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# HISTORY 396: U.S. MILITARY HISTORY

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## The American Military Experience to 1902

Fall 2010  
Univ. of Wisconsin-Madison  
Class Meetings: MWF, 2:25 PM - 3:15 PM  
Psychology 105

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Office hours: W, 9:30-12:00

### 1. Course description.

History 396 surveys the American military experience from the 16<sup>th</sup> century through the development of a nascent American “empire” at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. This course adopts a very broad view of both American and military history. In the former regard, we will trace the American military experience not from the English settlement of Jamestown but from the military practices of its indigenous peoples and the various colonial powers that contended for control of the continent. Moreover, this course embraces the “New Military History,” and we will examine the influence of warfare on all aspects of American society. We will not omit the traditional mainstays of the field—the study of battles and leaders—but we will consider them within the broader context of the American experience. Ultimately, this course will provide an appreciation of how war has shaped America and, in many regards, defined its interaction with the world.

### 2. Course Objectives. Students will understand:

- a. The diverse military traditions that collided in colonial North America and how they evolved in response to each other and technological developments.
- b. How and why American military policies, establishments, and practices evolved over time.
- c. How concepts of identity (to include race, ethnicity, kinship, gender, and religion) influence the character of war and how war can, in turn, influence identity.
- d. Warfare as a human experience endured on the battlefield, at sea, on the homefront, at desolate outposts, and in councils of government.
- e. How to analyze, synthesize, and interpret historical process and events.

### 3. Course format.

This course consists of three complementary, core components: lectures, seminar discussions, and readings. To master the course objectives, students must afford each component sufficient attention. Lectures will address the broad themes, important events, and significant

issues in American military history. Readings from Murray and Millet, *For the Common Defense*, will generally (but not always) align with lecture topics and provide a context for discussion. These readings lack the breadth and depth of the lectures, however, and will not suffice as a substitute for attending class. Moreover, several lectures will address topics covered only fleetingly—if at all—in the assigned reading. Your other course texts provide more thorough treatment of selected topics in American military history and represent various forms of historical writing. These readings, each focused on a different aspect of the American military experience, will provide the basis for periodic seminar discussions. These sessions provide students opportunities to interactively engage the materials and each other. To improve group discussions, students must complete all assigned readings prior to each seminar discussion. The 3-credit option for this course is for graduate students. All undergraduates are encouraged to enroll for 4 credits as they will—regardless of their registration—fulfill the requirements of a 4-credit-hour course.

4. Graded requirements. Students will be graded on a 1150-point scale.
  - a. Seminar discussion contributions (written and oral).

The quality of seminar discussions is entirely dependent upon student contributions, which will account for 130 points of each student's grade (10 points for each discussion session). Teaching Assistants (TAs) will assign this grade on the basis of *quality and consistency* over the course of the semester. An unexcused absence from any seminar discussion will result in 10-point penalty.

- b. Discussion essays.

In preparation for seminar discussions 2-6 and 9-13 (see Course Schedule below), students will write essays in response to a question posed by the TA in the previous seminar meeting. These essays will enable students to practice their expository and argumentative writing skills, provide several opportunities for constructive feedback, and “seed” our discourse with considered positions on the issues at hand. Essays are due via Learn@UW no later than 8 p.m. the evening before each seminar meeting.

Eight of these essays will consist of a single paragraph (not to exceed 300 words). These “short essays” will not be graded, but failure to submit an acceptable essay will result in a 10-point penalty.

The remaining two essays will be 4-5 pages in length and worth 30 and 50 points in their order of submission. These essays must be completed before the midterm. TAs will issue additional instructions regarding discussion essays.

- c. Mid-term examination.

Students will receive a take-home, mid-term examination in class on 22 October. The examination will consist of two questions and will account for 250 points (125 points per question). Students will answer each question in an essay of 1,000 to 1,200 words.

Essays must present a compelling thesis substantiated by specific historical evidence and demonstrate a mastery of the material covered in lectures, readings, and discussions. Poor writing, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization will result in grade deductions. Students may discuss the questions with one another outside of class, but the essays must be entirely their own work. **Completed examinations are due at the beginning of the 27 October class meeting.**

d. Writing requirement.

Students will write a 6-8 page essay based on a scholarly biography of their choosing. The subject of this biography need not be a military figure, but the book must shed light on some aspect of American military history. Essays should at once review the biography as a work of history and offer an original, student thesis explaining the significance of the subject to the American military experience.

In reviewing biographies, students must consider the work in several regards.

