

HIST 645: Seminar in American Military History

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This research seminar will introduce students to the major themes in American military history and historiography, and several approaches to US military history including “official” history, the New Military History –incorporating social-cultural themes, and the utilitarian tradition.

This class will focus on five themes of great significance to US military history; all written work and class presentations should be based on one of these topics:

- 1) The American way of war debate
- 2) New trends in US Military History
- 3) The US armed forces and their use of history
- 4) The study of war in the United States
- 5) Historiography of a conflict (World War II, Vietnam, post-Vietnam conflicts, Iraq War)

The first seven seminars will follow a three-segment format of roughly one hour each. The first will be a discussion of the readings assigned that week. During the second segment, the instructor will provide an overview of US military historiography. The third segment will focus on the seminar research project and emphasize historical tradecraft—note taking, sources, analysis, writing, critiquing, etc. The research project will teach students research skills, particularly how to access major archival collections of primary sources in recent and current US military affairs. Because assignments will build on each other, students should identify their seminar paper topic early and direct their readings towards developing an expertise in that area. After week seven the seminars will concentrate solely on the research project.

The seminar paper must be on one of the following topics: 1) The American way of war debate; 2) New trends in US Military History; 3) The US armed forces and their use of history; 4) The study of war in the United States; 5) Historiography of a conflict; 6) A topic on post-World War II US military history accepted by the instructor.

REQUIRED READINGS

Students should immediately subscribe to the *Journal of Military History*

(<https://secure8.itsamac.com/www.smh-hq.org/secure/memformnew.html>). The student subscription rate is \$25. Military officers should consider applying for Regular membership

Recommended: A. R. Millett and P. Maslowski, *For the Common Defense*
Chicago Manual of Style 15th edition)

Wayne Booth, et al, *The Craft of Research* (3rd Edition)

Assignment Due Dates: all written work due at 4pm on day of assignment

8 September—20 October: Outline of discussion readings

15 September: Research Proposal

Students meet with instructor 16-18 September

22 September:	Bibliography Revised proposal if required
7 October:	Prospectus
26-29 October	Meet with instructor to discuss research paper
3 November:	First Draft
10 November:	Critiques
17 and 24 November:	Oral Reports
8 December:	Final Draft

Submission of assignments: All assignments must be submitted via email before the beginning of class. **Outlines for the readings in the first seven weeks are due by 4pm before the class**

Late or inadequate papers: With one exception, late assignments will be penalized at 5% of the total point value every 24 hours—including weekends unless it is impossible to submit it by email. Students who miss the 3 November due date for the first draft (to both the instructor and their fellow students) will be penalized at 5% of the final paper grade for the first 24 hours (7 points), 10% for the next 24 hours (14 points), and 15% (21 points) thereafter. Assignments that do not meet graduate standards will be returned with a 5% penalty and must be resubmitted within 24 hours or additional 5% penalties per 24 hours will begin.

Graded Assignments: outlines (10 points each, 70 points total); class participation—criteria being both quality and quantity (50 points); research proposal (10 points); bibliography (15 points); prospectus (30 points); critique (20 points each, 60 points total); oral presentation (25 points); seminar paper (140 points). 400 points total. Descriptions of assignments are at end of syllabus. **Grade Distribution:** 360-400=A; 320-359=B; 280-319=C; Below 279=F

Seminar Outline and Assignments

1 September: Introduction to US Military History. Background to US military history, relationship to various constituencies (academia, public, defense analysis, armed forces), major areas of interest, methods, traditional and new approaches to the field. Explanation of course requirements and projects.

Required Readings for September 1

Allan R. Millett, "Clio and Mars as Pards" in David Charters, M. Milner, and J. B. Wilson, eds., *Military History and the Military Profession* (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1992), 3-21
 Elvis Killed Kennedy: <http://home.pacbell.net/hrwhite3/>
 Instructor's presentation: Colonial-Revolutionary War
 Research Methods: taking notes, organizing data, citation form, primary and secondary sources

8 September: US Military History: The Embattled Field? This section serves as an introduction to three significant questions in US military history; 1) Why do some critics believe academia is trying to drive military history out of the classroom? 2) Should (Can) military historians change their approach to history to become more respectable in academia? 3) What is military history's audience?

Required Readings for September 8: Please bring a short outline (1-2 pages) of these readings to class as a basis for discussion.

