

Common Course Outline

HIST 212

Social and Cultural History of American Warfare: 1917 to the Present

3 Credits

The Community College of Baltimore County

Description

HIST 212 – 3 Credits – Social and Cultural History of American Warfare: 1917 to the Present examines the history of American Warfare since World War I from a social and cultural perspective, exploring the unique challenges that the development of modern, high-tech war has posed to soldiers, civilians, and American society as a whole. This is **NOT** a traditional military history class. It focuses on the experiences of average Americans and analyzes the impact of war on society and culture, paying particular attention to the challenges that war poses to democratic principles and institutions and to the ways in which war is represented and remembered in public spaces, the media, and popular culture. Topics will include torture, terrorism and the treatment of prisoners; war-time propaganda; changes in military technology and medicine; civil liberties and censorship; and the treatment and role of women, racial minorities, homosexuals, and opponents of war.

3 credits

Prerequisite: HIST 112 or permission of the department chair.

Overall Course Objectives

Upon completion of this course students will be able to:

1. identify the military conflicts that America has taken part in since WWI;
2. defend oral and written arguments regarding the social and cultural impact of war on various individuals/groups and on American society generally;
3. explain, orally and/or in writing, the factors and principles that have shaped America's response to war in the 20th and 21st centuries;
4. analyze various forms of propaganda;
5. discuss the ways in which religion, race, class, and gender, have shaped the wartime experiences of various Americans;
6. describe and differentiate the impact of various wars on civilian populations;
7. evaluate the impact of advances in technology on American warfare;
8. critically assess primary and secondary sources;
9. compare and contrast the battle experiences of soldiers who fought in various American wars; and
10. analyze the ways in which various wars have been represented in popular culture.

Major Topics

- I. Major American Military Conflicts Covered
 - A. World War I
 - B. World War II
 - C. The Korean War
 - D. The Vietnam War
 - E. The Wars in Iraq and Afghanistan
- II. The Changing Experience of Battle and Military Life
 - A. The impact of technological advances, especially nuclear weapons and drones
 - B. Recruitment, the draft and military life
 - C. The role and treatment of women, racial minorities and homosexuals in the military
 - D. Advances in military medicine
 - E. Military discipline and justice
 - F. Torture and the treatment of enemy prisoners
 - G. Counter-insurgency and anti-terrorism
- III. War and Society
 - A. The impact of war on civilian populations
 - B. Anti-war movements and the treatment of critics of war
 - C. Representations of war in the media and popular culture
 - D. The impact of war on race, class and gender hierarchies
 - E. Civil liberties and government censorship in wartime
 - F. The impact of terrorism on American society
 - G. The rise of the military-industrial complex and its effect on American life

Course Requirements

Grading/Exams: Grading procedures will be determined by the individual faculty member, but will include the following:

1. At least one exam that includes a significant essay component.
2. At least two papers (of 2,000 words or more) that require students to conduct historical research and/or analyze primary and secondary sources.
3. At least two of the following: quizzes, in-class written assignments, class presentations, and/or class debates.
4. Participation in class discussion and/or group activities.

Students are required to utilize appropriate academic resources.

Other Course Information

This course is an elective in the U.S. history program.