

HIST 470/570: History of World War II – Spring 2008

Dr. Kurt Hackemer - Kurt.Hackemer@usd.edu

208 East Hall -- 677-5571

101 Arts & Sciences -- 677-5221

Course Time and Place:

This course meets in East Hall 213 on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 12:30-1:45 p.m.

Office Hours:

Mondays and Thursdays from 9-10:30 am and Wednesdays from 10-11:30 am in Dakota 12, although you can arrange to see me anytime. I will be in one of my offices almost every day. Give me a call. If I'm in, chances are we can meet.

Required Readings:

- Allan Millett and Williamson Murray, *A War to Be Won: Fighting the Second World War*. Harvard University Press. ISBN 0-674-00680-1.
- Mary R. Habeck, *Storm of Steel: The Development of Armor Doctrine in Germany and the Soviet Union, 1919-1939*. Cornell University Press. ISBN 0801440742..
- Geoffrey Megargee, *War of Annihilation: Combat and Genocide on the Eastern Front, 1941*. Rowman & Littlefield Publishers. ISBN 0-7425-4482-6.
- Rick Atkinson, *The Day of Battle: The War in Sicily and Italy, 1943-1944*. Henry Holt & Company. ISBN 0805062890.
- H. P. Willmott, *The Battle Of Leyte Gulf: The Last Fleet Action*. Indiana University Press. ISBN 0253345286.

Catalog Description:

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

Course Description:

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. Rote memorization will do you little good in this class; be prepared to think for yourselves. 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 the monographs you are reading and information from the lectures and discussions, will provide the material for the exams. There are 400 possible points to be earned in this class. There will be two (2) essay exams, one at midterm and one during finals week. Each exam will be worth 150 points. Bring a big bluebook and pen(s) to each exam. You will also write two book reviews 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.

THERE WILL BE NO CURVE.

Book Review

Writing critical book reviews is an important task for historians. Journals ask scholars with a specific expertise to succinctly evaluate books for their peers. You will do the same with two of the four books we are reading this semester. Each review will be 4-5 pages long, 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. Content of each book review should follow guidelines posted on my website (www.usd.edu/~khackeme). Your due dates are:

- Book Review 1
EITHER *Storm of Steel* (due February 11th) OR *War of Annihilation* (due March 5th)
- Book Review 2
EITHER *The Day of Battle* (due April 2nd) OR *The Battle of Leyte Gulf* (due April 23rd)

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

23 January - Drift to War, Part I

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

28 January - Drift to War, Part II

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

30 January - Interwar Seapower

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

4 February - Interwar Airpower

6 February - Origins of Blitzkrieg

11 February - Blitzkrieg Against Poland and France

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

Storm of Steel book review due as one option for Review 1.

13 February - Battle of Britain

20 February - The Holocaust

25 February - Documentary: "Night and Fog"

27 February - US Moves Towards War

3 March - US Grand Strategy

5 March - Sept. 1940 - Dec. 1941

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

Battle of Annihilation book review due as one option for Review 2.

10 March - Allied Strategy in 1942

12 March – MIDTERM

Readings Covered: A War To Be Won, ch. 1-8; Storm of Steel, War of Annihilation

SPRING BREAK

24 March - War in the Pacific, 1942

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

26 March - Battle of the Atlantic

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

31 March - Eastern Front, 1942-43

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

2 April - Allied Strategy from Torch to D-Day

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

The Day of Battle book review due as one option for Review 2.

7 April - German War Mobilization

9 April - Allied Bombing Offensive

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

14 April - Command Technology

16 April - Women at War

21 April - Victory in Europe: D-Day to VE Day

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

23 April - Victory in the Pacific: Midway to 1945

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

The Battle of Leyte Gulf book review due as one option for Review 2.

28 April - The Home Front

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

30 April - Defeat of Japan and the War's Aftermath

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

08 May - FINAL EXAM - 12:30-2:30 pm in East 213

Readings Covered: A War To Be Won, ch. 9-20; The Day of Battle, The Battle of Leyte Gulf

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 Dr. Matthew Moen, Dean of the College of Arts & Sciences, to initiate a review of the evaluation.

College of Arts & Sciences Plagiarism Policy:

The College of Arts and Sciences considers plagiarism, cheating, and other forms of academic dishonesty inimical to the objectives of higher education. The College supports the imposition of penalties on students who engage in academic dishonesty, as defined in the "Conduct" section of the University of South Dakota Student Handbook. No credit can be given for a dishonest assignment. At the discretion of the instructor, a student caught cheating or plagiarizing may be:

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

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

Updated 11 January 2008