

University of North Texas
Department of History
HIST 4261.002: 20th Century American Military History
Spring 2017
T-TH, 9:30 to 10:50

Instructor: Dr. Alex Mendoza

Office: WH 233

Office Hours: Tuesdays and Thursdays, 11:00 to 12:30, or by appointment

Office Phone: (940) 369-7241

Email: amendoza@unt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION: This is an overview of United States military history from the turn of the twentieth century to the present, emphasizing the concepts of the American military experience. This course focuses on the influence and concepts of the American military institution and the interrelationship between foreign and military policy. Students will achieve an understanding of the main developments in American military history during the 1900s, the ways in which these developments reflected or shaped developments in general American history, and how political and societal changes have influenced the nature of American military conflicts.

COURSE OBJECTIVES: To obtain a better understanding of the events, people, and ideas that helped shape the military affairs of the United States during the twentieth century. More specifically:

- Students will understand the broad narrative of American military history and appreciate how the nation's military experience has shaped both its past and present.
- Students will recognize the changes in tactics, strategy, and national policy in the 20th century.
- Students will examine how and why Americans became involved in wars, why those wars were fought the way they were, why they turned out the way they did.
- Students will learn to analyze, synthesize, and interpret historical process and events.

TEXTS:

- **Allan R. Millett, Peter Maslowski, and William Feis, *For the Common Defense*, 3rd edition, (2012)**
- **José Ramirez, *To The Line of Fire: Mexican Texans and World War I* (2008)**
- **Mark Perry, *The Most Dangerous Man in America* (2016)**

GRADING:

- | | |
|------------------------------|-----------------|
| ▪ Midterm Exams (2) | 40% (20% each) |
| ▪ Final Exam | 20% |
| ▪ Social Media Project | 10% |
| ▪ Book Quizzes | 15% (7.5% each) |
| ▪ Class Participation | 10% |
| ▪ Primary Source Discussions | 05% |

Generally speaking, a grade of 90.00% corresponds to a borderline A- and 89.99% to a B+; 80% is the line between a B- and a C+ and so on. **Grades will not be curved in this course.** No extra credit will be accepted to substitute for poor semester grades. It is the professor's policy not to grant incompletes.

EXAMS:

Three exams will be given during the semester (two midterms and a final). Exams will be comprised of matching, identification questions, and an essay component. Each test will focus on lectures and assigned readings. The final will be comprehensive.

SOCIAL MEDIA PROJECT:

A pertinent part of the American Military experience is the concept of historical memory and public spaces in the late 20th and early 21st century. Accordingly, students will be asked to visit a public space (museum, statue, memorial, etc.) dealing with American wars of the twentieth century and chronicle their experience via Instagram to the class Instagram page @[untmilitaryhistory](#). The project will comprise of a photo (or a series of photos) and a brief paper (details on both are forthcoming later this semester) answering particular questions on the meanings of the American wars in the 21st century.

BOOK DISCUSSION PROJECTS:

Students are required to read two monographs this semester (Ramirez, *To the Line of Fire!* and Perry, *The Most Dangerous Man in America*) during the semester. On the scheduled dates, students are expected to have read the entire book and have sufficiently prepared to take a quiz over each study. In order to provide for a flexibility of questions, no review guides will be given to students for preparation.

PRIMARY SOURCE DISCUSSION ASSIGNMENTS:

Students are expected to read a primary source document(s) pertaining to 20th century U.S. Military History and provide answers to a series of questions posed by the professor (200-word minimum) and comment on fellow students' responses (100-word minimum) on Blackboard. Additional information is forthcoming in the semester. The average of these assignments will comprise 05% of your overall average.

CLASS PARTICIPATION COMPONENT:

Ten percent of your grade will be based on a subjective class participation component. Since participation in class is expected, I will keep track of who shares in question/discussion and who says next to nothing. Obviously, since you have to attend class to contribute, there will be a strong emphasis on attendance for the class participation component. The professor will check attendance and use this to correlate this portion of the overall grade.

MAKEUP EXAM POLICY:

Exams may **NOT** be taken early—including the final exam. Students must arrange work schedules and last-minute travel plans in order to take the tests & quizzes on the scheduled dates. There are no make-ups unless you have some kind of documented medical emergency or university sponsored activity. Students need to notify the professor if a test or quiz is missed and no excuses will be accepted more than 48 hours after the scheduled test date. Make-up exams will be given only to students who in my opinion have a legitimate excuse, such as a severe illness, or absence due to a University-sponsored activity. The burden of supplying sufficient documentary proof rests upon the student. Students must provide a 1-page, single-spaced letter explaining the reason why they require a makeup test along with documentation (medical or otherwise) in order to receive consideration for a makeup. There are no reviews for the makeup exams, which are of an entirely different format than the original test.

USE OF BLACKBOARD:

The instructor will use UNT's Blackboard platform to distribute information throughout the semester. Lecture outlines, exam reviews, primary source discussions, and announcements will all be found on the course Blackboard page. Students must learn the process of accessing course information and quiz materials on specific dates. The burden of responsibility lies with the students. (Exams and class participation grades will not be posted on Blackboard.)

