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\*\*\*Syllabus\*\*

## History 281

### World War II

#### Summer 1997

#### Professor Guilmartin



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### Europe – Summer 1943

## Course Description

#### Course overview and philosophy:

History 281, The History of the Second World War, explores the origins, conduct and outcome of the global struggle, traditionally dated 1939–45, which engulfed most of the nations and peoples and all geographic regions of the world. It does so by examining the factors which shaped the conflict and its causes and which helped to determine the outcome. The course pays particular attention to geographic and economic factors; to technological considerations; to the interactions among policy, strategy and tactics; to the effect of the war on ordinary people; and to the role of leadership. The material covered in the course extends from the November 1918 Armistice and the Versailles Treaty to the aftermath of war in 1945. The core material addresses the course of the war from September 1939 when Germany invaded Poland to the conclusion of the war in the Pacific with the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

#### Scheduling and administration:

Class meets from 1330 to 1530 (1:30 to 3:30 PM) on Tuesdays and Thursdays in Hopkins Hall, room 162. The final examination will be administered in the normal classroom on Wednesday 27 August from 1730 to 1918 (5:30 to 7:18 PM).

My office is 148 Dulles Hall; my office hours are 0830–1100 Wednesday. I will normally be available immediately after class to answer questions. The TA will announce his office hours in class. If you are unable to meet us during our published hours, you may make individual appointments.

You may tape record lectures and classroom discussions only with my explicit permission. I do not allow professional note-taking. I and the TA will make appropriate arrangements for those with learning disabilities and those whose native language is not English. Contact us immediately if you are in either category.

**Grades:**

History 281 is graded on the basis of 1,000 points, allocated as follows:

- Quiz (Tuesday 15 July) 150 points
- Midterm exam (Tuesday 29 July) 300 points
- Final examination (Wednesday 27 August 1730–1918) 500 points
- Classroom participation *50 points*
- TOTAL 1,000 points

Grades of A through E will be awarded on the usual basis, where 90% is a borderline A–, 80% is a borderline B–, 70% a borderline C– and so on.

**Syllabus:**

The syllabus is your basic guide to History 281.. In addition to laying out course requirements, schedule and reading assignments, it embodies an expanded outline of the subject matter and an implicit guide to the course methodology.

**Course requirements:**

Classroom attendance is expected and will be reflected in your participation grade. You must take the quiz, midterm and final to receive course credit. Students who are unable to take an examination because of unavoidable circumstances must take a makeup. If you must be absent because of serious illness, court appearance, military service, and so on, explain the reason to me or the TA, if possible in advance. Document the reason for your absence and we will make the necessary arrangements. It is your responsibility to appraise us of the problem. I will award a grade of incomplete only in truly exceptional circumstances.

**Examinations:**

The examinations are designed to test your ability to organize, analyze, and explain what you know, rather than to find out what you do *not* know. They contain relatively few forced choices (definitions and the like; roughly 12–15% of the examination grades) and a large number of optional questions. An exam might require you to answer, say, four out of nine or five out of eleven one page essay questions, fewer for the quiz and more for the final. Each essay question is printed at the top of a sheet of standard bond paper (the same size as this one); it must be answered on the same side of the same sheet (with allowances for those with large handwriting, who can use part or all of the back). The optional essay questions provide a positive incentive for increasing your depth of knowledge in selected portions of the course material, as opposed to wider, more superficial, knowledge. In practical terms, increased study in areas which are of interest to you should benefit rather than penalize you.

**Texts:**

The texts are available for purchase at the Student Book Exchange. Readings for each lesson are indicated in the syllabus. The discussion topics in the syllabus indicate lecture material which goes beyond the readings; these are indicated to give you an opportunity to go beyond the required material in advance of the lecture if you so desire.

Gerhard Weinberg, *A World at Arms* (New York, 1989) [required].  
Colin McEvedy, *The Penguin Atlas of Recent History* (New York, 1982) [required].  
Primo Levi, *Survival in Auschwitz* (New York, 1993) [required].

