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## HISTORY 428: The American Military Experience Since 1899

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Spring 2016  
Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison  
Class Meetings: MWF, 9:55 AM - 10:45 AM  
Humanities 1651

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Office hours: M, 3:30-5:00 PM

### 1. Course description.

This course surveys the American military experience from the dawn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. It takes a broad view of military history, examining the influence of warfare on all aspects of American society. We will not omit the traditional mainstays of the field—the study of battles and leaders—but we will consider them within the broader American experience and in an international context. Ultimately, this course will provide an appreciation of how war has shaped America and, in many regards, defined its interaction with the world.

### 2. Course Objectives. Students will understand:

- a. How the United States has attempted to use military power to advance its interests and ideals around the world—and to what effect.
- b. How and why American military policies, establishments, and practices evolved over time—and the role of technology in this evolution.
- c. How concepts of identity (to include race, ethnicity, kinship, gender, and religion) influence the character of war and how war can, in turn, influence identity.
- d. Warfare as a human experience endured on the battlefield, at sea, in the air, on the homefront, at desolate outposts, and in councils of government.
- e. How to analyze, synthesize, and interpret historical process and events.

### 3. Course format.

This course consists of three complementary, core components: lectures, seminar discussions, and readings. To master the course objectives, students must afford each component sufficient attention. Lectures will address the broad themes, important events, and significant issues in American military history. Readings from Millet, Maslowski, and Feis, *For the Common Defense*, will generally (but not always) align with lecture topics and provide a context for discussion. These readings lack the breadth and depth of the lectures, however, and will not suffice as a substitute for attending class. Moreover, several lectures will address topics covered only fleetingly—if at all—in the assigned reading. Your other course texts provide more thorough treatment of selected topics in American military history and represent various forms of historical writing. These readings, each focused on a different aspect of the American military experience, will provide the basis for weekly seminar discussions. These sessions provide students opportunities to interactively engage the materials and each other. To improve group discussions, students must complete all assigned readings prior to each seminar discussion. Students will also

attend two special presentations (see course schedule below) at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum. The 3-credit option for this course is for graduate students. All undergraduates are encouraged to enroll for 4 credits, as they will—regardless of their registration—fulfill the requirements of a 4-credit-hour course.

4. Evening lectures.

Students are required to attend two evening lectures at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum, 30 W. Mifflin Street. One of this is scheduled for 17 March; the other will be announced as soon as possible. Students unable to attend due to irreconcilable schedule conflicts must make alternative arrangements with their TA as soon as possible. Students will receive compensatory “drops” from the normal class schedule on 18 March and 15 April. Students may attend additional evening programming at the Wisconsin Veterans Museum for potential extra credit. A full schedule of these programs will be available at <http://www.wisvetsmuseum.com/events/>. Various events on the UW campus (to be announced as the semester progresses) will provide additional opportunities to earn extra credit.

5. Graded requirements. Students will be graded on a 1000-point scale.

a. Seminar participation / quizzes: 200 points.

The quality of seminar discussions is entirely dependent upon student preparation and contributions. Accordingly, Teaching Assistants (TAs) will circulate a discussion question at least four days prior to most seminar meetings. Over the course of the semester, students must respond to **at least seven of these prompts** with a 150-word, single-paragraph essay, submitted on Learn@UW at least twenty-four hours before the respective seminar meeting. Each response is worth 15 all-or-nothing points contingent upon (a) an honest effort to answer the question and (b) student participation in this meeting. **Students must submit at least four responses prior to the midterm exam.** Students will have opportunities to earn the remaining 95 points through quizzes administered during discussion section meetings (students with unexcused absences will receive zero points for missed quizzes).

b. Lecture quizzes: 75 points.

Student may earn up to 75 points in unannounced quizzes administered during select lectures. The purpose of these quizzes is to incentivize students to do the assigned reading; any student who does the assigned reading should expect to earn all 75 points. As in seminar, however, students with unexcused absences will receive zero points for missed quizzes.

c. Research proposal: 75 points.

In preparation for the writing requirement (described below), students will submit a research proposal consisting of the following elements:

1. A brief biography of your prospective interview subject, identifying his or her experience and its relevance to the course themes.
2. A research question that (a) you can answer with the sources available to you and (b) relates the interview subject's experiences to the broader course themes.
3. An annotated bibliography comprising at least four secondary sources and one *substantial* primary source collection.

