



Survey of United States History Since 1865 HONORS
Prothro-Yeager College of Humanities and Social Sciences
HIST 1233 Section 2H1
Spring 2022

Contact Information

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Course Description

This is an Honors survey examining American history through the lens of conflict and warfare. The class is meant for students with a basic knowledge of American History, and explains how the United States became a world power. It challenges some of the preconceived and learned notions about American History and the American people that are often presented as “truths” in public school courses, popular (and flawed) books, and in the media. As an Honors course, we will engage in lively and rational debate, in which students with various opinions can exchange points of view respectfully without childish shunning, cancelling, or ad hominem attacks. There is NO personal and intellectual growth unless your opinions and values are challenged. The discussions, lectures, and readings are meant to develop critical thinking skills in relation to historical themes paradigms, and events.

Throughout the semester, we will examine the peculiarities of the American Way of War from English colonization of Virginia to the War on Terrorism with the main focus between 1865 and the present. This course significantly differs from similar courses in that it philosophically accepts that violence is an integral part of the human condition, and that war is often a legitimate and unavoidable undertaking. The students will critically explore the history of American warfare, developing an understanding of how Americans and the government adapted to changing methods and philosophies of organized violence. We will investigate the philosophies behind decisions to go to war, and evaluate the social, psychological, and political ramifications of armed conflict on Americans, the US military, and the government.

Student Participation

Students are responsible for their own education. I am a harsh taskmaster and do not accept excuses that tend to be pervasive in today's society. You are adults, and with age comes responsibility for your own actions or lack thereof. Active student participation in learning (which includes careful reading of ALL assignments, classroom engagement, attentive note taking, and participation in discussions), the maintenance of a weekly study schedule, the completion of ALL assignments in a timely manner, adequate preparation for exams, and, when necessary, individual post-exam consultation with the instructor, are essential to meeting the learning outcomes of the course. However, if you turn in all assignments, pass your exams, and participate in discussions, you are not guaranteed a “good grade”. A is a designation for superior work, and B for good work. If your work ethic, written work, and test taking efforts are merely satisfactory, you will EARN a C. The bare minimum earns a D.

Textbooks

Peter Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton University Press, 1986), 9780691027647.

Allan Millett, et al., *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (Free Press, 2012), 9781451623536.

John Chambers II and Kurt Piehler (eds.), *Major Problems in American Military History*, 1st ed. (Houghton Mifflin, 1998), 9780669335385.

Recommended Texts (you are not required to purchase these books):

Mosse, George. *Fallen Soldiers: Reshaping the Memory of the World Wars*. Oxford University Press, 1990.

Morillo, Stephen with Michael F. Pavkovic. *What is Military History?* Polity Press, 2006.

You can use this book to become more comfortable with the basic assumptions, problems, and language of military history, including who does it and why as well as its broader epistemological issues.

Readings for the week **MUST BE DONE** by the beginning of the first class for that week.

Academic Integrity, Misconduct Policy & Procedures

Academic Dishonesty: Cheating, collusion, and plagiarism (the act of using source material of other persons, either published or unpublished, without following the accepted techniques of crediting, or the submission for credit of work not the individual's to whom credit is given) will not be tolerated.

Additional guidelines on procedures in these matters may be found in the Office of Student Conduct.

Notice: Understand the following – it applies to all assignments. If you in any instance “cut and paste” from any internet source without citing that source (plagiarism) or use unapproved internet sources, you will fail the assignment in question. Depending on the severity of the offense, the professor reserves the right to employ any or all university sanctioned disciplinary actions, of which I will pursue prosecution to its furthest extent.

Grading

In the past, I've used a number of different assignments to evaluate student learning and retention. However, this semester I am employing assignments and evaluation as my mentors evaluated me as an undergraduate, which held me accountable for my own performance.

Assignments	Percentage of grade
Exam 1 (take home essay)	25%
Exam 2 (take home essay)	25%
Active participation and attendance (includes DAILY SUMMARIES, pop-quizzes, and in-class assignments)	25%
Analytical book review	25%

Final Grade	Percentage
A	90% plus
B	80 – 89.9%
C	70 – 79.9%
D	60 – 69.9%
F	Less than 60%

Essay exams (a total of two) will be distributed one week before their due dates (or maybe sooner). They are meant to be exercise in not only assessing your knowledge and understanding of the topics presented in class and in the readings, but also in research and argument construction. You will craft answers to the questions and use your notes and some research to answer fully and accurately. You may use the readings, lecture, discussion notes, and research from CREDIBLE (internet resources NOT from an academic resource or website are suspect and should be avoided as are “academic” works from Howard Zinn and other polemicists) sources to answer these questions as long as those sources are cited.

