

University of North Texas
Department of History
HIST 5100.001: Seminar in American Military History, Colonial to the Present
Spring 2021
Thursdays, 6:30 to 9:20 p.m. (remote)

Instructor: Dr. Alex Mendoza
Office: WH 233
Email: amendoza@unt.edu

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course focuses on the conception and submission of an original and creative research paper studying any aspect of U.S. Military History from the colonial period to the present. The scope of the potential manuscript topics are wide and varied, ranging from the development of American military institutions, the effect of war on the homefront, the origins of policy-making and maintenance of civilian control over that process, the interrelationship between foreign and military policy, and the general conduct of war, to name a few. The professor will require a formal research paper submission (see schedule), including thesis, objectives, relevance, a rough outline, and research methods by the third week of class (**Thursday January 28**).

PROFESSOR'S EXPECTATIONS:

Graduate courses are not meant to be professorial lectures. The class will place the burden of research and writing on the student. How much you learn depends largely on how much you and your classmates manage time and explore the rich and variant history of American wars since the colonial period. It is not easy; the research and writing load is heavy. Few transgressions will be worse in this class than not having an idea of what you will be writing about; and you will be put to the test this semester. Therefore, keeping on schedule is extremely important. I recognize that life often presents unexpected challenges and time constraints. Yet, if you are serious about a graduate education, you must make sacrifices.

It is assumed that participants in the readings course have, at the very least, a grasp of the major events and the larger historical developments related to American Military History and Society. If you do not, teach yourself. There are excellent studies, including the course recommended book, Matthew S. Muehlbauer and David J. Ulbrich, *Ways of War: American Military History from the Colonial Era to the Twenty-First Century* (2014). There are additional studies including Allan R. Millett and Peter Maslowski, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States* (2012); and Robert Doughty and Ira Gruber, *American Military History and the Evolution of Western Warfare* (1996). Please take advantage of them.

GRADING:

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|---------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| ▪ Research Paper (20-30 pages, 12-point font, double-spaced) | 90% |
| ▪ Class Attendance and Participation | 10% |

Generally speaking, a grade of 90.00% corresponds to a borderline A- and 89.99% to a B+; 80.00% is the line between a B- and a C+ and so on. Grades will not be curved in this course. No incompletes.

RESEARCH PAPER:

Students must submit a 20-30 page original research paper which demonstrates a critical, historical understanding of the subject chosen. As in any graduate course, students must submit an assignment with without any concerns for grammar, spelling, and clarity. A coherent and substantiated thesis (an argument) is expected in each research paper.

CLASS PARTICIPATION:

Ten percent of your grade will be based on class participation with Zoom meetings. This semester places the additional burden of meeting remotely. Yet, the idea of independent research is ideal for this type of setting. Two of the main components used in determining that grade are *attendance* and *presentation*. In regard to the former, graduate students are expected to exhibit a professional attitude toward this and all courses by attending any scheduled Zoom meeting and generally not “disappearing” during the semester. There are no excused “cuts” at this level and absences will reduce the overall grade. As for *presentation*, each student will be expected to be thoroughly prepared for any discussion of their topics and any related discourse.

DISABILITIES ACCOMMODATION:

The University of North Texas complies with Section 504 of the 1973 Rehabilitation Act and with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990. The University of North Texas provides academic adjustments and auxiliary aids to individuals with disabilities, as defined under the law. Among other things, this legislation requires that all students with disabilities be guaranteed a learning environment that provides a reasonable accommodation of their disabilities. If you believe you have a disability requiring accommodation, please see the instructor and/or contact the Office of Disability Accommodation at (940) 565-4323 during the first week of class.

USE OF EMAIL:

Since students will be working actively and independently on their own research projects, communication with the professor (and perhaps each other) is of vital importance, particularly since we will not meet for weeks at a time. So, please feel free to e-mail me in regard to anything related to the class, the topic, or professional requests.

MEETINGS WITH PROFESSOR:

During the second week of the semester, students are expected to individually meet with me via Zoom to discuss viable research paper topics on a broad scope. Formal in-class presentations of each topic are expected the following week, on January 28.

Spring 2015 Semester Schedule:

Week 1 (January 14):

Introduction and course expectations.

Week 2 (January 21):

Students will schedule a meeting to discuss research paper topics.

Week 3 (January 28):

Students will formally present their research paper topics to the professor. It will be via Zoom. Students will also provide a brief research proposal (less than one page) and the historical question they will address in their paper.

Week 9 (March 11):

Students must provide Zoom presentations of research paper topics, including thesis, objective, relevance, an outline, progress status, and problems.

Week 12 (April 01):

At this point in the semester, students will submit a rough draft of their paper to a fellow student (professor will randomly pick). Drafts should be returned within one week to the author with substantive comments and a summary. A photocopy of these corrections should be submitted to the professor as well.

Week 15 (April 22):

Deadline for research papers. Please submit final drafts along with copies of marked rough drafts from earlier in the semester.

NOTE:

Throughout the semester, please feel free to call or email to schedule individual appointments to discuss research projects.