**Prof. Hall will discuss this requirement during Lesson 9, 8 February. It is due at the beginning of Lesson 18, 29 February.**

- d. Mid-term examination: 200 points.

Students will receive a take-home, mid-term examination in class on 9 March. Students will answer two essay questions, each worth 100 points, with essays of 650-750 words (approximately two pages per answer). Essays must present a compelling thesis substantiated by specific historical evidence and demonstrate a mastery of the material covered in lectures, readings, and discussions. Students should cite sources as appropriate. Poor writing, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization will result in grade deductions. **Completed examinations are due at the beginning of Lesson 24 on 14 March.**

- e. Writing requirement: 200 points.

Students will write an essay of 2200-2500 words (exclusive of title page, notes, and bibliography) based on an oral history interview that they conduct. Students may interview any person whose personal experiences offers insights on the American military experience in the 20<sup>th</sup> or 21<sup>st</sup> centuries. The most common subjects for such interviews are veterans of American wars, but students may elect to interview anyone with a valuable perspective regarding the influence of war on American society. Potential interview subjects also include "gold star mothers," mental health care professionals who have treated veterans suffering from PTSD, defense policy-makers, or organizers of anti-war activities. Students should take great care in selecting someone with a suitable depth of relevant experience and must always treat their interview subject with respect. Under no circumstance will students solicit an interview with adversarial intentions. Essays must relate the individual's experiences to the broader themes of this course—an endeavor that will require substantial additional research. This writing requirement will account for 200 points. **Essays are due at the beginning of the 20 April class meeting.**

- f. Final examination: 250 points.

Students will take the final examination from 12:25 to 2:25 PM on 11 May (location TBD). Students will answer two essay questions (each worth 100 points) and identify the significance of two historical events, actors, or artifacts (from a menu of four options, each worth 25 points). Essays must present a compelling thesis substantiated by specific historical evidence, and all answers must demonstrate a mastery of the material covered in lectures,

readings, and discussions. Poor writing, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization will result in grade deductions. Students may refer to a single page of printed notes during the exam.

g. Grading summary.

Seminar participation / quizzes:	150 points	15%
Lecture quizzes:	75 points	7.5%
Proposal:	75 points	7.5%
Mid-term examination:	200 points	20%
Writing requirement	200 points	20%
Final examination	300 points	30%

h. Grading scheme.

92-100%	A
87-91.9%	AB
82-86.9%	B
77-81.9%	BC
72-76.9%	C
67-71.9%	D
0-66.9%	F

6. Formatting instructions for written work.

a. Format all work in accordance with *The Chicago Manual of Style*, an online version of which is available through the UW Libraries.

b. Use footnotes rather than endnotes (and be aware that they are not formatted as bibliography entries).

c. Use 12-point Times New Roman font.

d. Double space.

e. Use 1-inch margins on all sides.

f. Print only on a single side of letter-sized paper.

g. Bind submissions with a staple or binding folder.

h. The writing requirement (oral history paper) must include:

(1) A title page that contains the following information: title, name, section, and word count (exclusive of notes, title page, and bibliography).

(2) A bibliography listing primary sources, then secondary sources.

7. Grading standards for written work.

a. Organization:

(1) Does the essay begin with an effective introduction that (a) engages the reader, (b) identifies historical problem under consideration, and (c) posits the student's thesis?

- (2) Do paragraphs comprise discrete ideas defined by identifiable topic sentences?
- (3) Does the student make effective use of transitions (especially between paragraphs)?
- (4) Does the student arrange his or her paragraphs (ideas) in a logical sequence that furthers the argument while maintaining a coherent, chronological narrative?
- (5) Does the student conclude with a summary of the essay's most salient findings and (if appropriate) allusions to their broader significance?
- b. Use of sources:
  - (1) Is the student's research adequate?
  - (2) Does the student make significant / sufficient use of primary sources?\*
  - (3) Does the student over-rely on select secondary sources or non-scholarly sources?
  - (4) Does the student make appropriate use of the *best available* (rather than the most conveniently accessible) sources?
  - (5) Does the student effectively use evidence from these sources to further his or her argument?
  - (6) Does the student understand the historiography of his or her topic?\*
  - (7) Does the student make excessive or inappropriate use of direct quotations?
- c. Overall:
  - (1) Does the student present an original, compelling argument substantiated by appropriate historical evidence? Would a general, educated reader find the argument compelling?
  - (2) Does the student demonstrate mastery of the subject matter?
  - (3) Is the essay well written? Would a general, educated reader understand it and enjoy reading it?
  - (4) Is the essay (to include a cover sheet and bibliography) properly formatted in accordance with *The Chicago Manual of Style* and otherwise and free of errors?