The book review may be a new exercise to some in the class. This is **NOT a book report**. Reviews are critiques of books, in which the reviewer briefly describes the main thesis and the points the author uses to prove his or her argument. Once this is done, the reviewer critiques the book (is the argument believable, well researched, persuasive, well-written). Does the author fulfill his or her stated or implied purpose? Is the argument subtle or ham-fisted? I will provide a “how to” sheet with a barebones description of how to do a short academic review. I suggest you use review essays from an academic journal (such as the *American Historical Review*) to get a feel for what they are meant to do. Now you might be asking yourself, “why do I have to do this? I don’t intend to be a professional historian [or] I won’t ever take another course in this department.” Every academic field requires such critical exercises; furthermore, you may take a job after college in which the boss wants you to critique something in writing. This review will give you practice doing a formal critique. We will spend class time talking about and practicing analytical writing and the book review itself.

I suggest you choose a book directly relevant to your particular interest in American military history. The book review should be between 1200 and 1500 words. You must get your book approved no later than the third week of class. You must provide me (in an email) with the title, author, and ISBN. It **CANNOT** be a novel or any other work of fiction. It must be an academic book on **US military history** or a substantial memoir with historical significance to the United States that fits the **time parameters for the course (1860-2005)**. It must be approved by the instructor **NO LATER THAN January 26 at 4pm**. For every day you are late in requesting book approval, the final grade for the review will be lowered by 5%. I suggest you read the book carefully in the first half of the semester to avoid the end of term flood of assignments. Early work is encouraged. It is **due**, without exception, on **March 25 at 4pm via email to my non-D2L account**. No late work will be accepted. Same goes for the exams.

Active participation means not only attending the course, but contributing to discussion, asking questions, and being engaged. Just showing up IS NOT ADEQUATE. If you can’t commit, there’s no reason to take the course.

Daily summaries of the readings for that particular day will be turned in each class period. The summaries (100 words for EACH reading assigned on that day, due in the first five minutes of class) serve two purposes. First, it shows me that you are reading and understand the main points of each assignment. Second, if done with a vision of your essay exams in mind, they are helpful in answering those questions. Be sure to include all bibliographical information at the top of each summary so you have the necessary information immediately at hand.

Extra Credit

I do NOT offer extra credit. DON'T ASK.

Make Up Work/Tests

I will only allow make up work if there is a legitimate excuse for missing a scheduled exam. I have the sole discretion in determining whether or not an absence is excused. University functions approved by the administration counts. Other reasons must be documented in some acceptable form or fashion (proof).

Desire-to-Learn (D2L)

I use MSU's D2L program to post documents or give assignments. Each student is expected to be familiar with this program as it provides a primary source of communication between student and professor. In the first week, I will post the syllabus and the terms for the course. You can log into [D2L](#) through the MSU Homepage. If you experience difficulties, please contact the technicians listed for the program or contact your instructor. I will put a few required readings on D2L (see schedule below) during the semester. However, in terms of communication, I do NOT use D2L email. Please address all email inquiries or requests to me at my NORMAL email address: john.ashbrook@msutexas.edu.

Online Computer Requirements

It is your responsibility to have (or have access to) a working computer in this class. *Assignments and tests are due by the due date, and personal computer technical difficulties will not be considered reason for the instructor to allow students extra time to submit assignments, tests, or discussion postings.* Your computer being down is not an excuse for missing a deadline!

Institutional and COVID Policies

In general, the class policies concerning COVID are those implemented by MSU Texas and are subject to change as university policy changes. Please check university policies throughout the semester. Below are listed some of the things you should be aware of.

- 1) This is a face-to-face course. I will NOT be livestreaming the course unless a student tests positive or must go into quarantine due to exposure by an infected individual. It is the student's responsibility to inform me, in writing (email is fine), of the situation. I will implement livestreaming within two class sessions to accommodate the sick or quarantined students.
- 2) Due to the policies on social distancing and attendance, seating charts and seat assignments will be used in this course. Each student must sit in a desk or chair with an affixed sticker allowing seating. That desk or chair cannot be moved for any reason and attendance will be taken by seating chart. Once you select a desk, you must sit in that desk and that desk alone throughout the semester.
- 3) Due to the possibility of a campus shutdown, the students are responsible for owning or having access to the necessary equipment and software to continue this course via distance learning. Below are the MINIMUM requirements as determined by the university.