US Army Center of Military History, "Introduction," *American Military History*, pp. 1-18 at <http://www.history.army.mil/books/AMH/AMH-01.htm>

Brian M. Linn, "Military History: The State of the Field," (will be emailed)

John Lynn, "The Embattled Future of Military History," *Journal of Military History* 61 (Oct. 1997): 777-89

John Lynn, "Breaching the Walls of Academe: The Purposes, Problems, and Prospects of Military History," *Academe*, at http://www.nas.org/polArticles.cfm?Doc_Id=102

John J. Miller, "Sounding Taps: Why Military History is Being Retired," *National Review* (9 October 2006), at

<http://article.nationalreview.com/?q=MTcwOGU3MzhkNmI0Y2FmZjYzNjVlOGZhYWJiZWJjYjM>

Instructor's Presentation: Early Republic to Civil War

Research Methods: Organizing a research project

15 September: Operational "Official" History, World War II. Possible questions for discussion:

1) What are the goals or objectives of the operational historian (why is this account being written)? 2) Are there substantial differences or points of controversy about events in these histories (interservice rivalry? Accusations of bias?) 3) What is the goal/mission of the official historian? (Who is the audience? What lessons does the historian wish to convey?) 4) What are the limitations (conceptual, methodological) to operational history?

Please bring a short outline (1-2 pages) that covers ONE of these books—it will serve as a basis for the discussion.

Charles Anderson, *Guadalcanal* at <http://www.history.army.mil/brochures/72-8/72-8.htm>

W. F. Craven and J. L. Cate, *The Army Air Forces in World War II*, vol. 4, *The Pacific:*

Guadalcanal to Saipan, August 1942 to July 1944 at

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AAF/IV/AAF-IV-2.html>

HQ Army Air Forces, *Pacific Counterblow*,

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/AAF/WW/index.html>

Chapters 9-11 in George C. Dyer, *The Amphibians Came to Conquer*, at

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/ACTC/actc-9.html>

Frank O. Hough, Verle E. Ludwig, Henry I. Shaw, *History of the U.S. Marine Corps Operations in World War II*, volume 1, *Pearl Harbor to Guadalcanal*, pp. 235-374, at

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USMC/I/index.html>

John Miller, Jr., *Guadalcanal: The First Offensive* at

<http://www.history.army.mil/books/wwii/GuadC/GC-fm.htm>

Office of Naval Intelligence, *The Battles of Savo Island and the Eastern Solomon's*, at

<http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USN/USN-CN-ESols/index.html>

John L. Zimmerman, *The Guadalcanal Campaign* (Washington: USMCHR Historical Section, 1949), at <http://www.ibiblio.org/hyperwar/USMC/USMC-M-Guadalcanal.html>

Instructor's Presentation: Civil War

Research Methods: **Research Proposal due** (class discussion on proposals)

Between 16-18 September students must meet with the instructor to discuss their research paper

22 September: Ways of Studying Military History: Academic. This section will examine one of the more significant debates within the US academic military history community—whether recent interest in social-cultural history can be integrated with narrative operational history to form a hybrid “new” American military history. Students are responsible for all the readings and should be prepared to discuss: (1) the authors’ arguments; (2) the use of sources; (3) the audience the author is writing for, and (4) how this article contributes to the field of US military history. (Please submit a 1-2 page outline addressing these points for discussion.)

Required Reading

Edward M. Coffman, “The New Military History,” *Military Affairs* 48 (January 1984): 1-5.

John W. Chambers, “The New Military History: Myth and Reality,” *Journal of Military History* 55 (July 1991): 395-406.

Robert M. Citino, “Military Histories Old and New: A Reintroduction,” *American Historical Review* 112 (October 2007) at

<http://www.historycooperative.org/journals/ahr/112.4/citino.html>

Wayne Lee, “Mind and Matter—A Cultural Analysis in American Military History: A look at the State of the Field,” *Journal of American History* 93 at

<http://www.historycooperative.org>

Dennis Showalter, “A Modest Plea for Drums and Trumpets,” *Military Affairs* 39 (April 1975): 71-74.

John Shy, “The Cultural Approach to the History of War,” *Journal of Military History* 57 (October 1993): 13-26.

Instructor’s Presentation: Empire and Reform

Research Methods: Revising the research proposal. **Bibliography Due. Revised proposals due (if assigned).**

29 September: Military History and the Popular Market. Military history has a large readership among the American public. Many of these readers are interested in the human experience of war, how people deal with conditions of extreme stress, danger, physical discomfort, etc. Some very respected academics write for the popular market. Students will read one (1) of the following accounts or a book approved by the instructor and come to class with a short (1-2 page) outline discussing the strengths and limitations of popular history, and how it differs from academic history.

Stephen E. Ambrose, *Band of Brothers* or *Citizen Soldiers*

Rick Atkinson, *An Army at Dawn* or *The Day of Battle*

John Eisenhower, *The Bitter Woods*

Charles McDonald, *A Time for Trumpets*

John Prados, *Valley of Decision: The Siege of Khe Sanh*

Gordon Prange, *Miracle at Midway*

John Toland, *Battle: The Story of the Bulge*

Instructor’s Presentation: Interwar Period

Research Methods: Writing a prospectus

7 October: Military Historians as Critics and Advocates. Military historians have provided some of the strongest and most well-informed criticism of US military policy, and have urged the armed forces to learn from history in order to prepare for the future. Students should come to class with a short (1-2 page) outline on how these scholars use history to criticize US policy and/or advocate ways to improve effectiveness and prepare for the future.

