

**HIST 325**  
**Topics in Diplomacy: The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan**  
**Spring 2012**

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**Office Hours:** MW 2-2:50; TR 1-2 pm and by appointment

**Course Summary and Description:**

In an increasingly interdependent world it is important to understand the historical forces responsible for creating the current international climate and the relationships between the U.S. and the rest of the world. This seminar will explore the origins and outcomes (so far) of the recently concluded U.S. war in Iraq and the ongoing war in Afghanistan, all in the context of the so-called Global War on Terror resulting from the attacks on 9/11. Class sessions will mix some lecture with substantial discussion based on common readings (books, articles and documents). Attendance is required. Students will be evaluated on their participation in class, and the timely completion of all reading and writing assignments. This course is writing intensive.

**Goals and Objectives:**

By taking this class, students should 1) gain a basic understanding of the history of U.S. wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, including knowledge of the history of American Foreign Relations, the history of Iraq and the history of Afghanistan; 2) Recognize problems of historical interpretation and historiographic issues, such as the challenges of contemporary history and the differences between journalism and history; 3) recognize, use and create different modes of historical writing; 4) analyze primary and secondary sources and use those sources to create a work of original research; 5) improve written and oral communication skills and hone critical and analytical skills, 6) nurture intellectual curiosity and skepticism and enjoy having a supportive peer group with which to share ideas.

**Required Reading:**

May, ed., 9/11 Report with Related Documents

Filkins, The Forever War

Jones, In the Graveyard of Empires

Bacevich, The Limits of Power

Finkel, The Good Soldiers

Other Readings on Moodle and/or E-Reserve

**Assignments and Evaluation:**

Class Participation: (10%/100 points)

Short Writing Assignments: (40%/400 points) Students will engage in a variety of brief writing assignments. Details for each assignment will be posted on Moodle.

Research Paper: (40% / 400 points) Students will submit a 15-20 page research paper based on both primary source research and some reading in appropriate secondary sources. The research paper will replace the final exam in this class (there will be no final exam).

Class presentation (10%/100 points): Five-minute formal presentation of your research

**Attendance Policy:** Attendance will be taken in class. Students are granted two (2) absences with no penalty to their grade. However, if you miss class, it is your responsibility to get class notes and to turn in assignments. Remember, there are no make-up quizzes and papers are due on the due date, even if you miss class, unless you make special arrangements ahead of time.

For each absence after the second, (five points) will be deducted from the participation portion of your grade. Eight (8) or more absences results in automatic failure of this course. Students who know they will miss classes due to Wittenberg-sponsored events or athletics (or family obligations, etc.) should plan their schedule accordingly.

**Classroom etiquette:** Cell phones must be either turned off or set to “vibrate” and must be put away, out of sight, into your backpack, for the entire class period.

**Makeup/late paper Policy:** Makeup work will be re-scheduled only through advance consultation with your instructor. Late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade for each day late. Papers are due at the beginning of class. I do not accept papers via email attachments (unless special arrangements have been made ahead of time).

**Contact Information:** Do not hesitate to schedule an appointment with me if office hours are not convenient. I check my office phone messages and my email on week-days when school is in session. I will respond to email within 48 hours, but cannot guarantee an immediate response. Please plan accordingly.

**Statement on Academic Dishonesty:** It is assumed that all your work for this class carries the Witt Honor Code: *“I affirm that my work upholds the highest standards of honesty and academic integrity at Wittenberg, and that I have neither given nor received any unauthorized assistance.”* It is your responsibility to be familiar with the Wittenberg Code of Academic Integrity. Further information is available on the Witt website. If you have any questions about the Honor Code as it pertains to this class, please contact Dr. Wood. Any suspected cases of academic integrity in this class will be investigated and pursued. Sanctions are severe.

### **Additional Resources:**

**Students with Disabilities:** Wittenberg is committed to providing reasonable accommodations for eligible students with disabilities. Any student with a documented disability who needs to arrange reasonable accommodations must contact each professor at the beginning of the semester. Early identification at the start of the term is required to ensure timely provision of services. Please contact the Academic Services Coordinator (Recitation Hall) at 937-327-7924 to coordinate accommodations and receive self-identification letters for each professor.

**The Writing Center:** Writing advisors in the Writing Center work with any writer on any project at any stage. The Writing Center offers an inviting, personal atmosphere where individuals can both develop successful writing skills and foster these skills in others. You don't need to have a complete draft to use the Center's services. In fact, you don't need to have any writing completed. The Writing Center can help you at any stage in the writing process, from brainstorming a topic to polishing a final draft.

**Oral Communication Center:** The ability to convey your ideas clearly and effectively in spoken form is crucial to your success in this class, at Wittenberg, and thereafter. The Oral Communication Center provides consulting services to all students who are preparing for any kind of oral assignment, including but not limited to participating in discussions, leading a class session, giving an individual or group presentation, or taking part in a debate.

## Tentative Schedule

### Week 1:

T Jan 10: Introductions

Read: Mary Dudziak, "How 9/11 Made History," *OAH Magazine of History* (*September 11: Ten Years After*), Vol 25, no 3 (July 2011): pp 5-7 (Moodle).