HARDWARE:

PC Desktops and laptops (Use Windows' Operating System and PC Info to find your hardware information if you are unsure)

- a) Intel Core (i3, i5, i7) processors; 4th generation or newer
- b) 4 GB of RAM, 8 GB of RAM is highly recommended
- c) 256 GB SSD Storage
- d) Dual Band spectrum (2.4 GHz and 5 GHz) with 802.11ac or 802.11n

Mac desktops and laptops (Use Apple's About this Mac feature to find your hardware information)

- a) Intel Core (i3, i5, i7) processors; 4th generation or newer
- b) 4 GB of RAM, 8 GB of RAM is highly recommended
- c) 256 GB SSD Storage
- d) Dual Band spectrum (2.4 GHz and 5 GHz) with 802.11ac or 802.11n

PLEASE NOTE!!!: Chromebooks are not recommended, as they will not work with D2L. You have been warned now, so do NOT expect me to make accommodations if distance learning is implemented during the semester.

SOFTWARE:

Minimum Software requirements

Operating Systems:

- a) Windows 10 (1709)
- b) macOS 10.13 (High Sierra)

Web browsers:

- a) Internet Explorer 11 (Windows)
- b) Microsoft Edge
- c) Safari
- d) Firefox
- e) Chrome

Conferencing Software:

- a) Microsoft Teams
- b) Zoom Web Conferencing
- c) Skype for Business
- d) Web X

Other supported hardware and software options are located at <https://msutexas.edu/it/assets/files/basic-software-and-hardware-list.pdf>

- 4) If absence due to COVID infection or exposure occurs, it must be documented by the university. If you cannot make office hours, call during posted times only for immediate concerns. Otherwise, email or call to make a face-to-face or electronic meeting.
- 5) All documents relating to the course will be available on D2L. Check regularly.

Instructor Class Policies

Conduct: All students are expected to act as responsible adults. Any disruptions or distractions will be dealt with in an appropriate manner. Below you will find general guidelines covering certain actions and/or behaviors that are to be avoided. As a general rule any behavior that disrupts the administration of this class will not be tolerated.

Students are expected to assist in maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning. In order to assure that all students have the opportunity to gain from the time spent in class, students are prohibited from engaging in any form of distraction. Inappropriate behavior in the classroom shall result, minimally, in a request that the offending student leave the classroom. Furthermore, the professor reserves the right to deduct points from the student's semester total or remove the student from the course. **Arriving late is a distraction.** If arriving more than five (5) minutes late – DO NOT enter the classroom.

Electronic Devices, Texting, and Phones: The use of tape recorders, iPods, mp3s, or any other recording device in class is **prohibited**. It is imperative that you turn off phones, all other communication devices, and electronic equipment before entering the classroom. The use of a telephone or texting device for any reason is prohibited. *On the first offense the student will be penalized 20 points on her or his participation score for the week. The second offense will result in the student being asked to leave the classroom. The professor reserves the right to expel and administratively withdraw a student from the class upon the third offense.*

Laptops, Tablets, etc.: You must obtain permission from the professor to use laptops, tablets, and phones (or any other device capable of accessing the internet) in the classroom. Recent scholarship suggests that laptops and tablets are **major distractions** to fellow students and in general **do not enhance learning** and/or the classroom experience. Furthermore, there will be no surfing, texting, emailing, etc. in the classroom, unless I specifically ask the students to do so.

E-mail: Note that e-mail correspondence is the most effective and convenient way in which to communicate with me outside the classroom. The professor/student relationship is professional by nature and, accordingly, your e-mail correspondence should be constructed professionally. Again, **DO NOT send me messages via D2L; only use my regular email for correspondence.**

Attendance and your grade: This course is structured so that students must attend class regularly. From past experience, students who choose not to attend on a regular basis are not successful. I allow three, and only three unexcused absences. After that, each unexcused absence will result in a penalty to your participation grade. If you have a total of nine unexcused absences, you will not be able to pass the course.

Withdrawals (Course Drop): The professor is NOT responsible for student withdrawals. The student is responsible for meeting all academic deadlines including withdrawal deadlines.