Andrew J. Bacevich, "The Modern Major General," *New Left Review* 29 (September-October 2004): <http://www.newleftreview.org/?view=2529>

Andrew J. Bacevich, "Preserving the Well-Bred Horse," *National Interest* (Fall 1994)

<http://www.thefreelibrary.com/Preserving+the+well-bred+horse-a016315044>

Conrad Crane, *Avoiding Vietnam* www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=58

Bryon E. Greenwald, "The Anatomy of Change: Why Armies Succeed or Fail at

Transformation," AUSA Paper (2000), <http://www.ausa.org/PDFdocs/greenwald.pdf>

Timothy M. Karcher, "The Victory Disease," *Military Review* (July-August 2003): 9-17

<http://calldp.leavenworth.army.mil/carl>

Mark F. Duffield, "Into the Beehive: The Somali Habr Gidr Clan as an Adaptive Enemy," 17

December 1999, School of Advanced Military Studies Student Paper, at [http://www-](http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/contentdm/home.htm)

[cgsc.army.mil/carl/contentdm/home.htm](http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/contentdm/home.htm)

Instructors Presentation: World War II

Research Methods: **Prospectus Due:** discussion on prospectus

13 October: Research articles, professional journals, book reviews. Students should read one research article and several of the book reviews in the latest *Journal of Military History* and come to class with a short (1-2 page) summary of the article's thesis, sources, strengths and limitations.

Instructor's Presentation: Vietnam

Research Methods: Writing a research paper—brainstorming, revising, developing an argument, and organizing into sections.

20 October: The American Way of War Controversy. Military history inspires debate in both academic and policy circles. On one level, this discussion is between academics over a thesis to explain the conduct of American wars. On another level, it is an effort to use history to support a national security agenda. Discussion questions: (1) What are the points of difference between how academics study the topic of the American way of war and how defense analysts approach it? (2) Do critics of the "old" American way of war understand Weigley's thesis? (3) Why do they believe that the old "way" is no longer valid? (4) What do they define as the New American Way of War? (5) What are their assumptions and biases? Please bring a short (1-2) page outline to class that defines both the American way of war and the New American way of war and addresses these questions.

Required readings

Max Boot, "The New American Way of War," *Foreign Affairs* (July-August 2003)
<http://www.foreignaffairs.org/20030701faessay15404/max-boot/the-new-american-way-of-war.html>

Antulio Echevarria, *Toward an American Way of War*
www.carlisle.army.mil/ssi/pubs/display.cfm?PubID=374

Michael Kelly, "The American Way of War," *Atlantic* (June 2002)
<http://www.theatlantic.com/doc/200206/kelly>

Brian M. Linn, "The American Way of War Revisited," and Weigley "Response," *Journal of Military History* 66 (April 2002): 501-30

Russell F. Weigley, *The American Way of War* (Intro and conclusion)

Research Methods: Writing a research paper—maintaining the argument, introduction and conclusion, resolving contradictions, what to do when the data is not there

26-29 October: Individual meetings with instructor. Class does not meet on Tuesday

November 3--**Draft of Research Paper Due.** Students will submit a complete draft of their final paper electronically to the professor and to the three designated referees within the class who will provide helpful comments to improve it. Class discussion on critiquing papers and revising.

November 10— Refereed papers returned to authors (copy of referee's comments to instructor). Discussion of papers and how to improve final paper.

November 17 and 24—Class presentations on Research Papers. Each student will give a 6-8 minute presentation discussing sources, major problems encountered, and conclusions.

1 December—Individual meetings (also by appointment). Class will not meet.

8 December—final papers due, 4 p.m.

Outlines: (10 points each, 70 points) Students should bring to class two copies of a 1-2 page (750 word) outline on the readings for the week. The purpose of the outline is to provide ideas and information for class discussion. The outline should cover such topics as: author's thesis; the organization of the essay; the use of historical examples; strengths and weaknesses of the thesis. (The outlines will foster ideas for the seminar paper.)

Discussion/Participation: (50 points) Scholars thrive where they can discuss their discipline with mutual respect. Criticism can help colleagues become better historians if it challenges them to reexamine faulty assumptions, find new sources, or reorganize their arguments. In some seminars, students will form groups to discuss the readings and present a summary of their views to the class. At other times, each student will discuss his or her reaction to the readings. Note: Some of the assigned material may be unfamiliar, even 'foreign' sounding, since -- US military personnel and many defense analysts write in a peculiar language that includes acronyms, slang, and cultural references (such as "air power") that most Americans don't understand. If you do not understand a word or concept, or would like the background to some of the debates, please ask the instructor in class, via email, or during office hours.

