

America in the Era of World War II, 1920-1950

AMH 3931
University of Florida
Fall 2017
Office Hours: Tues 3:00-4:00, Thurs 9:00-11:00

Dr. Benjamin E. Wise
208 Keene-Flint Hall
benwise@ufl.edu
352-273-3363



In this course we will study the era of World War II in American history, roughly 1920 to 1950. The object of studying history is to learn about the past, but also to develop skills in analysis, critical thinking, interpretation of evidence, and expository writing. These skills are not merely useful for the historian but for all who are engaged in trying to understand the world and their place in it. Thus, in this course students will be expected to learn significant information about history, but will also be asked to read critically, discuss thoughtfully, and write persuasively.

Required Books

Michael C.C. Adams, *The Best War Ever: America and World War II*

Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston, *Farewell to Manzanar*

Dalton Trumbo, *Johnny Got his Gun*

E.B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed*

James Bradley, *Flyboys*

Selected readings posted on Canvas or handed out in class

Important Dates

Thurs 9/21—Document Analysis #1 Due

Thurs 10/12—Midterm Exam

Tues 12/5 (in class)—Final Exam

Tues 12/12—Final Essay Due

Grading

Participation—20%

Document Analysis—20%

Midterm—20%

Final Exam—20%

Final Essay—20%

The participation portion of your grade includes homework, in-class work, and quizzes (10%), and in-class discussion (10%).

Here's a rubric of what I'm looking for, for the discussion portion of your participation grade.

A range This student has not only done the reading but has actively engaged with its main themes, completed the homework thoughtfully, and participated in class discussion in such a way that demonstrates a command of the material.

B range This student has completed the readings and the homework but may have done so cursorily; speaks in class occasionally in a way that demonstrates satisfactory but not excellent engagement with the material.

C range This student may or may not have done the reading, and the homework does not reflect active engagement with the themes of the text; student does not speak in class, or occasionally does but does not demonstrate engagement with the material.

0 This student was absent, or was present and did not turn in homework.

The reading assignments for each day are listed on the syllabus.

There will be midterm and final exams; the midterm will cover all reading and discussion up to that point, and the final will cover the material from the second half of the term. There will also be two essays for which longer prompts will be handed out in class. I will occasionally give in-class quizzes and writing assignments on the assigned readings.

The course will emphasize discussion of readings, and there will be some sort of reading assignment for most days of class. Note that 20% of your final grade is based on participation—this means that in order to succeed in the course you need to read well and demonstrate *in class* that you are working hard to master the subject.

You may not text in class, nor can you use a laptop. If I notice you texting in class I will mark you absent.

Attendance Policy

Attendance may be taken on a random basis throughout the semester, via quizzes and sign-in sheets. You are permitted two unexcused absences without penalty, but on the third and each subsequent unexcused absence, your final grade for the course will be reduced by a third of a letter grade (I.E., from an A to a A-, an A- to a B+, etc.). UF's official attendance and make-up policies can be found here: <https://catalog.ufl.edu/ugrad/current/regulations/info/attendance.aspx>

Make-up and Late Work Policy

Late essays will be penalized 1/3 letter grade for each day they are late. Should you have a university excused absence, contact me beforehand (or if it is unforeseen emergency, as soon as possible after your absence) to make make-up arrangements. Otherwise, missed exams cannot be made up.

Students with Disabilities

Students requesting classroom accommodation must first register with the Dean of Students Office. The Dean of Students Office will provide documentation to the student who must then provide this documentation to the Instructor when requesting accommodation.

UF Grade Point Policy

Letter Grade	A	A-	B+	B	B-	C+	C	C-	D+	D	D-	E	WF	I	NG	S-U
Grade Points	4.0	3.67	3.33	3.0	2.67	2.33	2.0	1.67	1.33	1.0	.67	0	0	0	0	0

Academic Honesty

Be aware of the University's policy on plagiarism. The Internet has made this situation more problematic but understand that plagiarists will be caught. Any questions about what constitutes plagiarism, please do not hesitate to ask. All plagiarism offenses will be reported on a Faculty Adjudication Form and forwarded to the Office of Student Judicial Affairs. You may get more information on UF's Judicial Affairs process at:

<http://www.registrar.ufl.edu/staff/policies.html#honesty>

Evaluations

Students are expected to provide on the quality of instruction in this course by completing online evaluations at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu>. Evaluations are typically open during the last two or three weeks of the semester, but students will be given specific times when they are open. Summary results of these assessments are available to students at <https://evaluations.ufl.edu/results>.