Services for Students with Disabilities: In accordance with Section 504 of the Federal Rehabilitation Act of 1973 and the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Midwestern State University endeavors to make reasonable accommodations to ensure equal opportunity for qualified persons with disabilities to participate in all educational, social, and recreational programs and activities. After notification of acceptance, students requiring accommodations should make application for such assistance through Disability Support Services, located in the Clark Student Center, Room 168, (940) 397-4140. Current documentation of a disability will be required in order to provide appropriate services, and each request will be individually reviewed. For more details, please go to Student Disability Office.

Grade Appeal Process: Students who wish to appeal a grade should consult the Midwestern State University Undergraduate Catalog.

Changes in the course syllabus, procedure, assignments, and schedule may be made at the discretion of the instructor.

Course Schedule

Week I. What is War and what is its Purpose?

January 10: Introductions and class procedure discussed

January 12: Peter Paret, "Clausewitz," in Peter Paret (ed.), *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton University Press, 1986), 186-213.

January 14: Edward Earle, "Adam Smith, Alexander Hamilton, Friedrich List: The Economic Foundations of Military Power," in *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 217-261.

Week II. American War Strategy to World War I

January 17: No class

January 19: Russell Weigley, "American Strategy from Its Beginnings through the First World War," *Makers of Modern Strategy*, 408-43

January 21: Chambers and Piehler, 1-34

Week III. The New World and the Colonial Wars

January 24: Millett, Chapter 1

January 26: Millett, Chapter 2

You must have your book review selection approved by me no later than 4pm today!

January 28: Chambers and Piehler, 37-38 and 48-64

Week IV. The American Revolution and the War of 1812

January 31: Millett, Chapter 3

February 2: Writing a book review

February 4: Millett, Chapter 4

Week V. Wars of Manifest Destiny

February 7: lecture on Manifest Destiny and the Indian Wars

February 9: Millett Chapter 5

February 11: lecture on the Pawnee and their relationship to the US military

Week VI. The War Between the States

February 14: Millett Chapter 6

February 16: Millett Chapter 7

February 18: Chambers and Piehler, 169-184

Week VII. Building the American Empire, The Spanish American War and Pre-War Policy

February 21: Millett Chapter 9

February 23: Millett Chapter 10

February 25: Chambers and Piehler, 204-19

Midterm to be distributed on February 23 via email

Week VIII. The Great War and Industrial Society

February 28: Millett Chapter 11

March 2: Paul Fussell, "The Troglodyte World," in Paul Fussell, *The Great War and Modern Memory* (Oxford University Press, 1975), 36-74

March 4: Chambers and Piehler, 253-274

MIDTERM DUE AT BEGINNING OF CLASS March 4

Week IX. Saving Europe's Bacon ... Again.

March 7: Millett Chapter 13

March 9: Millett Chapter 14

March 11: Chambers and Piehler, 311-336

Week X. The Korean War

March 21: Millett Chapter 15

March 23: Chambers and Piehler, 376-407

March 25: NO CLASS, WRITING DAY

BOOK REVIEW DUE AT 4pm via email MARCH 25, NO EXCEPTIONS!!!

Week XI. The Cold War

March 28: Millett Chapter 16

March 30: Lecture on the Cuban Missile Crisis and Containment

April 1: Discussion of Cold War Strategy by the US, USSR, and China

Week XII. Vietnam

April 4: Millett Chapter 17

April 6: Millett Chapter 18

April 8: Chambers and Piehler, 409-443

Week XIII. The End of the Cold War

April 11: Millett Chapter 19

April 13: Lecture on the Meaning of the Collapse of the Soviet Union

April 15: NO CLASS – Easter Break

Week XIV. New World Disorder and Yugoslavia

April 18: Millett Chapter 20

April 20: John Ashbrook and Spencer Bakich, "Storming to partition: Croatia, the United States, and Krajina in the Yugoslav War," *Small Wars & Insurgencies* 21 (4) (2010), 537-560

April 22: Lecture - The Role of Genocide in post-WWII conflict

Week XV. Irregular Warfare and the War on Terrorism

April 25: Millett Chapter 21

April 27: M. Smith, "Guerrillas in the Mist: Reassessing Strategy and Low Intensity Warfare," *Review of International Studies* 29 (1) (2003), 19-37 [J-STOR]

April 29: David Perry, "Blackwater vs. bin Laden: The Private Sector's Role in American Counterterrorism," *Comparative Strategy* 31 (1) (2012), 41-55.

FINAL EXAM DUE DURING EXAM WEEK!!!