pomerene Hall, 1760 Neil Avenue; telephone 292-3307, TDD 292-0901; <http://www.ods.ohio-state.edu>.

Grading Scale:

A 93–100	B- 80–82.9	D 60–69.9
A- 90–92.9	C+ 77–79.9	E Below 60
B+ 87–89.9	C 73–77.9	
B 83–87.9	C- 70–72.9	

Course Schedule

- Lesson 1** Course Introduction
Reading: Syllabus
- Lesson 2** The Emergence of a World Power and the Root Reforms, 1899-1905
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 10
- Lesson 3** Early Air Power through the Punitive Expedition
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 11
- Lesson 4** “Over There” – Building a Military to Fight a European War
Reading: *Suddenly We Didn’t Want to Die*

- Lesson 5** The U.S. Armed Forces in the Great War
Reading: *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 1 (1918: The Year of Decision) and Chapter 2 (WWI: Overwhelming the Germans and Victory)
- Lesson 6** Military Policy in the Interwar Period
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 12
- Lesson 7** A Sleeping Giant – the United States and Armed Neutrality, 1939-1941
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, 367-374; “Plan Dog” (on Carmen)
- Lesson 8** Crafting a Strategy for Global War
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, 374-403
- Lesson 9** The Combined Bomber Offensive
Reading: *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 4 (Strategic Seapower and Airpower)

Reading Period (No Class)
- Lesson 10** Normandy and the Campaign for Northwest Europe
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 14
- Lesson 11** Film: The World at War – “Pacific”
Reading: Sledge, xi-Part I
- Lesson 12** The Pacific War, 1942-1944
Reading: *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapters 3 (Japan Strikes: From Pearl Harbor to Midway) and 5 (Waging Global War)
- Lesson 13** The Pacific War, 1945
Reading: Sledge, Part II-end; *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 6 (The Defeat of Japan)

*****Paper #1 Due*****

- Lesson 14** The Emergence of the Post-War Era and the Korean War
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 15

- Lesson 15** The Cold War, Containment, and Nuclear Strategy
Reading: *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 7 (Cold War 1945-1973: Containment and the Nuclear Era)

READING PERIOD, No Class

MIDTERM EXAMINATION

Reading: Study Lesson 1-15

Mar. 10/12 **SPRING BREAK, No Class**

Lesson 16 The Vietnam War, 1945-1964
Reading: *Dereliction of Duty*, beginning–154; *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 9 (Revolutionary War in Southeast Asia, 1954-1964)

Lesson 17 The U.S. War in Vietnam, 1965-1972
Reading: *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapters 10 (American Escalation in Vietnam, 1965-1967) and 11 (American De-Escalation in Vietnam, 1968-1972)

Lesson 18 Victory in the Cold War
Reading: *Dereliction of Duty*, 155–end; *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 19.

Lesson 19 War and Peace in the 1990s
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 20.

Lesson 20 9/11
Reading: The 9/11 Commission Report, pp. 1-14, 47-70, 325-334
available at <http://govinfo.library.unt.edu/911/report/911Report.pdf>

Lesson 21 The War in Afghanistan
Reading: *War*, part I; *West Point History of Warfare*, Chapter 12 (*Afghanistan: Thirty-Five Years of War and Counting*)

Lesson 22 The Iraq War
Reading: *For the Common Defense*, Chapter 21

Lesson 23 The War Against ISIS
Reading: *War*, Part II

*****Paper 2 Due*****

Lesson 24 Contemporary Military Policy
Reading: *War*, Part III

Lesson 25 Reading Period (No Class)

TBD FINAL EXAMINATION
Reading: Study Lessons 1-26