

U.S. MILITARY HISTORY
HISTORY 340 - Winter 2022

Location: 129 McKenzie
Tuesday and Thursday, 2-3:20
CRN 23086

Professor Dracobly
Office: McKenzie 329

(From the main [north] entrance, take first staircase on the left up one floor, exit to the left, go right down the hall to where it opens out a second time: I'm on the left, next to the recycling bins).

Office phone: None. Contact me by Canvas or e-mail: dracobly@uoregon.edu
Office hours: Fridays 9-12

We also have two Graduate Employees (G.E.s) helping out this term:

WHAT THIS COURSE IS ABOUT

This course examines the military history of the United States from the colonial period to the early twenty-first century with an emphasis on the United States Army. A governing assumption of the course is that a nation's military establishment reflects the society of which it is a part, even as it develops and maintains a distinct identity and traditions of its own. Because war remains the critical test of any military establishment, however, changes in warfare and the performance of the U.S. military in war will be our primary focus. We will be considering throughout the term how the nation's military institutions have responded to the demands of war and how those responses have changed over the last two centuries. The American Revolution, the Mexican War, the U.S. Civil War, the Indian Wars, the two world wars, the Korean Conflict, the Vietnam War, the Persian Gulf War, and the Global War on Terror will provide the focal points for the course, even as we also keep in mind the many tasks other than war that the U.S. military has often been asked to fulfill.

Required course materials: U.S. Army Center of Military History, American Military History volumes 1 and 2. Washington, D.C., 2009 (revised edition).

This book is available for free as a pdf:

Volume 1: <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH-V1/>

Volume 2: <http://www.history.army.mil/books/amh-v2/amh%20v2/>

You will need regular access either to the on-line version of this text or should download a pdf version of it. Because it is sometimes unavailable on-line, I would advise downloading it (I have posted pdf copies to the first module).

And ...

Charles B. MacDonald, Company Commander: The Classic Infantry Memoir of WWII. (Available from UO Bookstore or other vendors: any edition will do).

You should also download (as we go) from the course Canvas site the primary source materials that we will be using throughout the term. Those materials are located in the “modules” and “pages” established for each class day.

GENERAL AIMS AND EXPECTED LEARNING OUTCOMES

This course provides an introduction both to U.S. military history and, as a 300-level group-satisfying course, to historical methodology and the ways that historians think about the past. We will be examining a set of issues which arise in many areas of historical inquiry: the creation and development of institutions and institutional practice; the diverse forces that shape those institutions and their practices; and the factors that both promote change and predicate against change within those institutions. Over the course of the quarter we will be examining the wide range of factors and diverse explanations that historians have employed in trying to explain the successes and failures of the U.S. Army in its various endeavors.

Our textbook will provide us with most of substantive content. The various assignments are designed simultaneously to think about and test the different ways of explaining the history of the U.S. Army and to practice the different methods that historians employ in generating new historical knowledge and testing existing historical arguments. The expectation is that the themes and methods learned in this class will be applicable not only to other courses in U.S. history and military history, but also to the study of any institution that exists over a long period of time, develops a body of doctrine that is transmitted from one generation to the next, and creates an institutional memory that is preserved both formally and informally by the members, past and present, of the institution.

Over the course of the term you will:

1. Demonstrate an ability to recognize and understand the central themes of American military history.
2. Compare and contrast both major and minor military conflicts with respect to causes, strategy, operations, and tactics.
3. Assess the evolution of military policy and the role of political influences in shaping that policy, as well as the relationship between civilian and military hierarchies of command in U.S. military history.

4. Evaluate the relationship between war and society in shaping U.S. history.
5. Acquire an understanding of and practice in the use of basic historical concepts as they pertain to the study of institutions over long spans of time.
6. Practice the use of primary sources in developing new historical and testing existing historical arguments.

GRADED WORK

Weekly quizzes: an on-line quiz will be due on most Mondays at 11:59 pm. Answers to the quiz can be found in the textbook unless otherwise noted. The absolute point values of the quizzes will be slightly variable. As a group, however, the quizzes will be worth 20% of your grade but the two lowest quiz grades will be dropped. Thus, if you fail to take two of the quizzes, you can still receive the entire 20%. However, **you should take the first quiz.** They are intentionally designed to highlight the themes of this course and many students find that they take more time than they initially expected.

>>>>> Quizzes will remain open for a week beyond the due date and then shut down.

Everything else will take the form of essays, some shorter, some longer.

All written work will be submitted on-line. They are “due” at 11:59 pm but there will be a **48-hour grace period** for all written work **with the exception of the final.**

In other words, you can turn in anything up to 48 hours late without incurring a late penalty. After that, we will take off 20% of the value of the assignment.

