

SYLLABUS – HISTORY 4317.001
American Military History
Sul Ross State University – Fall 2016
Monday and Wednesday, 2-3:15pm, LH 201

MATT WALTER

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Office Hours: Monday through Friday, 8am to noon and 2-5pm

Course Description:

This course is designed to introduce the student to the AMERICAN MILITARY EXPERIENCE and how WAR has shaped American history and culture. It will look at how the American military experience is essentially an extension of American political doctrine, will examine the political causes which led to a war, the political objectives at the beginning of that specific military action, the military objectives and strategies employed during that war or conflict, the military technology, techniques and personnel involved, and the final military and political outcome of that conflict. It will also examine, in a more general way, some of the historical events which have involved U.S. military personnel during peacetime and will provide a historical overview of the individual history of each of the five armed branches of the U.S. military.

Goals of this Course:

At the end of this course, the student should have a greater appreciation of the U.S. military in both wartime and in peacetime, primarily as it applies to a specific military event or action. They should also have a better ability to better incorporate the role of the U.S. military into the broader theme of American history.

Student Learning Objectives:

1. Express an understanding of the various roles the U.S. military has played in U.S. history.
2. Describe why it is important to study American military history.
3. Explain how military action is essentially an extension of political will.
4. Recognize the relationship between the U.S. military and the civilian political government.
5. Evaluate how various factors, such as geography, diplomacy, culture, national and international politics, and the economy can influence military events.
6. Critique the political causes which have led to U.S. military action and analyze how some political events can apparently only be resolved by the use of military force.
7. Explain the difference between a political goal and a military goal.
8. Identify the various U.S. military actions by the technology and personnel involved.
9. Evaluate the role that the U.S. military plays during peacetime.
10. Summarize the general history of the five branches of the U.S. Armed forces.

Class format:

Generally, each class session will consist of a lecture and end with a question-and-answer session. Every student can be expected to be called on to express their knowledge and/or opinion concerning the particular topic being discussed.

Course Requirements:

Attendance policy: You are expected to attend every class! Regular attendance and punctuality are vital to academic success. As per university requirements, roll call will be taken at the beginning of each class. If you are going to be absent from class while traveling on a university-sponsored trip, you must complete a travel authorization form and turn that in to your sponsor or coach at least three days prior to the actual trip, so that you may be listed on the "Explained Absence List" which the Student Life Office prepares and sends out to all faculty. If you miss class due to illness, car trouble, a death in the family, etc., you must email me directly with an explanation of your absence. Students with excessive unexplained absences (more than six classes) will be dropped from the class with a grade of "F."

Academic honesty: All work handed in must be written by that student in their own words. Plagiarized papers will receive a grade of zero.

Student conduct: By enrolling at Sul Ross State University and in this class, you are assuming the responsibility for your personal and social conduct while on campus and in class. Students who disrupt a class in any way, such as arriving late, using their cell-phone or talking loudly may be directed to leave the class and could face disciplinary action which can include being withdrawn from the class.

Contacting the instructor: The instructors' email address and phone number are provided for emergency situations only. The preferred method of contacting the instructor is via email or facebook message. All messages to the instructor should include your name, your class title, and a simple message stating the reason you are contacting the instructor. Messages will normally be answered within 24 hours; however, questions such as "what did we cover in class?" will normally not be answered. Student phone messages will normally not be returned, due to the problem of "phone tag."

ADA Compliance: The instructor is committed to equal access in compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973. It is the student's responsibility to initiate a request for accessibility services. Notify the instructor and contact the Accessibility Services Coordinator (ASC) on campus for further information on what assistance is available in order to ensure that students with disabilities can fully participate in all university classes, programs, and activities. The ASC is Mary Schwartze, Ferguson Hall Room #112, mschwartz@sulross.edu. The mailing address is P.O. Box C-122, Sul Ross State University, Alpine, Texas, 79832. Telephone number is 432-837-8691.

