
History 600: American Military History

Fall 2024
Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison
Wednesdays, 1:20 – 3:15 PM
5257 Mosse Humanities Bldg.
3 credit hours
Breadth: Humanities or Social Sciences
Level: Advanced
Counts as LAS credit in L&S

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Office hours: M, 3:00 – 4:30 PM

- 1) **OVERVIEW.** This course provides a broad introduction to recent and significant works in American military history as well as the “state of the field.” It will familiarize students with the paramount historiographical issue within the field—American “ways of war”—as well as recent works in substantive subfield of “war and society,” thereby fulfilling one of the curricular requirements for the War in Society and Culture Program. Students may also fulfill temporal requirements for the U.S. field by arranging for concentrated readings in the desired century/centuries.
- 2) **COURSE OBJECTIVES.**
 - a) Students will acquire a foundational knowledge of the major events and historiographical themes in American military history.
 - b) Students will critically evaluate and contextualize signal and notable recent scholarship in the field, communicating their evaluations orally and in the form of an academic review article.
 - c) Students will synthesize course materials in a manner that furthers their own scholarship.
- 3) **COURSE FORMAT.** This section of History 600 meets with the graduate seminar HIST 958, American Military History. Weekly meetings consist of discussion of common, assigned readings in which no distinction will be made between undergraduates and graduate students. As the capstone course for the history major, undergraduates will also produce a significant work of original scholarship based on substantial research in primary sources. The credit standard for the course is met by an expectation of at least 135 hours of student engagement with the course’s learning activities. For all students, these activities will include group seminar meetings of 115 minutes per week.
- 4) **EXPECTATIONS / REQUIREMENTS.**
 - a) Students must read all assigned readings (see “Course Texts/Schedule,” below), attend all meetings of the seminar and participate actively in discussion. In coordination with the professor, students may (a) substitute books from the “American Military History Readings” shared EndNote library for the common reading for any particular week and (b)

- nominate books for inclusion in this library. Participation will be evaluated for quality and consistency. (35 percent of course grade).
- b) Students will select and review one recent, historiographically significant book-length work on American military history that supports their individual research agenda. All reviews should be critical, analytical, and thoughtful. Assess the book as a work of individual scholarship and locate it in the larger body of literature. Consider and address at least three published, scholarly reviews in your own. At a minimum, reviews should provide:
- i) Information on the author and his or her qualifications.
 - ii) A brief, *general* description of the organization and contents of the book.
 - iii) A statement of the purpose of the book and its thesis.
 - iv) Your critical evaluation of how successful the author is in achieving his or her goals and in persuading you of the thesis. The emphasis in each review should be on **critical** reading and evaluation. No book is perfect and none is worthless. The objective is to discern the strengths and weaknesses in the books you read and to place them in the context of the kinds of literature being done in the field and approaches to the various topics.
 - v) **Students must submit standard bibliographical information on the book they propose to review via email to Prof. Hall no later than noon, Monday, 16 September.**
 - vi) **The book review will not exceed 800 words and is due via email to the entire class at least 24 hours before the class meeting in which the book most appropriately falls. Students will briefly summarize the book and answer questions from fellow students during that class session.** (15 percent of course grade).
- c) Students will prepare a 4,000-word research paper on a subject of their own choosing, contingent on instructor approval. Projects should be conceived to further a student's progress toward degree completion. In either case, a two-page project proposal is due at the beginning of the week 5 class meeting and the completed project is due at the beginning of the week 13 class meeting. Students may schedule individual meetings with Prof. Hall during week 8. (50 percent of course grade).

5) COURSE TEXTS/SCHEDULE.

Week 1, 4 September	Introduction to the Field
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Biddle, Tami Davis, and Robert M. Citino. *The Role of Military History in the Contemporary Academy*. Lexington, VA: Society for Military History, 2014.

Bailey, Beth L., Christopher Capozzola, Kara Dixon Vuic, Lesley J. Gordon, John W. Hall, Andrew J. Huebner, Jennifer Keene, Adriane Lenz-Smith, and Susannah J. Ural. "What Is War and Society? A Roundtable Discussion." In *Cambridge History of War and Society in America*, edited by Andrew J. Huebner and Jennifer Keene. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2023.

Lee, Wayne E. "Mind and Matter—Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A Look at the State of the Field." *Journal of American History* 93, no. 4 (Mar. 2007): 1116-42.

Week 2, 11 September	“Ways of War”
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Linn, Brian M., and Russell F. Weigley. “The American Way of War Revisited.” *The Journal of Military History* 66, no. 2 (2002): 501-33.

