The Military in American Politics

This course explores the political and historical dynamics of national security issues in the United States. We will seek to understand how both politicians and ordinary citizens have wrestled with questions of military power, both at home and abroad. This will include a consideration of major wars but is not limited to them. Note that this is not a course about military strategy or foreign policy; rather it is concerned with exploring the evolution of American thinking about national security issues and charting how those changing views have impacted what the military does.

Ranging across history from the colonial period to the present day, the readings and our discussions will examine these (and other) weighty questions: Is military power dangerous to society? Can the U.S. extend its power abroad without harming civil liberties at home? What are the costs and benefits of having a large, professional military? How does armed conflict affect the way Americans see themselves and other groups within society? As part of the course, students will be expected to write a major research paper relating to one of these themes and present a portion of their findings to the class.

Required Texts

The following books are required:

- Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime*
- Jill Lepore, *The Name of War: King Philip’s War and the Origins of American Identity*
- Jonathan Mahler, *The Challenge: How a Maverick Navy Officer and a Young Law Professor Risked Their Careers to Defend the Constitution—and Won*
- Geoffrey R. Stone, *War and Liberty: An American Dilemma, 1790 to the Present*

Other texts we are reading will be available through e-reserve, password ADL355.

Course Learning Objectives

This is a demanding course that requires substantial reading, writing, and intensive class discussions. Students are expected not only to learn the substantive material, but also to apply concepts they learn across multiple periods of history. By the end of the semester, students should be able to critique theories presented by scholars, write concisely and thoroughly on a topic relating to the U.S. military, and generate their own informed perspectives on many of the important questions we are considering. Students will also enhance their public speaking skills through presentations of their own research.
Course Requirements

1) Complete all readings on schedule. If you miss a class, email me for the next reading assignment, as the schedule may change.

2) Attend on time and actively participate in class discussions. Those who arrive more than 5 minutes late, or who leave in the middle of class, will be marked for half an absence. Each student is allowed only two unexcused absences. Your participation grade will be reduced by one-third of a letter for each unexcused absence over two. Not being active during class discussions will also result in a lowering of your participation grade. Use of electronic devices such as phones, blackberries, or music players during class is prohibited. Laptops are permitted for note-taking only.

3) Keep up with the news. We will frequently discuss current events as they relate to the concepts we are discussing in class. This way, we will try to connect what can be abstract ideas to real-world outcomes. Read a newspaper, visit cnn.com, or do anything that helps makes you an informed citizen.

4) Submit all required writing assignments (see below for details).

5) Take the final exam. It will consist of essay questions and will be given in-class. I will likely give you sample questions ahead of the test. Make-up exams will only be given in the event of an emergency, verified with proper documentation.

Writing Assignments

Short writing assignments will be due approximately every other week. These 2-3 page papers will be opportunities for students to refine their thinking about the pertinent issues before we discuss them in class. Due dates are noted by a **. Each student will be asked to summarize the readings for that day’s class and provide a critique using informed opinions and/or outside evidence. Primarily, these papers are intended to demonstrate knowledge of the readings and prepare students for our discussions.

These shorter papers will culminate in a research paper. This paper must investigate a topic directly relating to the themes we are discussing in this course, and should combine material from the class with significant outside research. The assignment will proceed in the following stages:

1. Topic proposal. This should be no more than 2 pages. Briefly describe your area of interest and state a research question. Due no later than October 3rd. The grade for this assignment is Approve/Disapprove. If I do not approve your proposal, you must rewrite and resubmit it; you may not continue to the next stage until your proposal has been approved.

2. Annotated bibliography. About 2 pages. List no fewer than 6 separate sources you will use for your paper, not including Internet sources. Of the 6 sources at least one
must be a primary document. Describe each source and its relevance to your research question. Due no later than October 24th.

3. First draft, at least 10 pages. Due no later than November 14th.

4. Present a portion of your research to the entire class. We will set aside time so that everyone can briefly outline their question and findings. You will be graded on your ability to effectively communicate the material to a willing audience.

5. Final draft, at least 12 pages. Due no later than December 15th.

All written assignments must be typed in a 12 point font, double spaced, with one-inch margins, and have page numbers. Papers not meeting these criteria will be penalized. All papers must be submitted to www.turnitin.com (note that I will not accept papers not submitted to turnitin.com):

Class ID - 4114962
password – military11

Grading

Work conducted towards the end of the semester will be more heavily weighted in my mind when dispensing final grades; in other words, improvement counts.

Attendance/Participation: 10%
Short Writing Assignments: 20%
Annotated Bibliography: 5%
First Draft: 10%
Class Presentation: 5%
Final Draft: 20%
Final: 30%

Incompletes will only be given for valid, documented emergencies.

NOTE ON PLAGIARISM: Any student found plagiarizing work will receive a grade of zero for that assignment and an F for the course. It is your responsibility to avoid plagiarism; if you are uncertain about what constitutes plagiarism, please ask!

Accessibility

If you are a student with a disability or believe you might have a disability that requires accommodations, please contact Dr. Brent Mosser, in Student Disability Services, 385 Garland, (410) 516-4720, studentdisabilityservices@jhu.edu.
Schedule of Classes and Exams

Unit 1 – Civil-Military Relations

August 29th - Introduction

September 5th – Labor Day, no classes

**September 12th


September 19th
Eliot A. Cohen, *Supreme Command: Soldiers, Statesmen, and Leadership in Wartime*, chapters 1, 2, 6, 7, and Appendix.


Unit 2 – The Military-Industrial Complex

**September 26th
President Dwight D. Eisenhower, farewell speech -


October 3rd and **11th
(October 10th – no classes; October 11th – Monday schedule)

Unit 3 - Wars, Domestic Politics, and the Expansion of the American State

October 17th


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October 24th


**Unit 4 - Safe, Free, or Both? Civil Liberties and Military Power**

**October 31st**

November 7th

**Unit 5 - Military Power and American Character**

November 14th

**November 21st**

Aaron L. Friedberg, “American Antistatism and the Founding of the Cold War State,” chapter 9 in Katznelson and Shefter, eds., *Shaped by War and Trade*.

**November 28th – Student Presentations**

**Final: Thursday, December 15th, 9-12 am**