- Who is the author and what are his or her qualifications to write this work? What are his or her biases—in general and toward the subject in particular?
- In what era or context did the author write the biography? What prejudices or issues likely influenced the author's treatment of the subject?
- Who published the biography? How rigorous are this press's standards of scholarship?
- What is the author's thesis, and is it compelling? Does the author support this thesis with warranted arguments thoughtfully organized and supported by evidence? Do these arguments support or contradict other, prevalent interpretations of the subject's life?
- Is the author balanced in his or her treatment of the subject, or is the account either adulatory or damning?
- How sound is the author's scholarship? Did he or she consult a wide array of primary and secondary sources, or do a handful of sources dominate the author's citations?
- Finally, is the book well written? Would you recommend it to a friend?

Beyond evaluating the biography, students must posit an original argument that defines the place of this historical figure in the study of American military history. Substantiation of this argument will require contextualizing the subject's life in relation to the themes addressed in this course and conducting research beyond this single biography. Essays must cite *at least* four additional sources and make use of primary evidence. Each student should organize this essay around his or her thesis and regard the review as an integral but subordinate component of the overall project.

This writing requirement is worth 300 points. Enjoyment of this project and satisfaction with the final grade is largely contingent on the selection of a good biography of an appropriate subject. Often, the best biographical subjects are complicated or controversial figures. If students encounter difficulty selecting an appropriate book or have any questions regarding the expectations for this requirement, they should seek

guidance from their TA or Prof. Hall as soon as possible. **Essays are due at the beginning of the 12 November class meeting.**

e. Final examination.

Students will receive a take-home, final examination in class on 15 December. The examination will consist of three essay questions, two requiring short answers of 400 to 500 words and one requiring an essay of 1500 to 2000 words. The final examination will cover all materials presented in the course and is worth 350 points (75 points per short answer and 200 points for the essay). Each answer should present a compelling thesis substantiated by specific historical evidence and demonstrate a mastery of the material covered in lectures, readings, and discussions. Poor writing, grammatical errors, and ineffective organization will result in grade deductions. Students may discuss the questions with one another outside of class, but the essays must be entirely their own work. **Completed examinations are due at TA offices no later than 2:25 p.m. on 20 December.**

f. Grading summary.

Requirement	Due	Points
Seminar contributions	Various	130
Discussion essays	Various	80
Mid-term examination	2:25 p.m., 27 October	250
Writing requirement	2:25 p.m., 12 November	300
Final examination	2:25 p.m., 20 December	350
Total		1150

g. Grading scheme.

92-100%	A
87-91.9%	AB
82-86.9%	B
77-81.9%	BC
72-76.9%	C
67-71.9%	D
0-69.9%	F

5. Grading standards for written work.

a. Organization:

- i. Does the essay begin with an effective introduction that (a) engages the reader, (b) identifies historical problem under consideration, and (c) posits the student's thesis?
- ii. Do paragraphs comprise discrete ideas defined by identifiable topic sentences?

- iii. Does the student make effective use of transitions (especially between paragraphs)?
  - iv. Does the student arrange his or her paragraphs (ideas) in a logical sequence that furthers the argument while maintaining a coherent, chronological narrative?
  - v. Does the student conclude with a summary of the paper's most salient findings and (if appropriate) an allusion to their broader significance?
  - b. Use of sources:
    - i. Is the student's research adequate?
    - ii. Does the student make significant / sufficient use of primary sources?\*
    - iii. Does the student over-rely on select secondary sources or non-scholarly sources?
    - iv. Does the student make appropriate use of the *best available* sources?
    - v. Does the student effectively use evidence from these sources to further his or her argument?
    - vi. Does the student understand the historiography of his or her topic?\*
    - vii. Does the student make excessive or inappropriate use of direct quotations?
  - c. Overall:
    - i. Does the student present an original, compelling argument substantiated by appropriate historical evidence? Would a general, educated reader find the argument compelling?
    - ii. Does the student demonstrate mastery of the subject matter?
    - iii. Is the essay well written? Would a general, educated reader understand it and enjoy reading it?
    - iv. Is the essay properly formatted and free of errors?
6. How to succeed in this course.
- a. Do the reading.
  - b. Attend all class meetings (lectures and seminar discussions).
    - i. Be seated and prepared to take notes at 2:25 p.m.
    - ii. Turn off cell phones in class. Prof. Hall or the TAs will answer phones that ring; repeat offenders will be asked to leave.
    - iii. Coordinate anticipated absences, late arrivals, and early departures ahead of time.
    - iv. Prof. Hall expects personal explanations for unanticipated tardiness immediately following class.
  - c. Contribute to discussions.
  - d. Take notes—in class and while reading. Laptops are permitted in class for note-taking and referencing purposes only. Prof. Hall reserves the right to revoke laptop privileges for those who abuse them.
  - e. Work ahead on all graded requirements and submit them on time. **Late submissions will be penalized 10% for every 24-hour period they are late.**

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\* Research paper only.