Grenier, John. [*The First Way of War: American War Making on the Frontier*](#). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2005.

Week 3, 18 September	Contact and Conflict
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Book review selections due

Silverman, David J. [*Thundersticks: Firearms and the Violent Transformation of Native America*](#). Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 2016.

Week 4, 25 September	War for American Independence
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Hall, John W. "An Irregular Reconsideration of George Washington and the American Military Tradition." *The Journal of Military History* 78, no. 3 (July 2014): 961-93.

Ruddiman, John A. [*Becoming Men of Some Consequence: Youth and Military Service in the Revolutionary War*](#). Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2014.

Week 5, 2 October	Young Republic
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Proposals due

Carp, E. Wayne. "The Problem of National Defense in the Early Republic." In *The American Revolution: Its Character and Limits*, edited by Jack P. Greene, 14-50. New York: New York University Press, 1987.

Herrera, Ricardo A. [*For Liberty and the Republic: The American Citizen as Soldier, 1775-1861*](#). New York: New York University Press, 2015.

Week 6, 9 October	Antebellum Era
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Greenberg, Amy S. *A Wicked War: Polk, Clay, Lincoln, and the 1846 U.S. Invasion of Mexico*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2012

Hall, John W. "American Military History During the Early Republic, 1784-1860." In *The Oxford Handbook of American Military History*, edited by Samuel Watson. New York: Oxford University Press, 2025.

Week 7, 16 October	Civil War
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Zander, Cecily N. [*The Army under Fire: The Politics of Antimilitarism in the Civil War Era*](#). Baton Rouge: Louisiana State University Press, 2024.

Week 8, 23 October	Individual Meetings
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Appointments (as required) to be scheduled online.

Week 9, 30 October	Toward Empire
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Capozzola, Christopher. *Bound by War: How the United States and the Philippines Built America's First Pacific Century*. New York: Basic Books, 2020.

Week 10, 6 November	The Great War
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Keene, Jennifer D. *Doughboys, the Great War, and the Remaking of America*. War, Society, Culture. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 2001.

Week 11, 13 November	World War II
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Roberts, Mary Louise. [*Sheer Misery: Soldiers in Battle in WWII*](#). Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 2021.

Week 12, 20 November	Cold War
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Rutenberg, Amy J. [*Rough Draft: Cold War Military Manpower Policy and the Origins of Vietnam-Era Draft Resistance*](#). Ithaca New York: Cornell University Press, 2019.

Week 13, 27 November	Papers Due
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No common assigned reading. Students will summarize their work in 5-minute verbal presentations

Week 14, 4 December	Vietnam
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Daddis, Gregory A. [*Pulp Vietnam: War and Gender in Cold War Men's Adventure Magazines*](#). New York: Cambridge University Press, 2021.

Week 15, 11 December	New American Empire
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Aune, Stefan. [*Indian Wars Everywhere: Colonial Violence and the Shadow Doctrines of Empire*](#). Berkeley: University of California Press, 2023.

APPENDIX 1: STANDARDS FOR WRITTEN WORK AND KEYS TO SUCCESS

- 1) Organization:
 - a) 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?
 - b) Do paragraphs comprise discrete ideas defined by identifiable topic sentences?
 - c) Does the student make effective use of transitions (especially between paragraphs)?
 - d) Does the student arrange his or her paragraphs (ideas) in a logical sequence that furthers the argument while maintaining a coherent, chronological narrative?
 - e) Does the student conclude with a summary of the essay's most salient findings and (if appropriate) allusions to their broader significance?

- 2) Use of sources:
 - a) Is the student's research adequate?
 - b) Does the student make significant / sufficient use of primary sources?
 - c) Does the student over-rely on select secondary sources or non-scholarly sources?
 - d) Does the student make appropriate use of the *best available* (rather than the most conveniently accessible) sources?
 - e) Does the student effectively use evidence from these sources to further his or her argument?
 - f) Does the student understand the historiography of his or her topic?
 - g) Does the student make excessive or inappropriate use of direct quotations?

- 3) Overall:
 - a) Does the student present an original, compelling argument substantiated by appropriate historical evidence? Would a general, educated reader find the argument compelling?
 - b) Does the student demonstrate mastery of the subject matter?
 - c) Is the essay well written? Would a general, educated reader understand it and enjoy reading it?
 - d) Is the essay (to include a cover sheet and bibliography) properly formatted in accordance with *The Chicago Manual of Style* and otherwise free of errors?¹

- 4) How to succeed in this course:
 - a) Do the reading.
 - b) Attend all class meetings (lectures and seminar discussions).
 - i) Be seated and prepared to take notes when class begins.
 - ii) Turn off cell phones in class. Prof. Hall or the TA will answer phones that ring; repeat offenders will be asked to leave.
 - iii) Coordinate anticipated absences, late arrivals, and early departures ahead of time.

