

**Kingsborough Community College
of the City University of New York**

SYLLABUS

History 34: Military History
Prof. Abraham J. Edelheit

INTRODUCTION:

The Greek Philosopher Plato taught that “only the dead have known an end to war.” This course examines the history of warfare from earliest origins until contemporary asymmetrical battles. The course is designed to provide students with a basic understanding of the main trends in strategic and tactical thought while placing both of those into the context of the key technological, social, and political developments of each era

An additional goal of the course is to facilitate development of students’ research and writing skills. In particular, the course emphasizes clear and concise writing, purposeful reading, and the development of a critical ability to assess the value of varied documents from a wide range of sources. To this end, the course requires two exams and a research paper dealing with any specific topic in the domain of the syllabus.

SPECIFIC LEARNING GOALS:

- To make students aware of recurring themes in history, especially military history
- To instill in students an appreciation of history through the study of changing political and technological patterns
- To develop an understanding of the origins of the forces that have shaped the modern world
- To develop students’ ability to analyze and communicate historical information effectively
- To enable students to recognize differing historical perspectives
- To aid students in obtaining deeper insight into the current global situation as it pertains to them individually and to all Americans collectively

- To expose students to current events happening in the larger world in which we live
- To develop students' confidence in handling issues they previously considered alien
- To develop students' ability to communicate both orally and in writing
- To introduce the students' to the wealth of information available in books, journals, and on the internet.

LEARNING OUTCOMES:

By taking this course, students will be able to:

- Understand the impact warfare has had on human social and political organization
- Recognize the diverse political and economic forces that forge modern societies
- Understand the impact of strategic and tactical Revolutions in Military Affairs (RMAs)
- Understand the impact of industrialization on mass warfare in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries
- Improve their analytical and critical thinking and writing skills

ASSESSMENT:

Assessment strategies for this course include:

- Classroom discussion of major issues presented in reading assignments
- Critical analysis of primary and secondary sources in class
- Debates over conflicting interpretation of historical issues
- A research paper and related projects
- An oral presentation relating to the topics of students' research
- Written examination and quizzes

EVALUATION:

Assessment activities being completed, a student shows success through

- Completion of the research project, showing analytical and organizational skills
- Participation in class discussion of historical or current topics
- Passing scores on examinations and quizzes

CLASS HOURS/CREDITS:

Three (3) weekly class hours / Three (3) credits

METHOD OF TEACHING:

A variety of methods are used, including (but not limited to): lecture, discussion, audio-visual presentations, oral report by students.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Assignments from basic and advanced texts and primary source reader(s). A class presentation on the selected research topic and writing of a research paper. The specific combination of assignments is left to the discretion of the instructor and the size of the class.

TEXTBOOKS:

Geoffrey Parker (ed.). *The Cambridge Illustrated History of Warfare* (2000).

Christian I. Archer, et al. *World History of Warfare* (2002).

TOPICAL OUTLINE AND READING ASSIGNMENTS:

I. Introduction

Archer, et al, pp. 1-8

II. War in the Ancient World

Parker, pp. 2-9

Archer, et al, pp. 9-61

Gwynne Dyer, *War* (Crown Publishers, 1985), ch.1

III. Greco-Roman Warfare

Parker, pp. 12-61

Archer, et al, pp. 62-102

- IV. Rise of the Armored Knight
 Parker, pp. 64-105
 Archer, et al, pp. 103-170
- V. Naval Warfare in the Age of Sails
 Parker, pp. 120-131
 Andrew Lambert, *War at Sea in the Age of Sails, 1650-1850*
 (Smithsonian, 2005)
- VI. Gun Powder and the “New Model Army”
 Parker, pp. 106-117, 132-163
 Archer, et al, pp. 217-318
- VII. Warfare in the Eighteenth Century
 Parker, pp. 164-185
 Archer, et al, pp. 319-379
- VIII. Impact of the Industrial and French Revolutions
 Parker, pp. 186-213
 Archer, et al, pp. 380-409
- IX. Nineteenth Century Military Theory
 Martin van Creveland, *The Art of War: War and Military Thought*
 (Smithsonian, 2005),
 Karl von Clausewitz, *On War* (any edition), passim
- X. The Technological Road to Total War
 Parker, pp. Pp. 216-265
 Archer, et al, pp. 410-482
- XI. World War I
 Parker, pp. 266-296
 Archer, et al, pp. 483-511
- XII. Inter War Developments
 Parker, pp. 298-304
 Frances Lannon, *The Spanish Civil War* (Osprey, 2002), pp. 13-64

XIII. World War II

Parker, pp. 305-339

Archer, et al, pp. 511-548

XIV. War Since 1945

Parker, pp. 340-363

Archer, et al, pp. 549-591

ADDITIONAL BIBLIOGRAPHY:**I. General and Reference**Jeremy Black (ed.). *The Seventy Great Battles in History*Chris Cook and John Stevenson (comps.). *The Routledge Companion to European History Since 1763*Norman Davies. *Europe: A History*Trevor N. Dupuy. *The Evolution of Weapons and Warfare*John A. Garraty and Peter Gay. *The Columbia History of the World*J. F. C. Fuller. *A Military History of the Western World*, 2 volumes. Revised edition.Richard Holmes (ed.). *The Oxford Companion to Military History*John Keegan. *The Face of Battle*— (ed.). *World Armies*, second editionBasil H. Liddell-Hart. *Strategy*Anthony Livesey (ed.). *Great Commanders and Their Battles*John Macdonald. *Great Battlefields of the World*John U. Nef. *War and Human Progress*H. H. Turney-High. *Primitive War*Martin Van Creveld. *Command in War***II. War in the Ancient World**Richard A. Gabriel. *The Military History of Ancient Israel*— and Donald Boose, Jr. *The Great Battles of Antiquity*William Hallo and William Simpson. *The Ancient Near East*Frank Kierman and John Fairbank (eds.). *Chinese Ways in Warfare*Robert Laffont (comp.). *The Ancient Art of Warfare*, 2 volumes.