Tips For Success

Read for 30 minutes a day.

If you want to succeed in the class, read a little bit every day, and read well: underline passages, take notes in the margins, strike up conversations with strangers and tell them about your reading. Do not wait until the last minute to read. A major part of the midterm and final exams will ask you to demonstrate mastery of the readings.

Come to class.

This class is made up of lectures and discussion, both of which are designed to help you learn the course material. If you don't come to class, you will miss important information.

Transcribe your notes.

Research shows that students learn lecture material best when they review their notes shortly afterward. If you are horribly upset that you can't use your laptop in class, this is an opportunity: right after class, open it up, and transcribe your notes into a word document. This will help you remember the material and organize yourself to study for exams.

Be proactive.

The meek will inherit the earth, but only after all the aggressive people have had their way with it. If you have questions, uncertainty, ambivalence, lack of clarity on anything at all, seek me out. It is my job to help you learn and be successful.

Unit One: America Between the Wars

Week One

Tues 8/22—Introductions, Class themes, Syllabus, etc.

Thurs 8/24—What does World War Two mean?

READ: *Best War Ever*, Preface and Ch. 1

Week Two

Tues 8/29—Lecture: America Between the Wars

Thurs 8/31—Discussion: Peaceseekers and Warmakers

READ: *Best War Ever*, Ch. 2

Unit Two: The Coming of War

Week Three

Tues 9/5—Discussion: *Johnny Got His Gun*
READ: *Johnny Got His Gun*, Part 1

Thurs 9/7—Library Day: Newspaper research
Meet for class in Library West

Week Four

Tues 9/12—Discussion: *Johnny Got His Gun*
READ: Finish *Johnny Got His Gun*

Thurs 9/14—Lecture: Isolationism and the 1930s

Unit Three: The Pacific Theatre

Week Five

Tues 9/19—Discussion: *With the Old Breed*
READ: *With the Old Breed*, Ch's 1-7

Thurs 9/21—Lecture: America in the Pacific
DUE: Document Analysis

Week Six

Tues 9/26—Discussion: *With the Old Breed*
READ: Finish *With the Old Breed*

Thurs 9/28—Film: *Why We Fight*

Unit Four: The Home Front

Week Seven

Tues 10/3—Film Discussion: *Why We Fight*
READ: *Best War Ever*, Ch. 6

Thurs 10/5—Lecture: Race and World War II

Week Eight

Tues 10/10—Lecture: Home Front

Thurs 10/12—Midterm

Week Nine

Tues 10/17—Lecture: The War in Europe

Unit Five: The War In Europe

Thurs 10/19— Discussion: *Farewell to Manzanar*
READ: Finish *Farewell to Manzanar*

Week Ten

Tues 10/24—Discussion: The War in Europe
READ: *Best War Ever*, Ch's 3 & 4

Thurs 10/26—Film: *Fog of War*

Unit Six: The End of the War

Week Eleven

Tues 10/31—Film Discussion: *Fog of War*

Thurs 11/2—Lecture: Possibilities for the Endgame

Week Twelve

Tues 11/7—Discussion: War's End
READ: *Best War Ever*, Ch. 5

Thurs 11/9—Lecture: Endgame

Unit Seven: The World the War Made

Week Thirteen

Tues 11/14—Discussion: *Flyboys*
READ: *Flyboys*, Part 1

Thurs 11/16—Discussion: *Flyboys*
READ: Finish *Flyboys*

Week Fourteen

Tues 11/21— Lecture: The Bounty of War

Thurs 11/23—No Class--Thanksgiving

Week Fifteen

Tues 11/28—Lecture: The Cold War

Thurs 11/30—Final Exam Review

Week Sixteen

Tues 12/5—Final Exam in Class

Tues 12/12: FINAL ESSAY DUE