

Hist 355: American Military Affairs

I. Course Information

Instructor Info:

Dr. T. Cole Jones

Email: colejones@purdue.edu

Office: University Hall 222

Class Time and Location:

Monday, Wednesday, Friday

10:30-11:20

RAWLS 1011

Office Hours:

1:30-2:30 Mondays and Wednesdays

or by appointment

Course Website:

Blackboard

Teaching Assistant:

Ms. Andrea Ens

Office Hours: 12:30-2:30 Mondays

REC 409

Email: aens@purdue.edu

II. Course Description

This course will explore the history of the United States from its colonial origins to the present by looking at issues of war and defense. We will ask a number of questions about the history of American military affairs. How have Americans confronted threats to their national security? In what ways have Americans used military force to advance foreign policy objectives? How have America's military institutions changed over time? How has technology affected the conduct of war? How has war influenced American culture? How have American values and assumptions about war evolved? While we will explore questions of peacetime defense, this course will concentrate on armed conflict. We will examine domestic strife and foreign invasions, rebellions and civil wars, imperial and world wars, and finally terrorism and counterinsurgency in order to assess the role of war in American history. In so doing, we will question whether there is, or has ever been, an American way of war.

III. Learning Objectives:

This course asks you:

1. To increase your knowledge of the key events, themes, and problems in American military history.
2. To analyze the social and cultural place of war within American society, and to question the role of warfare as an agent of historical change.
3. To appreciate the role of contingency in warfare.
4. To understand the enduring influence of past conflicts on contemporary American society.
5. To examine American conflicts on the strategic, operational, and tactical levels of warfare.
6. To analyze and contextualize historical evidence.
7. To improve your oral and written communication skills.

IV. Course Requirements

1. Attendance and Active Participation—**20%**

Attendance is required and active participation is encouraged. Lectures provide the background knowledge and analytical framework necessary to understand the readings and complete the assignments.

2. Midterm Exam—**20%**

In class exam on October 4

Midway through the semester we will have an exam designed to evaluate your comprehension of the course material. The exam will take the format of several identifications and one essay. Please bring a “blue book” to class. I cannot provide you with one.

3. Song Lyric Analysis—**15%**

Due: October 25

This Assignment asks you to locate and identify the lyrics of a song written during one of America’s past conflicts. Once you have uncovered an acceptable song, you will write a **2-page** critical analysis, explaining what the lyrics can tell us about the person or persons who created it, probing what the song can tell us about their attitudes to the American military and conflict, and placing it within its proper historical context.

4. Film Project—**25%**

Due: November 22

As a final project, all students will write a **6-8 page** critical analysis of a film related to the history of war and defense in America from 1492 to the Present. America’s military history has attracted considerable attention from Hollywood, yet the portrayal of America’s wars on film has varied considerably. This assignment takes as a premise that movies provide a window onto the values and assumptions of the people who create and consume them. In this project, I do not want you to evaluate the film for its historical accuracy, I want you to analyze the film in the context of the historical moment in which it was created. This assignment is about the time and place in which the movie was made not the time and place the movie portrays. We will discuss this project in more depth in class.

All writing assignments should be typed and double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font with 1-inch margins. Citations should adhere to the Chicago Manual of Style

6. Final Exam—20%

The final exam will occur during the university's exam week. It will cover the second half of the course.

V. Course Readings

Required Texts:

Joseph T. Glatthaar, *The American Military: A Concise History* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018)

Richard W. Stewart, ed., *American Military History* (Washington, DC: Center of Military History, 2009-10), 2nd edition, 2 vols.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History* is available for download through blackboard.

VI: Classroom Policies:

My policies are simple:

Show up to every class on time.

Do the assignments.

Be respectful.

Use common sense.

Do your own work.

Do not lie, cheat, or steal.

If you have a question, ask me in person or via Email.