## 8. How to succeed in this course.

- a. Do the reading.
- b. Attend all class meetings (lectures and seminar discussions).
  - (1) Be seated and prepared to take notes when class begins.
  - (2) Turn off cell phones in class. Prof. Hall or the TAs will answer phones that ring; repeat offenders will be asked to leave.
  - (3) Coordinate anticipated absences, late arrivals, and early departures ahead of time.
  - (4) Prof. Hall expects personal explanations for unanticipated tardiness immediately following class.
- c. Contribute to discussions.
- d. Take notes—in class and while reading. Laptops and tablets are permitted in class for note-taking and referencing purposes only. Prof. Hall reserves the right to revoke IT privileges for those who abuse them.
- e. Work ahead on all graded requirements and submit them on time. **Late submissions will be penalized 10% the moment they are late with additional 10% deductions every twenty-four**

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\* Research paper only.

**hours *unless* students negotiate an extension prior to the original due date.** Submissions will not be accepted after the return of other students' graded submissions.

f. Do your own work. Doing otherwise defeats the purpose of taking the course. Prof. Hall will investigate and punish suspected cases of plagiarism in accordance with Chapter 14 of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code.

g. Seek assistance from the professor or TA if you are struggling or do not understand the expectations.

9. Course texts.

a. Students are responsible for acquiring the following texts:

Finkel, David. *The Good Soldiers*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2009.

Michener, James A. *The Bridges at Toko-Ri*. New York: Fawcett Books, 1953.

Millett, Allan R., Peter Maslowski, and William B. Feis. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*. Completely revised and expanded ed. New York: Free Press, 2012.

Overy, Richard. *Why the Allies Won*. New York: W.W. Norton & Company, 1995.

Schmidt, Hans. *Maverick Marine: General Smedley D. Butler and the Contradictions of American Military History*. Lexington: University Press of Kentucky, 1987.

Slotkin, Richard. *Lost Battalions: The Great War and the Crisis of American Nationality*. New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2005.

Westad, Odd Arne. *The Global Cold War: Third World Interventions and the Making of Our Times*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

b. The following essays are available on Learn@UW.

Birtle, Andrew J. "PROVN, Westmoreland, and the Historians: A Reappraisal." *The Journal of Military History* 72, no. 4 (2008): 1213-1247.

Davidson, Phillip B. "The Strategy of Revolutionary War." In *Secrets of the Vietnam War*, 17-27. Novato, CA: Presidio, 1990.

Fall, Bernard B. "The Theory and Practice of Insurgency and Counterinsurgency." In *Last Reflections on a War*, 209-223. Garden City, N.Y.: Doubleday, 1967.

Krepinevich, Andrew F. "A Strategy of Tactics." In *The Army and Vietnam*, 164-193. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

Sledge, E. B. "Chapter 5: Another Amphibious Assault." In *With the Old Breed at Peleliu and Okinawa*, 114-138. New York: Presidio Press, 2007.

8. Course schedule.

LSN	Date	Topic	Reading
1	1/20	Introduction	Millett & Maslowski (M&M), xiii-xviii
<b>American Identity &amp; Interventionism</b>			
2	1/22	Review & Summary: American Military History to 1899	Schmidt, 1-37
3	1/25	An Imperial Constabulary	Schmidt, 38-95; M&M, 300-303
S1	1/26	Seminar Discussion 1	~
4	1/27	Modernizing the Military Establishment, 1899-1914	Slotkin, 1-29; M&M, 282-300
<b>The Great War</b>			
5	1/29	Toward Catastrophe: The Origins & Opening Moves of the Great War	All: M&M, 303-308; Slotkin, 29-34 Group A: Slotkin, 35-71 Group B: Slotkin, 72-111
6	2/1	WWI to American Entry	M&M, 309-18; Slotkin, 112-51
S2	2/2	Seminar Discussion 2	~
7	2/3	The Great War at Sea	M&M, 318-22; Slotkin, 153-212
8	2/5	Pacifism, Preparedness, & Participation	M&M, 322-30; Slotkin, 213-39; Schmidt, 96-109
9	2/8	Writing Clinic	Complete Scavenger Hunt Prep.
S3	2/9	Seminar Discussion 3 <b>Meet in foyer of Wisconsin Historical Society</b>	~
10	2/10	Material Culture of the Great War <b>Meet at the Wis. Veterans Museum!</b>	Slotkin, 241-74
11	2/12	Building the AEF, Breaking the Stalemate	M&M, 330-38 Group A: Slotkin, 275-303 Group B: Slotkin, 305-63
12	2/15	German Defeat, American Disappointment	Slotkin, 395-461
S4	2/16	Seminar Discussion 4	~
<b>The Interwar Years</b>			
13	2/17	Military Policy between the Wars	M&M, 339-366;

