

HIST 470: History of World War II (3 credit hours) – Fall 2023

Dr. Kurt Hackemer - 203 East Hall

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Course Time and Place:

This course meets in Arts & Sciences 105 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30-1:45 p.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:

- Allan Millett and Williamson Murray, *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*.
- Saburo Sakai, *Samurai!*
- Petr Mikhin, *Guns Against the Reich: Memoirs of an Artillery Officer on the Eastern Front*
- Marie Jalowicz Simon, *Underground in Berlin: A Young Woman's Extraordinary Tale of Survival in the Heart of Nazi Germany*
- George Wilson, *If You Survive: From Normandy to the Battle of the Bulge to the End of World War II, One American Officer's Riveting True Story*

Catalog Description:

Study of the war from a political, military, social and economic point of view. American or European emphasis dependent upon instructor.

Course Goals:

This course surveys the history of World War II, the most destructive conflict of the 20th century. Although this class will be taught primarily from an operational perspective, 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 cover all major military operations but will also spend much of our time discussing things like technology, doctrine, diplomacy and politics, and the social impact of the war on those affected by it.

Student Learning Outcomes:

- Understand, analyze, and explain World War II from political, military, social and economic points of view.
- Critically analyze and interpret primary sources such as memoirs, documentaries and animated cartoons.

Course Requirements

The instructor expects each student to keep up with the schedule of readings that appears on this syllabus. These assignments, along with the monographs you are reading, the cartoons and documentaries you are watching, and 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 two (2) essay exams, one at midterm and one during finals week. Your midterm exam will be worth 100 points and your final exam will be worth 150 points. Bring a

big bluebook and pen(s) to the exams. You will also write four short papers worth 50 points each, explained in more detail below. Your course grade is determined by your average and is based on a standard 10-point scale.

THERE WILL BE NO CURVE.

Critical Essay Assignment

This course is organized to introduce you to a variety of primary sources, whether it be the cartoons we watch before class, the documentaries we watch in class, or the memoirs we read in conjunction with class.

Individually, primary sources can be tricky things; they reflect the biases of those who created them and often do not tell the whole story. This is particularly true of memoirs, which can be a bit self-serving at times. For these assignments, your task is to write a critical essay evaluating each memoir as an historical source. While you should discuss events from each memoir, this is NOT a book report. In your essay, consider the following questions:

- What is the author's point of view, and what biases are introduced into the narrative as a result?
- What relevant issues (social, political, military, or other) are addressed, and what does their inclusion add to your understanding of WWII beyond what you are learning in class and knew before you took this class?
- What relevant issues (social, political, military, or other) are not addressed, and why do you think the author left them out?
- What value does this memoir have as an historical document?

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:

- Sakai, *Samurai!*, due September 7th.
- Mikhin, *Guns Against the Reich*, due October 5th.
- Simon, *Underground in Berlin*, due October 31st.
- Wilson, *If You Survive*, due November 30th.

You will also write an essay on your final exam that asks you to consider issues and questions raised by all four autobiographies.

Makeups

Makeups must be taken within one week 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 one week will have a score of zero entered on the grade sheet.

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

22 August - Introduction to the Course

24 August - Drift to War, Part I

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 1.

29 August - Drift to War, Part II

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 7.

31 August - Interwar Seapower

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 2.

5 September - Interwar Airpower

7 September - Origins of Blitzkrieg

Turn in critical essay on Sakai, *Samurai!* Submit via D2L.

12 September - Blitzkrieg Against Poland and France

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 3-4.

14 September - Battle of Britain

19 September - The Holocaust

21 September - US Moves Towards War

26 September - US Grand Strategy

28 September – NO CLASS: Northern Great Plains History Conference

3 October – Documentaries: “Defenders of Moscow, 1941;” excerpts from German propaganda films, including “Triumph of the Will;” “A Night at the Garden” (Academic Affairs Council Meeting)

5 October – Sept. 1940 - Dec. 1941 (Board of Regents meeting)

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 5-6, 8.

Turn in critical essay on Mikhin, *Guns Against the Reich*. Submit via D2L.

10 October - Allied Strategy in 1942

12 October - MIDTERM

Readings Covered: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 1-8

17 October - War in the Pacific, 1942

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 9.

19 October - Battle of the Atlantic

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 10.

24 October - Eastern Front, 1942-43

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 11.

26 October - Allied Strategy from Torch to D-Day

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 14.

31 October - German War Mobilization

Turn in critical essay on Simon, *Underground in Berlin*. Submit via D2L.

2 November - The Home Front

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 19.

7 November - Allied Bombing Offensive

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 12.

9 November – NO CLASS: Southern Historical Association/Society of Civil War Historians

14 November - Documentary: “Memphis Belle”

16 November - Command Technology

21 November - Women at War

23 November – NO CLASS: Thanksgiving Break

28 November - Victory in Europe: D-Day to VE Day

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 15-16.

30 November- Victory in the Pacific: Midway to 1945

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 13, 17-18.

Turn in critical essay on Wilson, *If You Survive*. Submit via D2L.

5 December - Defeat of Japan and the War's Aftermath

Readings: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 20.

13 December - FINAL EXAM – 10:00 am – Noon.

Readings Covered: *A War To Be Won*, ch. 9-20; *Samurai!*; *Guns Against the Reich*; *Underground in Berlin*; *If You Survive*.

Documentaries Covered: "Defense of Moscow, 1941," excerpts from German propaganda films including "Triumph of the Will," "A Night at the Garden," "Memphis Belle," course cartoons, others as assigned.

One Final Tip:

Bad things happen to good people. If you have a horrible test, if something traumatic happens in your personal life, or if the world just seems to be collapsing around you, you need to talk to me as soon as possible. Often, there are things that can be done and allowances that can be made to help you get back on track in this class. However, I can't help you if you don't talk to me.

KEEP THIS SYLLABUS AND REFER TO IT OVER THE COURSE OF THE SEMESTER.
WHEN IN DOUBT, ASK QUESTIONS.

Updated 7 July 2023

Required Board of Regents and Institutional Statements

Freedom in Learning

Under Board of Regents and Regental Institutions policy, student academic performance may be evaluated solely on an academic basis, not on opinions or conduct in matters unrelated to academic standards. Discussion and debate are critical to education and professional development. 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. While the exploration of controversial topics may be an important component of meeting the student learning outcomes in a course, no student will be compelled or directed to personally affirm, adopt, or adhere to any divisive concepts (as defined in SDCL 13-1-67). Students who believe that an academic evaluation reflects prejudiced or capricious consideration of student opinions or conduct unrelated to academic standards should contact their home institution to initiate a review of the evaluation.

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.

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

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

Email: 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 2:33](#) and [BOR Policy 3:4](#).

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](#)) 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](#).

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

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.