¹ Proper citation of your sources is not a formality; it is an essential (and therefore graded) component of your research project. Students will format footnotes and bibliographies in accordance with the latest edition of *The Chicago Manual of Style*. A number of software applications make the tasks of organizing and citing your sources relatively easy. Use of these applications is entirely optional but recommended: EndNote Web (free for UW students via the UW Library); RefWorks (free for UW students via the UW Library); Zotero (free shareware plug-in for Firefox).

- iv) 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 notetaking and referencing purposes; they and cell phones may further be used at Prof. Hall's invitation for exercises conducted via Top Hat. 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 not be accepted *unless* students negotiate an extension prior to the original due date.**
- f) *Do your own work*. Doing otherwise (to include employment of AI unless otherwise authorized) defeats the purpose of taking the course. Suspected cases of plagiarism will be dealt with in accordance with Chapter 14 of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code.
- g) Seek assistance from the professor or your TA if you are struggling or do not understand the expectations.

APPENDIX 2: HISTORY PROGRAM LEARNING OUTCOMES

The goal of the history major is to offer students the knowledge and skills they need to gain a critical perspective on the world. History students learn to find and interpret evidence about the world, to translate complex information into engaging and persuasive stories, and to use their understanding of many perspectives to solve complex problems.

From deciphering manuscripts to mastering the latest digital research tools, history students investigate, interpret, and tell compelling stories about the past and the present. They look beyond easy explanations to understand the complexities and ambiguities of human experience. History is therefore an excellent major for students interested in careers involving research, communication, and problem-solving. History graduates can do anything. They learn to identify the skills developed in the study of history and articulate the applicability of those skills to a variety of professional and intellectual endeavors. Many continue on in fields such as law, business, non-profit management, journalism, medicine, public health, national and international policy work, military, government, museum work, library and information management, and education.

To ensure that students gain exposure to the great diversity of topics, methodologies, and philosophical concerns that inform the study of history, the department requires a combination of courses that offer breadth, depth, and variety. The structure of the curriculum ensures that students will gain broad acquaintance with several geographic areas of the world and with both the pre-modern and modern eras. In their capstone experience, students will also gain an in-depth understanding of a topic of their choice through original or creative research.

Through their courses, students should improve their skills in the following areas:

RESEARCH AND ANALYSIS - Find and interpret diverse evidence to explain complex changes over time.

- Read and evaluate a variety of materials to determine their origins, perspective, usefulness, and reliability
- Analyze influences that shape historical narratives and debates across genres and media
- Explain complex changes over time at different levels of scale
- Ask creative questions and work persistently to find relevant sources to answer them
- Develop a convincing narrative or properly substantiated argument based on synthesizing diverse methodologies and sources of information

WRITTEN AND ORAL COMMUNICATION - Communicate effectively to a variety of audiences in writing and speech.

- Craft clear, persuasive prose
- Discuss and distill complex points through lucid verbal communication
- Communicate findings to diverse audiences, in various formats

LEADERSHIP AND COMMUNITY-BUILDING - Use an understanding of many perspectives to work with people and solve complex problems.

- Give and receive helpful, respectful feedback
- Lead and participate productively in purposeful discussion
- Recognize contextual influences on the values, perspectives, and actions of individuals and groups, including oneself

- Approach a problem in multiple ways to propose a range of viable solutions
- Create and implement a plan for completing a multi-step project

EMPATHY AND GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP - Seek to understand differing views and ways of being in the world.

- Engage with humility and empathy, and respect those with differing views
- Recognize multiple ways of being in the world, and how what may seem natural in a society has been built over decades of accumulated human actions
- Break down stereotypes and misconceptions through rigorous analysis
- Understand the roots of persistent social, economic, gender, and racial inequalities across time, space, and cultures.
- Develop a lifetime sense of curiosity and wonder

LEARNING OUTCOMES FOR ASSESSMENT

- Find and interpret diverse evidence to explain complex changes over time
- Communicate effectively to a variety of audiences in writing and speech
- Use an understanding of many perspectives to work with people and solve complex problems
- Seek to understand differing views and ways of being in the world
- Identify the skills developed in the study of history and articulate their applicability to a variety of professional and intellectual endeavors

APPENDIX 3: RIGHTS, RESPONSIBILITIES, AND RESOURCES

TEACHING & LEARNING DATA TRANSPARENCY STATEMENT

The privacy and security of faculty, staff and students' personal information is a top priority for UW-Madison. The university carefully reviews and vets all campus-supported digital tools used to support teaching and learning, to help support success through [learning analytics](#), and to enable proctoring capabilities. View the university's full teaching and learning [data transparency statement](#).

