

HIST 460: American Military History – Fall 2024

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203 East Hall -- 677-5569/102 Slagle Hall – 658-3850

Course Time and Place:

This course meets in Old Main 202 on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 11:00-11:50 a.m.

Office Hours:

Thursdays from 3-4 pm in East Hall 203. Given the complexities of my schedule, this time won't always be available, and it will probably be easiest to schedule individual meeting times as needed. Please check with me directly or contact my assistant at Lisa.Ketcham@usd.edu to get on my calendar.

Required Readings:

- Millett, Maslowski, and Feis, *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012* (2012)
- Lee, *The Cutting-Off Way: Indigenous Warfare in Eastern North America, 1500-1800* (2023)
- Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945* (2012)
- Linn, *Real Soldiering: The US Army in the Aftermath of War, 1815-1980* (2023)

Catalog Description:

Examines the origins and developments of military institutions, traditions, tactics, and practices in the United States from 1775 to the present, including the relation between the armed forces and other government agencies.

Course Objectives:

This course is a survey of American military history from colonial times to the modern day. Because it is a survey course, we will not have the opportunity to give as much attention as you may desire to every important, interesting, and controversial topic. However, we will discuss a wide range of issues about which you will be expected to think and form your own opinions. Military history is about more than generals and battles (what some historians like to call "Guns and Drums History"). We will spend much of our time discussing things like technology, professionalism, administration, and military policy -- the less glamorous but equally important components of a balanced overview of military history. Rote memorization will do you little good in this class; be prepared to think for yourselves, especially when it comes to the papers you will write about the outside readings. You are strongly encouraged to make use of the instructor's office hours throughout the semester.

Course Requirements:

The instructor expects each student to keep up with the schedule of readings that appears on this syllabus. You will have a much better idea of what's going on if you have done the reading. These assignments, along with information from the lectures and discussions, will provide the material for the exams. There are 450 possible points to be earned in this class. There will be three (3) essay exams, two during the semester and one during finals week. Each exam will be worth 100 points. Bring a big bluebook and pen(s) to both exams. You will also write three short chapter analysis papers worth 50

points each, which are explained in more detail below. Your course grade is determined by your average and is based on a standard 10-point scale.

Chapter Analysis Assignments

One of the goals of this course is to not only expose you to lots of content about the evolution of American military history over time, but also to teach you how to think critically about the way that historians write history. We evaluate historical arguments by looking closely at the way that historians use primary and secondary sources in constructing their theses, and we get better at doing that by practicing, much as we use practice to improve our writing.

This semester, you are reading three monographs that each focus on a very different moment in American military history. Each monograph has an overall thesis, but they also contain chapters developing sub-arguments that ultimately feed into that thesis. For this exercise, you will read a selected chapter from each monograph and write a critical essay evaluating just how effective each historian is in constructing and supporting their argument in that chapter.

Each essay will be analytical, and while you should discuss details from the chapters, this is NOT a book report. In your essay, you must specifically address each of the following questions:

- What is the author's main argument in this chapter? If there are multiple parts to their argument, what are they?
- What types of primary sources does the author use in the chapter? In what ways are these primary sources convincing (or not!) in proving the chapter's main argument?
- What types of secondary sources does the author use in the chapter? In what ways are these secondary sources convincing (or not!) in proving the chapter's main argument?
- Are there other types of sources, or sources from other historical actors, that could have made the author's thesis stronger?
- How does this chapter reflect, confirm, challenge, or contradict ideas expressed in Millett, et.al, *For the Common Defense* (your textbook)?
- After considering the five preceding questions, how successful (or not) is each author in proving the chapter's thesis?

Citations

- While history papers generally use the Chicago Manual of Style, these papers are a bit different because your sole source for each paper is the book itself. If you use a quotation in your paper, put a parenthetical reference at the end of the sentence with just the page number, like this (142).
- If you use an AI engine like ChatGPT or CoPilot to generate ideas for your paper, you will need to cite that. That citation style would also be parenthetical, like this ("Description of prompt," ChatGPT, 2024).

