Military History 304-1

Professor Mark Orsag
(402) 826-8219 (Office)                                                Class Hours: TH 6:00-10:00 (Spring Term )
(402) 916-9584 (Home)                                                FBC

Texts:
Christon I Archer, et al, World History of Warfare
General H. Norman Schwarzkopf, It Doesn't Take a Hero

Course Summary

The course will study the evolution of warfare from ancient times to the present. The course will encompass four chronologically-based units: warfare in the ancient world, medieval and early modern warfare, modern warfare to 1945, modern warfare 1945-2012.

The course also meets all three criteria for the Global and Cultural Contexts area of The Foundational Areas of Knowledge. By examining how civilizations confront one another on the battlefield, the course explores and creates “a refined empathetic understanding” of a “multifaceted world.” Similarly, military effectiveness (or lack thereof) is examined in socio-cultural terms. This comes into focus several times during the course -- one example is Alexander the Great's victories over the Persians and Indians (triumphs that embodied the initiative and elan essential to the "Western Way of War"). The “evolution and development of cultural frameworks in the context of historical, political, social, religious, economic, and/or legal structures” is key to understanding, for example, the stunning success of the hitherto little known but subsequently terrifying medieval raiders and invaders-- The Vikings. Viking society, in its social rhythms, was built almost entirely around an annual raiding season. By emphasizing leadership decision-making at its core, the course also “interpret[s] intercultural experience from multiple perspectives.” As tactical and strategic command decisions are analyzed both from internal and external (perceptions of the enemy) contexts. The Lepanto simulation is a good example of a graded assignment that tests student understanding of this component.

Grading Breakdown:
Simulation (Tactical) Refighting Lepanto: 25%
Analytical Quiz: 25%
Final Exam 35% (Comprehensive)
Attendance and Participation 15%

Students with disabilities are urged to contact the instructor.

General Course Polices

Students are permitted up to four unexcused absences per semester. Unexcused absences beyond four may incur penalties to the student’s final course grade at a rate of 0.25 per unexcused absence. Thus, a student with nine unexcused absences whose written work has averaged to a 3.0 (B) could see that grade reduced to a 2.0 (C). Late papers or missed tests or assignments may be made up with no penalty if prior notification was received by the instructor, and there was a valid reason for the lateness or absence in question. Failure to notify the instructor previously and/or lack of a legitimate excuse will subject the student to a 0.5 (one-half grade level) to a 1.0 (one-grade level penalty) at the instructor’s discretion. Failure, without notification and/or a legitimate excuse, to do an in-class exam or assignment within one week will result in the student in question receiving a 0 score (lowest possible F) for that exam or assignment. Late papers (or other take home work) may generally (with exceptions at the instructor’s discretion) be turned in up until the last day of class for the semester. Papers late without notification and/or legitimate reason more than a week, however, will incur a severe 2.0 (two-grade level) penalty. Any work not turned in by the end of the semester will receive a grade of 0 (lowest possible F).

Any case of academic dishonesty [please refer to the Academic Integrity section of the Doane College Student Handbook for an explanation of the various forms of academic dishonesty] will be dealt with as follows: the student or students in question will receive a numerical score of 0 (lowest possible F) for the assignment in question and will be referred to the Office of the Vice-President of Academic Affairs and will face sanctions up to and including expulsion.

Class grading will be on the basis of a converted 100-point scale: 97 (A+), 92 (A), 90 (A-), 87 (B+), 82 (B), 80 (B-), 77 (C+), 72 (C), 70-71 (C-), 60-69 (D), 0-59 (F). Students with disabilities are invited to contact the instructor to discuss their particular needs.

Class Schedule:

Week 1
Introduction: Warfare in the Ancient World, Archer to 61
Week 2
...continued to 139.

Week 3
Archer 140-215 The Medieval Military Environment and
Archer 215-318 The Early Modern Military Environment (part 1) Lepanto Simulation Preparation
Week 4
Archer 318-408 The Early Modern Military Environment (part II) Lepanto Simulation

Week 5
The Age of Industrial Warfare Archer 410-546 (video clips)
World Wars I and II and Schwarzkopf to 152 (skim) Analytical Quiz

Week 6
War in Today's World Archer 546-Finish View Jarhead Schwarzkopf to 308 (skim)

Week 7
.. Schwarzkopf Finish(skim)

Week 8
Recent and ongoing wars 2008-2012
Final Exam.