**[Workbook \(281wb/281wb.htm\)](#)** :

The workbook is available for purchase in Cop-Ez in the basement of Bricker Hall for about \$5.00. It is based on reduced originals of the lecture viewgraphs with additional background material added. The margins are large, leaving lots of space for note taking. The workbook will help you stay up with the flow of the lectures without having to write down unfamiliar words and expressions. It also contains maps illustrating various aspects of World War II, so you can supplement your note taking by drawing in geographic relationships. Note that the workbook contains only an outline of the lectures, and in many cases important issues will be raised in the lectures which go beyond the outline. The workbook is a supplement to note taking, not a substitute.

**Syllabus | |**

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**Class**

\*\*\*\* ***Period | Date | Assignment and Readings***

**1 | Tuesday 24 June | Nationalism, the New Diplomacy and the Unfinished Business of World War I**

**Discussion Topics**

- Peace, war and the morality of war
- Policy, strategy and tactics
- Technology, science and economics
- The political and strategic impact of Versailles

**2 | Thursday 26 June | Totalitarianism, the Great Depression, Appeasement and the Road to War**

Weinberg, *A World at Arms* , Introduction and Chapter 1.

McEvedy, *The Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 2, 40–61 (skim), 62–71.

**Discussion Topics**

- Japanese imperialism: Economic and social background; from Manchuoko, 1931, to the Marco Polo Bridge incident, 1937.
- The Spanish Civil War, 1936–39

**3 | Tuesday 1 July | Crossing the Threshold: The Dissection of Poland, Allied Failure and the Sitzkrieg**

*A World at Arms* , Part I, Chapter 2.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 72–73.

**4 | Thursday 3 July | The Breaking Wave: The Blitzkrieg in the West, May–June 1940**

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 3.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 74–75.

5 | Tuesday 8 July | Technology and Economics: War in the Air, at Sea, and on the Home Front.

*A World at Arms* , Chapters 4, 9 and 10.

### **Discussion Topic**

- Aircraft engines, aircraft design and aircraft performance.

6 | Thursday 10 July | Mediterranean and Middle Eastern Complications: The Importance of Oil

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 76–77.

7 | Tuesday 15 July | **QUIZ**

8 | Thursday 17 July | Barbarossa: Initial Onslaught to the Gates of Moscow

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 5.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 78–79.

9 | Tuesday 22 July | The Centrifugal Offensive from Pearl Harbor to Midway

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 6.

10 | Thursday 24 July | The Hinge of Fate, 1942: Stalingrad, The Battle of the Atlantic, North Africa and Guadalcanal

*A World at Arms* , Chapters 7 and 8.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 80–81.

11 | Tuesday 29 July | **MIDTERM**

12 | Thursday 31 July | Summer 1943: The Tide Turns

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 11.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 82–83.

### **Discussion Topic**

- Signals intelligence, photo intelligence and strategic intelligence

13 | Tuesday 5 August | The Holocaust and the Horrors of Japanese Imperialism

Levi, *Survival at Auschwitz* .

14 | Thursday 7 August | The Combined Bomber Offensive

15 | Tuesday 12 August | D-Day and the Second Front, June–December 1944

*A World at Arms* , Chapters 12–14.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 84–87.

**16** | Thursday 14 August | Closing the Ring: America on the Offensive in the Pacific

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 16 to "Ending the War," page 882.

**17** | Tuesday 19 August | The End in Europe, December 1944–May 1945

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 15.

*Penguin Atlas of Recent History* , 88–90.

**18** | Thursday 21 August | The End in the Far East.

*A World at Arms* , Chapter 16, page 882–end.

**19** | Tuesday 26 August | Aftermath

*A World at Arms* , Conclusions.

**FINAL EXAM** | Wednesday 27 August | 1730 to 1918

Normal Classroom

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