PRIVACY OF STUDENT RECORDS & THE USE OF AUDIO RECORDED LECTURES STATEMENT

View [more information about FERPA](#).

Lecture materials and recordings for this course are protected intellectual property at UW-Madison. Students in courses may use the materials and recordings for their personal use related to participation in class. Students may also take notes solely for their personal use. If a lecture is not already recorded, students are not authorized to record lectures without permission unless they are considered by the university to be a qualified student with a disability who has an approved accommodation that includes recording. [Regent Policy Document 4-1] Students may not copy or have lecture materials and recordings outside of class, including posting on internet sites or selling to commercial entities, with the exception of sharing copies of personal notes as a notetaker through the McBurney Disability Resource Center. Students are otherwise prohibited from providing or selling their personal notes to anyone else or being paid for taking notes by any person or commercial firm without the instructor's express written permission. Unauthorized use of these copyrighted lecture materials and recordings constitutes copyright infringement and may be addressed under the university's policies, UWS Chapters 14 and 17, governing student academic and non-academic misconduct.

CAMPUS RESOURCES FOR ACADEMIC SUCCESS

- [University Health Services](#)
- [Undergraduate Academic Advising and Career Services](#)
- [Office of the Registrar](#)
- [Office of Student Financial Aid](#)
- [Dean of Students Office](#)
- [Graduate Student Services](#)

COURSE EVALUATIONS

Students will be provided with an opportunity to evaluate their enrolled courses and their learning experience. Student participation is an integral component of course development, and confidential feedback is important to the institution. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

DIGITAL COURSE EVALUATION

UW-Madison uses a [digital course evaluation](#) survey tool. In most instances, students receive an official email two weeks prior to the end of the semester, notifying them that course evaluations are available. Students receive an email with a link to log into the course evaluation with their NetID. Evaluations are anonymous.

Student participation is an integral component of course development, and feedback is important. UW-Madison strongly encourages student participation in course evaluations.

STUDENTS' RULES, RIGHTS & RESPONSIBILITIES

[Rights & Responsibilities](#)

DIVERSITY & INCLUSION STATEMENT

[Diversity](#) is a source of strength, creativity, and innovation for UW-Madison. We value the contributions of each person and respect the profound ways their identity, culture, background, experience, status, abilities, and opinion enrich the university community. We commit ourselves to the pursuit of excellence in teaching, research, outreach, and diversity as inextricably linked goals. The University of Wisconsin-Madison fulfills its public mission by creating a welcoming and inclusive community for people from every background – people who as students, faculty, and staff serve Wisconsin and the world.

ACADEMIC INTEGRITY STATEMENT

By virtue of enrollment, each student agrees to uphold the high academic standards of the University of Wisconsin-Madison; academic misconduct is behavior that negatively impacts the integrity of the institution. Cheating, fabrication, plagiarism, unauthorized collaboration, and helping others commit these previously listed acts are examples of misconduct which may result in disciplinary action. Examples of disciplinary [sanctions](#) include, but are not limited to, failure on the assignment/course, written reprimand, disciplinary probation, suspension, or expulsion.

ACCOMMODATIONS FOR STUDENTS WITH DISABILITIES

The University of Wisconsin-Madison supports the right of all enrolled students to a full and equal educational opportunity. The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Wisconsin State Statute (36.12), and UW-Madison policy ([UW-855](#)) require the university to provide reasonable accommodations to students with disabilities to access and participate in its academic programs and educational services. Faculty and students share responsibility in the accommodation process. Students are expected to inform faculty of their need for instructional accommodations during the beginning of the semester, or as soon as possible after being approved for accommodations. Faculty will work either directly with the student or in coordination with the McBurney Center to provide reasonable instructional and course-related accommodations. Disability information, including instructional accommodations as part of a student's educational record, is confidential and protected under FERPA. (See: [McBurney Disability Resource Center](#))

ACADEMIC CALENDAR & RELIGIOUS OBSERVANCES

[Academic Calendar & Religious Observances](#)