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATIONS:

The University of North Texas makes reasonable academic accommodation for students with disabilities. Students seeking accommodation must first register with the Office of Disability Accommodation (ODA) to verify their eligibility. If a disability is verified, the ODA will provide you with an accommodation letter to be delivered to faculty to begin a private discussion regarding your specific needs in a course. You may request accommodations at any time, however, ODA notices of accommodation should be provided as early as possible in the semester to avoid any delay in implementation. Note that students must obtain a new letter of accommodation for every semester and must meet with each faculty member prior to implementation in each class. For additional information see the Office of Disability Accommodation website at www.unt.edu/oda. You may also contact them by phone at 940.565.4323.

STUDENT ABSENCE FOR UNIVERSITY SPONSORED EVENTS AND ACTIVITIES:

If you intend to be absent for a university-sponsored event or activity, you (or the event sponsor) must notify the instructor at least two weeks prior to the date of the planned absence. At that time the instructor will set a date and time when make-up assignments will be completed.

NOTE TAKING:

You are expected to take notes during lectures, discussions, and, if applicable, videos. Lecture outlines may assist you in this process. However, it is not enough simply to copy the lecture outline—you must take notes in order to do well on exams. Please do not try to follow along with me in your textbook—I do not lecture directly from the text and you will end up missing key points in the lecture and the point(s) I am trying to make. The professor does not provide lecture notes. Please do not bring a tape recorder to class unless you can provide some documentation for a disability.

USE OF EMAIL:

Feel free to e-mail me in regard to anything related to the class, the topic, or professional requests. Please do not e-mail me or the teaching assistant in regard to specific grades. I will not respond to grade queries for reasons of student privacy, and anything I deem inappropriate or unprofessional. I also retain the right to forward all such e-mails to university officials. Please use my university email address listed on page 1 of this syllabus.

WHAT I EXPECT FROM YOU:

- Keep up with the readings. Keep track of your own grades. Do not wait until the last minute (or last week) for anything related to the course.
- Please try not to be late to class. If there is a reason why you must be late, try to be quiet as you come in.
- Take all exams on the scheduled dates. Makeups will be comprised of a different format than the original test.

WHAT TO EXPECT FROM ME:

- My lectures will be well-prepared and organized.
- I will see that your exams are graded as promptly and accurately as possible.

POLICY STATEMENT:

Please keep in mind that there are no assignments or extra credit opportunities to substitute for poor grades or non-attendance. It is understood that remaining in this class constitutes an agreed to abide by the terms outlined in this syllabus and an acceptance of the requirements outlined in this document.

| Date | Lecture | Subject | Reading(s) |
|-------------------|----------------|---|--|
| Jan. 17 | 01 | New Frontiers and American Imperialism | Millett, <i>For the Common Defense</i> (M) |
| Jan. 19 | 02 | The Philippine War, 1898-1902 | M, Chapter 9 |
| Jan. 24 | 03 | The Era of Military Reform, 1898-1916 | M, Chapter 10 |
| Jan. 26 | 04 | The Great War: Origins | M, Chapter 10 |
| Jan. 31 | 05 | The American Expeditionary Force | M, Chapter 11 |
| Feb. 02 | 06 | The Great War: Over There | M, Chapter 11 |
| Feb. 07 | 07 | The Interwar Years | M, Chapter 11-12 |
| Feb. 09 | 08 | The Rise of the Totalitarians | M, Chapter 13 |
| | | Book Quiz #1 (Ramirez, <i>To the Line of Fire!</i>) | |
| Feb. 14 | | Review | |
| Feb. 16 | | Exam I | |
| Feb. 21 | 09 | Pearl Harbor | M, Chapter 13 |
| Feb. 23 | 10 | Strategy and Mobilization | M, Chapter 13 |
| Feb. 28 | 11 | The Asia-Pacific Theater | M, Chapter 13 |
| Mar. 02 | 12 | The Battle of the Atlantic | M, Chapter 13 |
| Mar. 07 | 13 | The Pacific War, 1943-1944 | M, Chapter 14 |
| Mar. 09 | 14 | The European Theater, 1943-1944 | M, Chapter 14 |
| Mar. 13-17 | | UNT Spring Break | |
| Mar. 21 | 15 | D-Day | M, Chapter 14 |
| Mar. 23 | 16 | The Road to Berlin | M, Chapter 14 |
| Mar. 28 | 17 | Strategic Bombing | M, Chapter 14 |
| Mar. 30 | 18 | Ending the War | M, Chapter 14 |
| Apr. 04 | | Exam II | |
| Apr. 06 | 19 | The Cold War Military | M, Chapter 15 |
| Apr. 11 | 20 | America's Forgotten War: Korea | M, Chapter 15 |
| Apr. 13 | | America's Forgotten War: Korea, cont. | |
| Apr. 18 | 21 | Vietnam: Origins | M, Chapter 16-17 |
| | | Book Quiz #2 (Perry, <i>The Most Dangerous Man in America</i>) | |
| Apr. 20 | 23 | Vietnam: Escalation | M, Chapter 17 |
| Apr. 25 | 24 | Vietnamization and its Impact | M, Chapter 18 |
| Apr. 27 | 25 | Buildup: Reagan's Military | M, Chapter 19 |
| May 02 | 26 | The First Gulf War | M, Chapter 19 |
| May 04 | | Summary/Review | |
| May 05 | | University Reading Day—No Classes Scheduled | |

Final Exam

Thursday, May 11, 2017, 8:00 a.m. to 10:00 a.m. (!)