Late papers will be penalized **one-third grade per day** [example: an A paper that is one day late becomes an A- paper]

For a more detailed explanation of the above, see the University Policies:

“Purdue prohibits ‘dishonesty in connection with any University activity. Cheating, plagiarism, or knowingly furnishing false information to the University are examples of dishonesty.’ [Part 5, Section III-B-2-a, Student Regulations] Furthermore, the University Senate has stipulated that ‘the commitment of acts of cheating, lying, and deceit in any of their diverse forms (such as the use of substitutes for taking examinations, the use of illegal cribs, plagiarism, and copying during examinations) is dishonest and must not be tolerated. Moreover, knowingly to aid and abet, directly or indirectly, other parties in committing dishonest acts is in itself dishonest.’ [University Senate Document 72-18, December 15, 1972]”

<https://www.purdue.edu/odos/academic-integrity/>

Students with Disabilities:

Students who need special accommodations to participate fully in class should contact me as soon as possible. While I will do everything in my power to accommodate your needs, Purdue University requires you to provide me with appropriate written documentation and to have that documentation on file with Student Services. Students should be aware that Services for Student Disabilities are available at 494-1247 if you need further assistance.

VII. Course Content:

WEEK 1

Mon. August 19: What is Military History?

Wed. August 21: An American Way of War?

Fri. August 23: "Horse Soldier"

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, ix-x.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:1-17.

WEEK 2

Mon. August 26: European and Native American Ways of War

Wed. August 28: Clash of Empires

Fri. August 30: "Rule Britannia"

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:19-42.

WEEK 3

Mon. September 2: Labor Day, NO CLASS

Wed. September 4: British Liberties or Free America?

Fri. September 6: "Free Americay"

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:45-105.

WEEK 4

Mon. September 9: War for Independence or Revolutionary War?

Wed. September 11: Revolutionary Legacies

Fri. September 13: "Hail Columbia"

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, 1-24.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:108-156.

WEEK 5

Mon. September 16: Second War for Independence

Wed. September 18: Antebellum Professionalization

Fri. September 20: “Benny Havens, Oh”

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1: 160-197.

WEEK 6

Mon. September 23: Warring for Manifest Destiny

Wed. September 25: Brother against Brother

Fri. September 27: “Lincoln and Liberty”

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, 25-52.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:200-304.

WEEK 7

Mon. September 30: Total War?

Wed. October 2: War on the Plains or War of Extermination?

Fri. October 4: MIDTERM

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:308-344.

WEEK 8

Mon. October 7: Fall Break, NO Class

Wed. October 9: Warring for Empire

Fri. October 11: “The Regular Army-O”

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 1:347-369.

WEEK 9

Mon. October 14: Open Doors

Wed. October 16: FILM: Apocalypse World War I

Fri. October 18: “When the Lusitania Went Down”

Reading:

No Reading.

WEEK 10

Mon. October 21: Lafayette, We are Here!

Wed. October 23: Isolation and Innovation

Fri. October: 25: “Over There” —SONG PROJECT DUE

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, 53-87.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2: 1-77.

WEEK 11

Mon. October 28: Blitzkrieg and Banzai!

Wed. October 30: Germany First

Fri. November 1: “Boogie Woogie Bugle Boy”

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:79-103, 133-166.

WEEK 12

Mon. November 4: Island Hopping

Wed. November 6: Destroyer of Worlds

Fri. November 8: "Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition"

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:169-202.

WEEK 13

Mon. November 11: Containment and Escalation

Wed. November 13: Tonkin to Tet

Fri. November 15: "Ballad of the Green Berets"

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:203-253

WEEK 14

Mon. November 18: Vietnamization

Wed. November 20: Safe for Democracy?

Fri. November 22: "The Eve of Destruction"—FILM PROJECT DUE

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, 88-123.

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:290-370.

WEEK 15

Mon. November 25: Sand and Oil

Wed. November 27: Thanksgiving NO CLASS

Fri. November 29: Thanksgiving NO CLASS

Reading:

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:373-459.

WEEK 16

Mon. December 2: Terror and Counterinsurgency

Wed. December 4: Tomorrow's War?

Fri. December 6: "American Soldier"

Reading:

Glatthaar, *The American Military*, 124-27

Stewart, ed., *American Military History*, Vol. 2:463-517.

EXAM WEEK: December 9-14

Disclaimer:

In the event of a major campus emergency, course requirements, deadlines and grading percentages are subject to changes that may be necessitated by a revised semester calendar or other circumstances beyond the instructor's control. Relevant changes to this course will be posted on Blackboard or can be obtained by contacting the instructor via email. You are expected to read your @purdue.edu email on a frequent basis.