Each critical essay (worth 50 points each) will be 5 pages long. It must be double spaced, typed in a standard 12-point font with appropriate margins, and have page numbers in the upper right-hand corner of the page. You will submit your essay via D2L. Your due dates are:

- Chapter Analysis 1:
Wayne Lee, *The Cutting-Off Way: Indigenous Warfare in Eastern North America, 1500-1800*, Chapter 6 (The Military Revolution of Native North America: Firearms, Forts, and Politics), due September 20.

- Chapter Analysis 2:
Michael Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy: American Operational Art to 1945*, Chapter 6 (The European Theater of War), due October 30.
- Chapter Analysis 3:
Brian Linn, *Real Soldiering: The US Army in the Aftermath of War, 1815-1980*, Chapter 4 (The Aftermath Army of World War II and Korea), due December 9.

In addition to these chapter analyses, you can also expect to write an essay on each your exams about each of these books in their entirety.

Makeups

Makeups must be taken within two weeks of a missed exam and will only be given if the student has a university-approved absence. **It is your responsibility to arrange the makeup.** Unless there are extenuating circumstances, makeups not completed within two weeks will have a score of zero entered on the grade sheet. Students with unexcused absences will not be allowed to take a makeup.

Writing Essay Exam Questions

When writing essays, it is important that you build your answer around some kind of thesis statement. Be blunt and put your thesis in the opening paragraph. The remaining paragraphs should strengthen your thesis while answering the question. I often write essay questions that ask you to explain different aspects of a basic question. You may find it easiest to make each of these aspects the subject of its own paragraph. Be sure to support your essay throughout with details from lectures and your readings. Make it **crystal clear** to me that you understand the material. Finally, include a strong conclusion where you tell me what you just told me in the rest of the essay.

Semester Schedule

Topics and dates are subject to change.

- 26 Aug: Introduction to the Course
- 28 Aug: Topic: The American Military Tradition & Our European Heritage
- 30 Aug: Topic: The Colonial Wars
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 1-2.
- 02 Sept: NO CLASS: LABOR DAY HOLIDAY
- 04 Sept: Topic: The Revolutionary War: The Continental Army
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 3.
- 06 Sept: NO CLASS
- 09 Sept: Topic: The Revolutionary War: Citizen Soldiers & The Course of the War
- 11 Sept: Topic: US Army from 1783-1812
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 4.
- 13 Sept: Topic: The War of 1812
- 16 Sept: Topic: American Military Policy, 1815-1845
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 5.
- 18 Sept: Topic: The Mexican War
- 20 Sept: Topic: The American Way of War, 1848-1861
NOTE: First chapter analysis paper (Lee, *The Cutting Off Way*, ch. 6) due.

- 23 Sept: Topic: Civil War Strategy
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 6-7.
- 25 Sept: Topic: Lincoln and Davis as War Presidents
- 27 Sept: **FIRST EXAM**
Readings covered: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 1-7; Lee, *The Cutting Off Way*.
- 30 Sept: Topic: Army Organization from 1865-1898
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 8.
- 02 Oct: Topic: Army Missions from 1865-1898
- 04 Oct: Topic: The Spanish-American War
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 9.
- 07 Oct: Topic: The Philippine Insurrection and Guerrilla War
- 09 Oct: Topic: Army Reform, 1900-1917
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 10.
- 11 Oct: NO CLASS: D-DAYS USD FOUNDATION MEETING
- 14 Oct: NO CLASS: NATIVE AMERICAN DAY
- 16 Oct: Topic: The Changing Face of War, 1865-1914
- 18 Oct: Topic: America Prepares for the Great War
- 21 Oct: Topic: The AEF in the Great War
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 11.
- 23 Oct: Topic: WWI Airpower & the Origins of Strategic Air Doctrine
- 25 Oct: Topic: Strategic Bombing Doctrine
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 12.
- 28 Oct: Topic: Interwar Land Defense Policy, 1919-1941
- 30 Oct: Topic: WWII: American Grand Strategy
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 13-14.
NOTE: Second chapter analysis paper (Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy*, ch. 6) due.
- 01 Nov: Topic: WWII: Manpower & Doctrine
- 04 Nov: Topic: WWII: The Air War
- 06 Nov: **SECOND EXAM**
Readings covered: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 8-14; Matheny, *Carrying the War to the Enemy*.
- 08 Nov: Topic: Post-War Military Policy & Containment
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 15.
- 11 Nov: NO CLASS: VETERANS DAY
- 13 Nov: Topic: The Korean War: Background & Status of American Forces
- 15 Nov: Topic: The Korean War: The Course of the War
- 18 Nov: Topic: The New Look, 1953-1960
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 16.
- 20 Nov: Topic: The Kennedy Years
- 22 Nov: Topic: The Vietnam War, 1954-1968
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 17-18.
- 25 Nov: Topic: The Vietnam War, 1968-1975
- 27 Nov: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK

- 29 Nov: NO CLASS: THANKSGIVING BREAK
- 02 Dec: Topic: The Air War in Vietnam
- 04 Dec: Topic: The Post-Vietnam Army, 1976-1989
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 19.
- 06 Dec: Topic: The Post-Cold War Army, 1990-2002
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 20.
- 09 Dec: Topic: Iraq War 2003 and Civil/Military Tension
Assigned Reading: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 21.
NOTE: Third chapter analysis paper (Linn, *Real Soldiering*, ch. 4) due.
- 18 Dec: **FINAL EXAM** – 10 am-noon, in our regular classroom (Old Main 202)
Readings covered: *For the Common Defense*, ch. 15-21; Linn, *Real Soldiering*.

Zoom Usage and Classroom Attendance:

Classroom participation and in-person interaction are integral components of the education process for face-to-face and hybrid courses, and the university expects students enrolled in those courses to be physically present for scheduled in-person class sessions. The use of video delivery technology (Zoom) to supplement classroom instruction is at the discretion of the instructor, but students should not assume that it is universally available. Students should also not assume that participation via Zoom meets attendance requirements. For this course, Zoom access and attendance will be handled as follows:

- At the instructor's discretion, Zoom may be made available to students with extenuating circumstances. Students must notify the instructor in advance, and if approved, attendance via Zoom will meet course attendance requirements. Pre-approved students will be admitted via a waiting room.
- At the instructor's discretion, Zoom will be made available during inclement weather when travel is not advised, and attendance via Zoom will meet course attendance requirements.

Students with a disability who wish to request an accommodation related to the classroom attendance requirement(s) must contact Disability Services to engage in the accommodation process.

Freedom in Learning:

Under Board of Regents and University policy student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Students should be free to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in any course of study and to reserve judgment about matters of opinion, but they are responsible for learning the content of any course of study for which they are enrolled. Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact the dean of the college or school that offers the class to initiate a review of the evaluation.

Accessibility Statement

The University of South Dakota strives to ensure that physical resources, as well as information and communication technologies, are accessible to users in order to provide equal access to all. If you encounter any accessibility issues, you are encouraged to immediately contact the instructor of the course and the Office of Disability Services, which will work to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

ADA Statement:

The University of South Dakota strives to ensure that physical resources, as well as information and communication technologies, are reasonably accessible to users to provide equal access to all. If you encounter any accessibility issues, you are encouraged to immediately contact the instructor of the course and the Office of Disability Services, which will work to resolve the issue as quickly as possible.

Any student who feels s/he may need academic accommodations or access accommodations based on the impact of a documented disability should contact and register with Disability Services during the first week of class or as soon as possible after the diagnosis of a disability. Disability Services is the official office to assist students through the process of disability verification and coordination of appropriate and reasonable accommodations. Students currently registered with Disability Services must obtain a new accommodation memo each semester.

Please note: if your home institution is not the institution you are enrolled at for a course (host institution), then you should contact your home institution's Office of Disability services. The disability services at the home and host institution will work together to ensure your request is evaluated and responded to.