			Schmidt, 202-51
<b><i>World War II</i></b>			
14	2/19	Germany First...?	M&M, 367-81, Overy, xii-24
15	2/22	Economies at War	M&M, 381-91; Overy, 180-244
S5	2/23	Seminar Discussion 5	-
16	2/24	Victory at Sea by '43	M&M, 391-96; Overy, 26-62
17	2/26	War without Mercy in the PTO	M&M, 396-99, 404-409, 415-20; Sledge
18	2/29	The Soviet Contribution	Overy, 63-100 <b>Submit Proposal</b>
S6	3/1	Seminar Discussion 6	~
19	3/2	The Promise of Airpower	M&M, 409-15, 427-32; Overy, 101-33
20	3/4	Learning to Fight: TORCH to OVERLORD	M&M, 399-403; Overy, 134-52
21	3/7	D-Day, Breakout, & Pursuit	M&M, 420-27, 432-39; Overy, 152-79
S7	3/8	Seminar Discussion 7	~
22	3/9	Strategic Leadership. <b>Mid-Term Review &amp; distribution of take-home exam questions</b>	Overy, 245-330
<b><i>Colonialism, Revolution, &amp; the Origins of the Cold War</i></b>			
23	3/11	Waging Cold War	M&M, 440-453; Westad, 8-38
24	3/14	The Korean War: KMAG & TF Smith	M&M, 453-58; start Michener <b>Submit midterm</b>
S8	3/15	Seminar Discussion 8	~
25	3/16	Korea: Limited War	M&M, 458-73; finish Michener
L1	3/17	7 PM Evening Lecture at Wisconsin Veterans Museum	TBA
~	3/18	<b>Compensatory drop—no class</b>	~
26	3/28	The New Look: Nuclear Deterrence & Revolution	M&M, 475-96; Westad, 73-109
S9	3/29	Seminar Discussion 9	~
27	3/30	The Flexible Response: Intervention in the '60s	M&M, 496-506; Westad, 39-72

28	4/1	Race, Civil Rights, & the Cold War	Westad, 110-57
<b><i>The Vietnam War</i></b>			
29	4/4	Roots of Conflict	M&M, 507-14; Westad, 158-170
S10	4/5	Seminar Discussion 10	~
30	4/6	<i>Dau Tranh</i> —the People’s War	M&M, 514-22; Davidson; Fall
31	4/8	The Helicopter War (special presentation by Rick Berry)	~
32	4/11	Westy’s War	M&M, 522-36; Krepinevich
S11	4/12	Seminar Discussion 11	~
33	4/13	Tet & the War at Home	M&M, 537-43; Westad, 180-184
~	4/15	<b>Compensatory drop—no class</b>	M&M, 543-59; Birtle
34	4/18	“A Better War” Considered	M&M, 559-68; Westad, 194-206
S12	4/19	Seminar Discussion 12	~
35	4/20	Legacies, Foreign & Domestic	<b>Submit writing requirement</b>
<b><i>From Cold War to GWOT</i></b>			
36	4/22	The Cold War in Iran & Afghanistan	M&M, 569-76; Westad, 288-330
37	4/25	The Reagan Offensive	M&M, 576-89; Westad, 331-63
S13	4/26	Seminar Discussion 13	~
38	4/27	Apparent Victory: Collapse of the Soviet Union & the Gulf War	M&M, 589-605; Westad, 364-95
39	4/29	“Peacekeeping”: The 1990s	M&M, 606-32; Westad, 396-407
40	5/2	GWOT	M&M, 633-60; Finkel, Chapters 1-3
S14	5/3	Seminar Discussion 14	Finkel, Chapters 7-8
41	5/4	COIN in Afghanistan & Iraq	M&M, 660-80; Finkel, Chapters 4-6
42	5/6	Panel Discussion: Modern War	Finkel, Chapters 9-10
	5/11	<b>Final Exam: 12:25-2:25; location TBD</b>	