Written work submission portals will remain open one week beyond the due date.

HOW GRADES WILL BE DETERMINED

Weekly quizzes	20%
Short essay (Washington to Dinwiddie)	10%
Two essay “midterms”	30% (15% each)
MacDonald paper:	20%
Final essay assignment	20%
 Total:	 100%

SIGNIFICANT DATES: all written submissions are due at 11:59 pm; the quizzes are due on Mondays (but remain open for a week)

Most Mondays, 11:59 pm: weekly quizzes due (two chances, untimed, open book – each quiz will stay open one week past the due date and the answers will appear when the quiz “closes”)

January 16: Short essay on Washington’s letter to Dinwiddie

January 31: First essay “midterm”

February 14: Second essay “midterm”

February 28: MacDonald paper

March 16: Final essay assignment

LATE POLICY

With the exception of the weekly quizzes, late submissions are accepted for one week following the due date and time with a penalty of 20% of the value of the assignment. After the passage of a week the submission portal will shut down and you will have to contact Professor Dracoby if you want to talk about it.

GRADING CRITERIA

Final grades will be assigned as follows:

A = 93% and up

A- = 90-92.9%

B+ = 87-89.9%

B = 83-86.9%

And on down the scale to 60% = D-

Anything below a 60% is an F.

A+ are awarded on a discretionary basis. I typically award 1-3% of any class an A+ but only when there are clear cases of students who consistently outperform their peers throughout the duration of the term.

The following criteria will be employed for all written work.

A: Work that distinguishes itself by the excellence of its grasp of the material and the precision and insight of its argument, in addition to being well executed and reasonably free of errors.

B: Work that satisfies main criteria of the assignment, and demonstrates command of the material, but does not achieve the level of excellence that characterizes work of A quality.

C: Work that demonstrates a rudimentary grasp of the material and satisfies at least some of the assigned criteria reasonably well.

D: Work that demonstrates a poor grasp of the material and/or is executed with little regard for college standards, but which exhibits some engagement with the material.

F: Work that is weak in every aspect, demonstrating a basic misunderstanding of the material and/or disregard for the assigned question.

COURSE POLICIES

Class attendance is expected and the quizzes and exams will reflect that expectation. If you are in class, I expect you to avoid the use of any devices or engaging in behavior that might distract your fellow students.

I encourage everyone in the class to collaborate - to talk with classmates about the midterms and final. You will benefit from sharing ideas and talking with others about the coursework.

>>>>> **However, all submitted written work must be your own:** you may share ideas but, in the end, you must write it up yourself. Doing otherwise - whether "borrowing" a colleague's written work or submitting something written by a third party - constitutes plagiarism. Plagiarized work will receive a zero in the first instance. A second instance of plagiarism will result in a failing grade for the class and will be reported to the Office of Student Conduct.

ACCESSIBILITY

This course supports access and inclusion for students with disabilities. This includes but is not limited to exam adjustments, sign language interpretation, classroom relocation, and adaptive technology services available to students who register with the Accessible Education Center (AEC).

You can find more information at: <https://aec.uoregon.edu/>

Class Schedule (which is also posted with links to the additional readings in the modules and pages of the course Canvas site: there is a “page” for each class day)

WEEK 1: Introduction and the Beginnings

Jan. 4: Introduction to US military history: What does military history encompass? What are the central themes of U.S. military history?

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, preface and introduction (xv-17)

Jan. 6: The Beginnings: the military in colonial America

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapter 1 (19-43); George Washington to Robert Dinwiddie, October 11-14, 1755, from The Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series, II (1983), 101-108.

For class make sure to have a copy of Washington's letter to Dinwiddie that you can consult (whether printed out or on a device).

WEEK 2: American Revolution War

Jan. 11: American Revolutionary War (day 1)

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapter 3 (45-74); George Washington, General Orders of July 4, 1775, Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, I, 54; and George Washington, Letter "To John Hancock [President of Congress]," September 25, 1776, Papers of George Washington, Revolutionary War Series, VI, 393-40. Also, an example of a "return" from the Seven Years War: The Papers of George Washington, Colonial Series, III (1984), 428-29.

Topic: Note Washington's attempt to place the "Continental Army" on a regular footing and his general distrust of militia: why the emphasis on a regular army as opposed to relying on militia?

>>>>> Short essay (Washington to Dinwiddie) due: January 16

Jan 13: American Revolutionary War (day 2)

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapter 4 (75-106); and Christopher Ward, "Before Cowpens" and "Cowpens," chs. 68-69, The War of the Revolution II (1952), 748-762 (in a single file: war_cowpens.pdf).