Disability Services, The Commons – Room 116
(605) 658-3745

Web Site: <https://www.usd.edu/About/Departments-Offices-and-Resources/Disability-Services>

E-mail: disabilityservices@usd.edu

Academic Integrity

Cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty and misconduct run contrary to the purposes of higher education and will not be tolerated. Academic dishonesty includes, but is not limited to, plagiarism, copying answers or work done by another student (either on an exam or an assignment), allowing another student to copy from you, and using unauthorized materials during an exam. The governing Board of Regents policies can be found in [BOR Policy 2.9.2](#) and [BOR Policy 3:4.1](#).

No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. A student found to have engaged in any form of academic dishonesty may, at the discretion of the instructor, be:

- a. Given a zero for that assignment.
- b. Allowed to rewrite and resubmit the assignment for credit.
- c. Assigned a reduced grade for the course.
- d. Dropped from the course.
- e. Failed in the course.

Acceptable Use of Technology

Acceptable Use of Information Technology Resources: While Regental Institutions strive to provide access to computer labs and other technology, it is the student's responsibility to ensure adequate access to the technology required for a course. This may include access to a computer (not Chromebooks, iPads, etc.), webcam, internet, adequate bandwidth, etc. While utilizing any of the information technology systems students, faculty and staff should observe all relevant laws, regulations, [BOR Policy 7.1](#), and any institutional procedural requirements.

Emergency Alert Communication

In the event of an emergency arising on campus under [BOR Policy 7:3](#), USD will notify the campus community via the Everbridge emergency alert system. It is the responsibility of the student to ensure that their information is updated in the emergency alert system. The student's cell phone will be automatically inserted if available and if not, their email address is loaded. Students can at any time update their information in the student alert system.

Grade Appeal Policy

Under Board of Regents ([Student Appeals for Academic Affairs Policy 2.9.1](#)) and University policy ([Student Academic Appeals](#)), students have the right to appeal such matters as course grades and dismissal from a program. Students wishing to appeal an academic decision must use the appropriate [appeal form](#). The form should be used only if informal discussion with the academic decision-maker does not produce a satisfactory resolution and the student wishes to pursue the matter further. Appeals must be initiated by the student through discussion with the individual responsible for the decision (i.e., the academic decision-maker/instructor) to question the decision and explain the basis for doing so. The student must have this discussion within 30 calendar days of being notified of the decision that is being appealed. If notification occurs within 15 calendar days before the end of a term, the discussion must occur at the latest within 15 calendar days of the start of the next term. If a student wishes to pursue the appeal following the discussion with the academic decision-maker, they should complete Step 2 of the [appeal form](#) and submit within 5 working days of the discussion a signed copy to the mediator designated on the form.

Statement on Recording of Lectures by Students

Lectures, presentations, and other course materials are protected intellectual property under South Dakota Board of Regents Policy. Accordingly, recording and disseminating lectures, presentations or course materials is strictly prohibited without the express permission of the faculty member or as the result of an approved disability accommodation through Disability Services. Violation of this prohibition may result in the student being subject to Student Conduct proceedings under [SDBOR Policy 3.4.1](#).

Student Success Services and Supports

The USD Opportunity Center (<https://www.usd.edu/About/Departments-Offices-and-Resources/Opportunity-Center>) offers a central connection point for campus resources that are designed specifically for student success. The Opportunity Center staff is located in MUC 204 and can work with USD students in any location or online to guide you to any of the many student support services you need to navigate life at USD. To find resources on your own, Coyote One Stop (<https://www.usd.edu/About/Departments-Offices-and-Resources/Coyote-One-Stop>) lets you ask questions and browse a comprehensive service catalog for your informational and support needs.

Concern/Complaint Resolution Process

To resolve any concerns, complaints, or questions regarding a course experience, the student should initially attempt addressing issues of concern directly to the instructor or the appropriate decision maker as defined by the chart appended to the university's [academic appeal form](#). Together the student and the instructor should establish a timetable for resolving the issues of concern. If a student feels the conflict has not been resolved, the student should communicate this concern to the chair of the department offering the course. If questions or concerns remain, or if the instructor is the department chair, the student may contact the dean's office for the college or school in which the course is offered.

Contact information for questions or concerns:
USD President Sheila K. Gestring, president@usd.edu