Research Proposal (10 points) Students will submit a one-page outline that includes topic, thesis, and organization of their seminar paper.

Bibliography (15 points) Students will submit a preliminary bibliography of at least 10 primary sources. The bibliography should be extensive and innovative. It may include books and articles that are found on the web as well as those in the library. Citations must conform to the *Chicago Manual of Style* bibliographic form.

Prospectus (30 points): A research prospectus describes what the author intends to accomplish. It includes the project's thesis, why it is important, the research methodology, and the paper's organization. The prospectus should be at least two pages. It should have two attachments: 1) an outline that demonstrates the paper's organization; 2) a bibliography of at least 15 primary sources. The proposal will be graded on the following criteria:

1. What is the thesis question? Is it clear and coherent? Is it too narrow or broad?
2. Will the methodology allow the author to answer the question?
3. Are primary sources appropriate to the question and the methodology? Does the author explain why s/he chose these particular documents and references?
4. Is the organization of the paper logical?
5. Does the outline correspond to the description in the essay?
6. Are the primary sources cited correctly?

Critique: (20 points each for total of 60 points): **sent via email to the student and instructor.** Each student will write a 500-700-word critique of three classmates' draft papers. The critique provides feedback on the strength of the argument, an analysis of the primary sources used, suggestions for improvement, and what the author did that was effective. The critiques must be written in essay format (no outlines) and in coherent sentences (no fragments or lists). Critiques should address, and will be graded, on the following criteria:

1. What is the author's thesis? Critics should provide a 1-paragraph summary
2. What is the methodology?
3. Are primary sources integrated into the text?
4. Did the author follow proper citation format?
5. Are there sufficient primary sources?
6. What specific improvements can be made to the thesis? The methodology? The sources? The writing style? What major problems prevent this from being an "A" paper?
7. What did you like about the paper?
8. What did the author do well?

Remember: a critique is a way of helping a colleague; it is not an opportunity to show how smart you are.

Oral Presentation: (25 points) Each student will give a short (6-8 minute) summary of his/her research paper. This will provide an overview of the paper topic, the main argument, the sources used, and the conclusion. Students may pick the format (PowerPoint briefing, lecture, etc.). This is a formal presentation in which clarity and coherence matter. It is highly recommended that student's write out their remarks and rehearse several times.

Seminar Paper (140 points): Students will write a paper that both summarizes and critiques the literature on one of the following topics: 1) The American way of war debate; 2) New trends in US Military History; 3) The US armed forces and their use of history; 4) The study of war in the United States; 5) Historiography of a conflict.

This paper will be **at minimum 3,500 words** (not including the notes or bibliography) and must be based on at least fifteen primary sources (books, articles, essays, student papers, think tank essays, policy pieces).

Useful websites

Small Wars Journal: <http://smallwarsjournal.com/reference/>

Air War College internet portal: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/awcgate.htm>

Student papers, reports

Air War College research portal: <http://www.au.af.mil/au/awc/awcgate/awc-ref.htm#primary>

Army War College Strategic Studies Institute: <http://www.strategicstudiesinstitute.army.mil/>

US Army Center of Military History, <http://www.history.army.mil/>

DTIC Stinet (source for student papers and technical reports): <http://stinet.dtic.mil/>

Technical reports, student papers

Command and General Staff College: <http://www-cgsc.army.mil/carl/contentdm/home.htm>

Student papers, Masters of Military Art and Science theses, and School of Advanced Military Studies student papers include many examples of historical analysis.

US Marine Corps University Research Archives (Student Papers, especially SAW—School of Advanced Warfighting): <http://12.1.239.226/isispeq.html>

Marine Corps University Library Military Research Site:

<http://www.mcu.usmc.mil/MCRCweb/mculibrary/milres.htm>

Military Review (recent issues), <http://usacac.army.mil/CAC2/MilitaryReview/>

US Army Center of Military History: <http://www.history.army.mil>

Infantry School Monographs: <https://www.infantry.army.mil/monographs/index.asp>

Or <https://www.infantry.army.mil/monographs/content/wwi/index.htm>

Center for Army Lessons Learned (CALL) Public Archives: <http://calldp.leavenworth.army.mil/>
Military Review back issues, SAMS papers, CGSC papers, research projects

Professor Patrick Reagan of Tennessee Technical University has excellent websites:

Military History: <http://www.tntech.edu/history/military.html>

Contemporary Military Affairs: <http://www.tntech.edu/history/contmil.html>

Sources for Research in Military History: <http://www.tntech.edu/history/336paper.html>

Preparing to Write a Research Paper: <http://www.tntech.edu/history/library.html>