WEEKLY CLASS PROJECTS

Five times a week, DURING THE FIRST TEN WEEKS SEMESTER (beginning with Week 2), each student will go to the website <https://thisdayinusmilhist.wordpress.com/> and will select ONE entry FOR THAT SPECIFIC CALENDAR DAY that catches their attention. Cut and paste that entry onto your weekly project paper, and note WHY it caught your interest. Five different days must be selected from that week, which coincides with that particular current day and week of the semester! THIS DAILY ENTRY SHEET IS DUE EVERY MONDAY. Also, every week, you will select ONE of your five entries for further research and will hand in a separate paper (1-2 pages) expanding on the topic and explaining what you found. As appropriate, you WEEKLY TOPIC PAPER will document all quotes and you will list in a bibliography all the sources you used to help you research that topic. This paper will be stapled and handed in with your DAILY ENTRY SHEET.

Note: DAILY ENTRY SHEETS and/or WEEKLY TOPIC PAPERS that are handed in late will have a maximum value of 50%. Ones that are more than one week late will not be accepted.

BOOK REPORT

During the first week of classes, a drawing will be held and each student will end up selecting a topic for their book report. Then, based upon that topic, each student will either go to the Sul Ross Library or Front Street Books and selected a book that is directly related to that topic. On the 9th OF NOVEMBER, each student will hand in a book report, based on the guidelines detailed below.

Book Report Guidelines

1. Part One

This portion consists of a title, followed by a paragraph which describes the theme or thesis of the book. If possible, it will also include the main topic sentence used by the author, which is usually found in the introduction to the book itself.

2. Part Two

In this section, which will involve some research on your part, you will analyze the author of the book. All quotes and sources that you use must be properly documented. You will do your best to endeavor to answer the following questions:

- a) What is the author's background, and what makes this book a primary source document?
- b) What else has this author written?
- c) Do you believe the author is qualified to have written this book?

3. Part Three

In this section, you will summarize the book after you have finished reading it. Try and make this a smooth and comprehensive narrative, a retelling of the story that elaborates on the main topic and thesis of the book. Usually the easiest way to write this section is to summarize each chapter on a single 3x5 index card and the use those cards to write – in your own words – a summary of the book.

4. Part Four

This is your critique of the book and also the central part of your report. This portion should contain most or all of the following:

- a) Is the book a primary or secondary source.
- b) What are the strengths and weaknesses of the book? Was it well written, easy to read, and hold your attention? Were there any particular sections that stood out as especially well done, or that didn't make any sense?
- c) Were the illustrations, maps, tables, diagrams, photographs, etc? Did they add or distract from the book? If there weren't any of these, could they have been used to make the book more effective?
- d) Does the author seem fair in the presentation of his or her material, or does there seem to be any bias? Explain.
- e) Would you recommend this book to someone else, and why or why not?

5. Part Five

This is your concluding paragraph, where you restate the thesis of the book and a short summary of your critique.

6. Part Six

Your Works Cited or Bibliography page, usually done in Turabian or MLA style.

NOTES:

1. Your report should be typed, double-spaced, on standard 8.5x11 inch white paper, with standard one-inch margins and using an easily-readable font, such as Times New Roman.
2. Give the full name of every person the first time you mention them in your report.

SEMESTER GRADING

1. DAILY ENTRY SHEETS – 10 points each – total 100 POINTS
2. WEEKLY TOPIC PAPER – 10 points each – total 100 POINTS
3. BOOK REPORT – 200 POINTS (Due 9 NOVEMBER).
4. Attendance and class participation – 50 points
5. Final Exam – 50 points

CLASS SCHEDULE:

WEEK ONE. Intro. Semester overview. Book reports. What is military history. Why it's important. Why we fight. Wars of the Colonial Period.

WEEK TWO: The American Revolution.

WEEK THREE: Barbary War. The Lewis and Clark Expedition. The War of 1812. Texas Revolution. The US-Mexico War.

WEEK FOUR: The Civil War.

WEEK FIVE: The Indian Wars. The Spanish-American War. The Philippine-American War. The Great White Fleet.

WEEK SIX: The Mexican Revolution and the United States. World War I.

WEEK SEVEN: World War II.

WEEK EIGHT: The Cold War. Korean War. Vietnam War. The Space Race.

WEEK NINE: History of the US Army.

WEEK TEN: History of the US Navy.

WEEK ELEVEN: History of the US Marine Corps.

WEEK TWELVE: History of the US Coast Guard.

WEEK THIRTEEN: History of the US Air Force.

WEEK FOURTEEN: Contemporary Wars. Future Wars.

WEEK FIFTEEN: FINAL EXAM.