WEEK 3: From the early years of the Republic through the Mexican War

Jan. 18: From the early years of the Republic and up to the Mexican War

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, skim chapters 5 to 7 (107-76); George Washington "Calls for a Standing Army, 1783," and excerpts from the Constitution and Bill of Rights, as reproduced in John Whiteclay Chambers II and G. Kurt Piehler, eds., Major Problems in American Military History (1999), 101-102; and excerpts from the Militia Act of 1792, from Walter Millis, ed., American Military Thought, 60-7 (read especially Chap. XXXVIII and Chap. XXXIX, section 1).

Jan. 20: The Mexican War And after

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, ch. 8 (177-198)

WEEK 4: The U.S. Civil War

Jan 25: The Civil War

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapters 9 and 10 (199-251); and miscellaneous documents regarding Confederate strategy by General Lee and President Jefferson Davis, from John Whiteclay Chambers II and G. Kurt Piehler, eds., Major Problems in American Military History (1999), 154-160.

Jan. 27: The Civil War (cont.)

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapters 11 and 12 (253-305); and miscellaneous documents regarding Union strategy and the conduct of the war by General Grant and General Sherman, from John Whiteclay Chambers II and G. Kurt Piehler, eds., Major Problems in American Military History (1999), 166-168; and letters between the same from Walter Millis, ed., American Military Thought (1966), 143-160.

WEEK 5: From the Civil War to the emergence of the U.S. as a world power

>>>> **First "midterm essays" due: January 31**

Feb. 1: The Indian Wars, frontier policing and constabulary responsibilities

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapters 13 and 14 (307-346); and the short excerpt from A Webfoot Volunteer Soldier's Diary. This is the diary of William W. Hilleary, who served at Fort Hoskins (now a state park northwest of Corvallis) in 1865 – this idea is to get a small sense of what service in such an outpost was like.

Feb. 3: Spanish-American War and U.S. emergence as a world power

Read: American Military History, vol. 1, chapters 15 to end (347-396).

WEEK 6: World War I and the interwar years

Feb. 8: World War I

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, prologue and chapters 1 and 2 (1-78); and John Pershing, "Against Amalgamation," and AEF Combat Instructions, 1918," in John Whiteclay Chambers II and G. Kurt Piehler, eds., Major Problems in American Military History (1999), 255-7.

Feb. 10: The interwar years and the beginning of WWII

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapters 2 and 3 (55-105)

WEEK 7: World War II

>>>> **Second midterm essays due: Feb. 14**

Feb. 15: WWII: Grand Strategy and the European theatre

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapters 4 and 5 (107-68)

Feb. 17: WWII: The Pacific War

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapter 6 (169-202)

WEEK 8: World War II and after

Feb. 22: U.S. Army Operational Methods and Combat in the European and Pacific Theatres

Read: Keep reading WWII chapters of American Military History, vol. 2; and finish MacDonald, Company Commander.

For our **class session**, we'll take a look at how the U.S. engaged in combat operations in Europe and the Pacific, the similarities and differences. You should think about the ways in which MacDonald's account of his experience as a company commander illustrates U.S. Army operational methods in Europe. We'll be talking about MacDonald and the papers on his book in class.

Feb. 24: The Korean War and the Cold War Army

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapters 7 to 9 (203-88).

WEEK 9: From Vietnam to the creation of the All-Volunteer Force

>>>>> **MacDonald paper due, February 28**

March 1: The U.S. Army and Vietnam

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapters 10 and 11 (289-372)

The final "exam" essays are now available. You should take a look at them. You will see that one of the topics concerns the war in Vietnam. In class we'll talk about that essay. It will be more useful to you if you have read the sections on "The Highlands, 1965," "Defending Saigon, 1965-1967," and "II Corps Battles, 1966-1967" (pages 311-329) - those sections will serve as the basis for that essay and we will talk about what you can do with them. Be sure to have access to the book in class.

March 3: From Vietnam to Desert Storm: the creation of an All-Volunteer Force

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapter 12 (373-411).

WEEK 10: From the Persian Gulf War to the Global War on Terror

March 8: The US Army and the end of the Cold War

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapter 13 (413-461); and Captain H.R. McMaster, "Eagle Troop," in Personal Perspectives on the Gulf War (1994), 33-38.

March 10: The Challenge of the Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan

Read: American Military History, vol. 2, chapter 14 (463-518)

FINAL ASSIGNMENT: Due Wednesday March 15 on Canvas (11:59 pm)

>>>> THIS IS A HARD DEADLINE: I HAVE THREE CLASSES FOR WHICH I MUST SUBMIT GRADES BY NOON AND I CANNOT FINISH IF EXAMS ARE TRICKLING IN. THE 48 HR GRACE PERIOD **DOES NOT** APPLY TO THE FINAL.