THE UNITED STATES AND THE SECOND WORLD WAR

COURSE DESCRIPTION:

This course fulfills part of the requirements for the Normandy Scholars Program as well as part of the American history requirement for the University. It explores American involvement in the Second World War. Among the topics covered are: American isolationism; the controversy over Pearl Harbor and American entry into the war; the rise of air power and strategic bombing; the conduct of war and diplomacy; everyday life and politics on the home front; the experience of battle; the use of the atomic bomb; the seeds of the Cold War; and conflicting visions of the postwar world.

No course can be encyclopedic. This one will divide its time between events in Europe and the Pacific without trying to cover either theater in all its detail. Two events, one in each theater, will serve as case studies for in-depth analysis: 1) the D-Day invasion and the opening of the “Second Front” in Europe; and 2) the atomic bombs and the surrender of Japan in the Pacific.

ASSIGNMENTS:

Class work consists of lectures and discussions of weekly reading assignments, lectures, and films. Discussions constitute 20 percent of the course grade. Five in-class quizzes based on lectures and readings make up another 20 percent of the grade. A research paper, done in three stages, serves as the written portion of the workload and is worth 50 percent of the course grade. Each student will also present his or her work orally. The oral presentation is worth 10 percent of the grade.

The readings, like the course, proceed both from the top down and from the bottom up. In other words, we look at high-level policymakers but also at those ordinary people upon whom policy fell most heavily and from whom policy sometimes derived. Readings are divided between primary and secondary sources. The aim here is to give students both the broader, interpretive perspective of historians and the narrower, often more vivid views of participants.

The list of lectures and discussions provide a loose framework for the course. We may run over in each individual session. In that case, we will pick up the thread of the lecture or discussion in the next session and readjust the syllabus accordingly.

N.B.: 1) Attendance in class and at all scheduled events is mandatory.
2) Students with disabilities may request appropriate academic accommodations from the Division of Diversity and Community Engagement, Services for Students with Disabilities, 471-6259.
3) For an explanation of academic dishonesty, students should consult the Office of Student Judicial Services at http://deanofstudents.utexas.edu/sjs/.
4) This course carries the Writing Flag. Writing Flag courses are designed to give students experience with writing in an academic discipline.

REQUIRED BOOKS: (paperbacks available at Co-Op):

David Kennedy, The American People in World War II
E. B. Sledge, *With the Old Breed*
John W. Dower, *War Without Mercy: Race and Power in the Pacific War*
Michael B. Stoff *et al.*, eds., *The Manhattan Project: A Documentary Introduction to the Atomic Age*
Cornelius Ryan, *The Longest Day*
John Hersey, *A Bell for Adano*

**RECOMMENDED:**
William Strunk and E. B. White, *The Elements of Style*

**LECTURES & ASSIGNMENTS** (This list is a rough guide to the course. While you should stay abreast of weekly reading assignments, we may depart from the lecture list as discussions dictate.)

January 19: Introduction
January 21: America in 1939

January 26-27: Individual Meetings with Professor
January 28: DISCUSSION: *Casablanca* (1942)

February 2: The Road to War in Europe, 1919-1941
February 4: The Road to War in Asia, 1919-1941

***FEBRUARY 4: TOPICS DUE***

February 9: DISCUSSION: *Why We Fight* (1942-1943)
February 11: Wartime America I: The Warlords of Washington and the Return of Prosperity

February 16: DISCUSSION: Sledge and Dower
February 18: DISCUSSION: How to Write a Research Paper

February 23: Wartime America II: The Transformation of Everyday Life and Politics
February 25: The American Soldier at War

***FEBRUARY 25: FIRST DRAFT DUE***

March 2: DISCUSSION: *The Longest Day* (1960)
March 4: The Rise of American Air Power

March 9: The European Theater from Operation Torch to D-Day, 1942-1944
March 11: **Case Study in Europe: D-Day and the Second Front**
READING: Kennedy, American People, pp. 284-320; Dower, War Without Mercy, pp. 77-200; Ryan, Longest Day, pp. 175-279.

(SPRING BREAK, MARCH 14-18)

***MARCH 18: SECOND DRAFT DUE***

March 23: DISCUSSION: Ryan, The Longest Day
March 25: The Pacific Theater from the Fall of Bataan to the Battle of Leyte Gulf

March 30: The Diplomacy of War
April 1: DISCUSSION: PEER EDITS
READING: Sledge, Old Breed, pp. 175-300.

April 6-8: READING/RESEARCH
READING: Stoff, Manhattan Project, pp. 90-278; Kennedy, American People, pp. 373-426.

April 13: DISCUSSION: The Manhattan Project
April 15: Case Study in the Pacific: The Making of the Atomic Bombs
READING: Hersey, Bell for Adano, pp. v-93.

April 20: Case Study in the Pacific: The Atomic Bombs and the Surrender of Japan II
April 22: DISCUSSION: The Best Years of Our Lives (1946)
READING: Hersey, Bell for Adano, pp. 93-269; Sledge, Old Breed, pp. 301-315; Kennedy, American People, pp. 427-433.

April 27: Oral Presentations of Research
April 29: DISCUSSION: A Bell for Adano

***APRIL 29: FINAL PAPER DUE***

May 2-6: Preparation for European Phase of the Program

May 10-31: European Phase of the Program: Tour of London, Normandy, Paris, and Berlin

GRADING (pluses and minuses will be employed):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Research Paper:</td>
<td>30 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Drafts:</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quizzes</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Class Discussion:</td>
<td>20 percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oral Presentation:</td>
<td>10 percent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Professor Michael B. Stoff
GAR 2.138/WCH 4.104
tele: 475-7217/e-mail: mbstoff@austin.utexas.edu