- f. Do your own work. Doing otherwise defeats the purpose of taking the course. Prof. Hall will investigate and punish suspected cases of plagiarism in accordance with Chapter 14 of the University of Wisconsin System Administrative Code.
  - g. Seek assistance from the professor or TA if you are struggling or do not understand the expectations.
7. Course texts. Students are responsible for acquiring the following texts:

Calloway, Colin G., ed. *Our Hearts Fell to the Ground: Plains Indian Views of How the West Was Lost*, The Bedford Series in History and Culture. Boston: Bedford Books of St. Martin's Press, 1996.

Crane, Stephen. *The Red Badge of Courage*. Clayton, Del.: Prestwick House, 2004.

Gross, Robert A. *The Minutemen and Their World*. New York: Hill and Wang, 2001.

Hickey, Donald R. *The War of 1812: A Short History*. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1995.

Millett, Allan R., and Peter Maslowski. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States of America*. Revised and expanded ed. New York: Free Press, 1994.

Morison, Elting E. *Men, Machines, and Modern Times*. Cambridge, Mass.: M.I.T. Press, 1966.

Prucha, Francis Paul. *Broadax and Bayonet: The Role of the United States Army in the Development of the Northwest, 1815-1860*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1995.

Skelton, William B. "Officers and Politicians: The Origins of Army Politics in the United States before the Civil War." *Armed Forces & Society* 6, no. 1 (1979): 22-48. (Available on Learn@UW).

Steele, Ian K. *Warpaths: Invasions of North America*. New York: Oxford University Press, 1994.

Summerhayes, Martha. *Vanished Arizona: Recollections of the Army Life of a New England Woman*. Salem, Mass.: Salem Press, 1911. (Available for free download at [http://books.google.com/books?id=hukTAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=vanished+arizona&ei=ZQ74SIqDHo3kywT\\_3ND8DA#PPP1,M1](http://books.google.com/books?id=hukTAAAYAAJ&printsec=frontcover&dq=vanished+arizona&ei=ZQ74SIqDHo3kywT_3ND8DA#PPP1,M1)).

Watkins, Samuel R. *Co. Aytch: A Confederate Memoir of the Civil War*. New York: Touchstone, 2003.

8. Course schedule.

Week	LSN	Date	Topic	Reading
1	1	9/3	Introduction	M&M, xi-xiv
2	<b><i>The Invasion of America</i></b>			
	S1A	9/7	Seminar Discussion 1	--
	2	9/8	Native American & European Warfare	Steele, 3-36, 110-130
	S1B	9/9	Seminar Discussion 1	--
	3	9/10	Contact and Conflict	M&M, 1-21; Steele, 37-58, 80-109
3	4	9/13	The Contest for Colonial Dominion	M&M, 22-37; Steele; 59-79, 131-174
	S2A	9/14	Seminar Discussion 2	Review readings to date
	5	9/15	Endgame	M&M, 37-46; Steele, 151-206
	S2B	9/16	Seminar Discussion 2	Review readings to date
	6	9/17	Lessons	Steele, 207-47
4	<b><i>The American Revolution</i></b>			
	7	9/20	A People in Arms	Gross ix-29; M&M, 51-65
	S3A	9/21	Seminar Discussion 3	Review Steele; M&M to 46
	8	9/22	Miscalculations: 1775-76	Gross, 30-67; M&M, 65-69
	S3B	9/23	Seminar Discussion 3	Review Steele; M&M to 46
5	9	9/24	Turning Point: Saratoga	Gross, 68-108; M&M, 70-72
	10	9/27	The Brutal War: The South and Indian Country	Gross, 109-32; M&M, 73-83
	S4A	10/5	Seminar Discussion 4	Gross, 133-204
	11	9/29	American Mythology	--
	S4B	9/30	Seminar Discussion 4	Gross, 133-204
6	<b><i>The Early Republic</i></b>			
	12	10/1	Founding a Military Establishment	Hickey, ix-18; M&M, 88-106
	13	10/4	The War of 1812	Hickey, 19-52; M&M, 106-19
	S5A	10/12	Seminar Discussion 5	Hickey, 53-109
	14	10/6	Breaking Indian Power	--
7	<b><i>The Frontier Constabulary, Part 1</i></b>			
	S5B	10/7	Seminar Discussion 5	Hickey, 53-109
	15	10/8	Engineers & Explorers	Prucha, xi-33; M&M, 123-41
	16	10/11	The Black Hawk War	Prucha, 34-80
	S6A	10/19	Seminar Discussion 6	Review readings to date
8	17	10/13	Indian Removal	Prucha, 81-119; M&M, 141-44
	S6B	10/14	Seminar Discussion 6	Review readings to date
	18	10/15	The Mexican-American War	Prucha, 120-48; M&M, 144-57
	19	10/18	Profession of Arms	Prucha, 149-88 COMPENSATORY DROP; NO CLASS
	S7A	10/19	Seminar Discussion 7	Review ALL readings to date
8	19	10/19 7 PM	The Profession of Arms in Pre-Civil War America	Skelton, 22-48 Wisconsin Veteran's Museum
	20	10/20	Expanding Frontiers, Opening Rifts	Prucha, 189-222
	S7B	10/21	Seminar Discussion 7	Review ALL readings to date
	21	10/22	Mid-Term Review & distribution of take-home exam questions	