Historians and 9/11: Creating an on-line Archive

- September 11 Digital Archive: <http://911digitalarchive.org/>
- Sonic Memorial Archive:  
<http://www.sonicmemorial.org/sonic/public/index.html>

Th Jan 12: 9/11 and Pearl Harbor

Read: Emily Rosenberg, "Chapter 10" in *A Date Which Will Live: Pearl Harbor in American Memory*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2003, (Moodle)

### Week 2:

T Jan 17: 9/11 and the Media

- *NYT Historical* Assignment due (students are introduced to research using the NYT Historical database. They read, summarize and assess a variety of NYT stories of their own choosing from 9/11 and the immediate aftermath)

Th Jan 19: Read "The Toppling: The Media and Saddam's Statue" in *The New Yorker* 10 Jan 2011.

### Week 3:

T Jan 24: Read 9/11 Report, Part I and Part II, chapters 1-6

Th Jan 26: Read 9/11 Report, Part II, chapters 7-11 and Part III

### Week 4:

T Jan 31: U.S. Foreign Relations Background: Imperialism and World Wars

Th Feb 2: U.S. Foreign Relations Background: The Cold War

### **Week 5:**

T Feb 7: US Foreign Relations Background: The Vietnam Era

Th Feb 9: US Foreign Relations Background: The U.S. and the World Since 1979

### **Week 6:**

T Feb 14: Reading Documents and Creating a Timeline of Events:

- George W. Bush 9/11 Speech
- George W. Bush 2002 State of the Union Speech
- Bush Administration National Security Strategy September 2002
- Iraq War Resolution (Oct 2002)

Th Feb 16: Reading Documents and Creating a Timeline of Events:

- George W. Bush 2003 State of the Union
- “Mission Accomplished”
- Abu Ghraib Documents
- Downing Street Memo

### **Week 7:**

T Feb 21: Read *The Forever War*, prologue and chapters 1-10 (see discussion questions below)

Th Feb 23: Read *The Forever War*, chapters 11-21 (come to class with five “discussion points”)

### **Discussion Questions: *The Forever War***

- 1) What difference, if any, does it make that the author of this book is a journalist instead of a historian? Comment on possible areas of comparison such as style, content, coverage, audience for the book, sources, and uses for the book.
- 2) What is the purpose of the “prologue?”
- 3) What is the author’s purpose in “Part I?” Why, explicitly, does he include these three chapters in his book? What is he trying to tell his audience through these three chapters?
- 4) Consider the direct quotes below (taken from *The Forever War*) and provide a brief context for the quote and some comment/reaction to it. What do you think it means, or how do you react to it? These are passages that I underlined when reading the book so that I would come back to think about them and what they mean:
  - p.55 "Yesterday my enemy,' Uria said, 'today, my brother.'"
  - p. 86 “All those hopeful little pieces of paper.”
  - p. 90 “In Iraq if there is a leader who is fair, he will be killed, Ali said.”
  - p. 109 “Bullets were flying in every direction, yet when I looked up I saw the locals immersed in their routines.”
  - p. 115 "There were two conversations in Iraq, the one the Iraqis were having with the Americans and the one they were having among themselves."
  - p. 139 “Democracy has made everyone incompetent.”
  - p. 153 “The Americans were making enemies faster than they could kill them.”

•p. 179 “Major Shamad sighed, in the weary manner of someone tired of having to explain his civilization to the unknowing.”

### **Week 8: Documentary Film**

T Feb 28: “No End in Sight”  
Th Mar 1: “No End in Sight”

### **Week 9:**

T Mar 13: Read “Parallel Wars? Can ‘Lessons of Vietnam’ be Applied to Iraq,” in *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam*  
Th Mar 15: Read “Mr. Rumsfeld’s War,” in *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam*

### **Week 10:**

T Mar 20: Read *In the Graveyard of Empires* (see discussion questions below)  
Th Mar 22: Read *In the Graveyard of Empires*

### **Discussion Questions: *In the Graveyard of Empires***

- 1) Who was Ahmed Shah Massoud?
- 2) Who is Hamid Karzai?
- 3) Author says, In 2006, "one U.S. soldier remarked to me at the time that Afghanistan was beginning to feel like Iraq in 2003." What does this mean?
- 4) In Intro, author poses question: "Why did an insurgency develop in Afghanistan?" How does he answer this question?
- 5) Who is Khalid Sheikh Muhammad?
- 6) p. xxii "U.S. squandered this extraordinary opportunity" What does author mean by this?
- 7) p. xxiii -- How does author define "insurgency"?
- 8) Why is Afghanistan called "Graveyard of Empires?"
- 9) What was the so-called "light footprint?"
- 10) Why, according to the author, did an insurgency occur?

### **Week 11: Individual Conference with Dr. Wood about your Research Papers**

T Mar 27: No Class: See schedule and requirements for Research Papers and Individual Conferences  
Th Mar 29: No Class: See schedule and requirements for Research Paper and Individual Conferences

### **Week 12:**

T Ap 3: “This American Life: Will They Still Know me Back Home?”  
Th Ap 5: Read *The Good Soldiers*

**Week 13:**

T Ap 10: Read *The Good Soldiers*

Th Ap 12: Read Christian Appy, "Class Wars," in *Iraq and the Lessons of Vietnam*

**Week 14:**

Tu Ap 17: Read Bacevich, *The Limits of Power*, Intro, chapters 1-2

Th Ap 19: Read Bacevich, *The Limits of Power*, chapter 3 and conclusions; also read Bacevich article in *Washington Post* 27 May 2007.

**Weeks 15-16: Presenting your research**

T Ap 24: Class presentations (5)

Th Ap 26: Class presentations (5)

T May 1: Class presentations (5)

**Research Paper due during Exam Week**