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 18: Introduction
January 20: DISCUSSION: Choosing a Research Topic

***JANUARY 23: INDIVIDUAL MEETINGS WITH PROFESSOR***
January 25: America in 1939
January 27: DISCUSSION: *Casablanca* (1942)
    **READING:** Sledge, *Old Breed*, pp. xi-174.

February 1: The Road to War in Europe, 1919-1941
February 3: The Road to War in Asia, 1919-1941

***FEBRUARY 6: TOPICS DUE***
February 8: DISCUSSION: *Why We Fight* (1942-1943)
February 10: Wartime America I: The Warlords of Washington and the Return of Prosperity

February 15: DISCUSSION: Sledge and Dower
February 17: DISCUSSION: How to Write a Research Paper

February 22: Wartime America II: The Transformation of Everyday Life and Politics
February 24: The American Soldier at War

***FEBRUARY 27: FIRST DRAFT DUE***
February 29: DISCUSSION: *The Longest Day* (1960)
March 2: The Rise of American Air Power

March 7: The European Theater from Operation Torch to D-Day, 1942-1944
March 9: **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 12-16

March 21: DISCUSSION: Ryan, The Longest Day
March 23: The Pacific Theater from the Fall of Bataan to the Battle of Leyte Gulf

***MARCH 26: SECOND DRAFT DUE***
March 28: Filming the War: With the Marines at Tarawa (1943)
March 30: The Diplomacy of War
   READING: Sledge, Old Breed, pp. 175-300.

April 4: DISCUSSION: PEER EDITS
April 6: Case Study in the Pacific: The Making of the Atomic Bombs
   READING: Stoff, Manhattan Project, pp. 90-278; Kennedy, American People, pp. 373-426.

April 11: DISCUSSION: The Manhattan Project
April 13: Case Study in the Pacific: The Atomic Bombs and the Surrender of Japan II
   READING: Hersey, Bell for Adano, pp. v-93.

April 18: DISCUSSION: The Best Years of Our Lives (1946)
April 20: Oral Presentations of Research
   READING: Hersey, Bell for Adano, pp. 93-269; Sledge, Old Breed, pp. 301-315; Kennedy, American People, pp. 427-433.

April 25: Oral Presentations of Research
April 27: DISCUSSION: A Bell for Adano

***APRIL 27: FINAL PAPER DUE***

April 30-May 4: Preparation for European Phase of the Program

May 8-29: European Phase of the Program: Tour of London, Normandy, Paris, and Berlin

GRADING (pluses and minuses will be employed):

1 Research Paper: 30 percent
2 Drafts: 20 percent
Quizzes: 20 percent
Class Discussion: 20 percent
Oral Presentation: 10 percent

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