<b>9</b>	<b><i>The Civil War</i></b>			
	22	10/25	America on the Eve of War	Watkins, 3-39
	23	10/27	The Rise of the South, 1861-62; <b>submit exams</b>	M&M, 162-200
	S8B	10/28	Seminar Discussion 8	Review readings to date
	24	10/29	The African-American Experience: Slaves, Soldiers, & “Contraband”	Watkins, 40-80; M&M 203-11
<b>10</b>	25	11/1	Turning Point: 1863	Watkins, 81-124; M&M, 211-19
	S8A	11/2	Seminar Discussion 8	Review readings to date
	26	11/3	Materiel of the Civil War	Watkins, 125-72 Wisconsin Veterans Museum
	S9B	11/4	Seminar Discussion 9	Review readings to date
	27	11/5	Fighting the Civil War	Watkins, 173-223
<b>11</b>	28	11/8	Toward Total War: 1864-65	Watkins, 224-42; M&M, 219-36
	S9A	11/9	Seminar Discussion 9	Review readings to date
	29	11/10	Why the North Won	Watkins, 243-48; M&M, 236-40; Start Crane
	S10B	11/11	Seminar Discussion 10	Review readings to date
	30	11/12	Reconstruction; <b>submit writing requirement</b>	M&M, 257-62; Continue Crane
<b>12</b>	31	11/15	War Fiction	Finish Crane
	S10A	11/16	Seminar Discussion 10	Review readings to date
	<b><i>The Frontier Constabulary, Part 2</i></b>			
	32	11/17	Plains Indian Warfare	Calloway, 1-53
	S11B	11/18	Seminar Discussion 11	Review Crane
	33	11/19	“Indian Wars,” 1862-75	Calloway, 56-88; M&M, 248-57
<b>13</b>	34	11/22	Buffalo Soldiers	Calloway, 89-132
	S11A	11/23	Seminar Discussion 11	Review Crane
	35	11/24	The Sioux War of 1876	Calloway, 133-167
<b>14</b>	36	11/29	Seminar Discussion	Calloway, 168-207
	S12A	11/30	Seminar Discussion 12	Review Calloway
	37	12/1	Strike Breakers	Summerhayes, 7-108, M&M, 262-264
	S12B	12/2	Seminar Discussion 12	Review Calloway
	38	12/3	Conquered Frontier	Summerhayes, 109-202
<b>15</b>	39	12/6	Gender and War	Summerhayes, 203-302
	S13A	12/7	Seminar Discussion 13	Review Summerhayes
	<b><i>The Progressive Era</i></b>			
	40	12/8	Industrialized Warfare	Morison, vii-44
	S13B	12/9	Seminar Discussion 13	Review Summerhayes
<b>16</b>	41	12/10	Roles & Missions in the Age of Mahan	M&M, 265-80; Morison, 98-122
	42	12/13	The Birth of Empire	Morison, 45-66; M&M, 284-313
	43	12/15	Review & distribution of take-home examination questions	
<b>Exam</b>	44	12/20	<b>Examination essays due at TA’s office, 2:25 p.m.</b>	