

UNITED STATES AIR FORCE ACADEMY

DEPARTMENT OF HISTORY

SYLLABUS

**HISTORY 345**  
**The American Way of War**

Fall 2021

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Version 1

## **I. Course Description**

This course surveys the history of American warfare from the colonial period to the present and examines the history of American national security. It focuses primarily on the character of American warfare and addresses the question of whether there is a peculiar American way of war or approach to national security. The course deals with such issues as the American attitude toward war, civil-military relations, force structure, the role of professional leadership, national security issues, and the impact of technology.

## **II. Course Introduction – Purpose and Scope**

History 345 is a survey course in American military history, which means that we will examine and discuss nearly all major American wars, from the colonial era to the present, as well as the significant developments in American military and defense policy. The course will introduce and reinforce the influence and importance of the American military in the history of the United States. We will study how American military institutions have been shaped by other factors in American history. We will study the social, geographic, economic, political, ethnic, and intellectual developments of the American military. As with most military history courses, we will discuss why these wars occurred, how they were fought, why one side won and the other lost, and the ways in which military events and institutions impacted society—and vice versa. In a very real sense, this course is a history of the United States seen through the prism of warfare and the development of the professional American military.

This course will focus on four main questions throughout the semester:

1. *Is there a distinct American way of war?*
2. *If so, what is it? If not, how should we categorize the way in which America has historically waged war?*
3. *Where did that come from / how did it originate?*
4. *What does that mean for our national security today?*

To accomplish answering the four fundamental questions of the course, we will seek answers from:

- *American military history from colonial warfare to modern conflicts*
- *Prominent military scholars/theorists who argue about the nature of American war*
- *Modern American warriors who prosecute warfare today*

Finally, National Security refers to protecting and advancing the fundamental interests of a society. It is critical that cadets—regardless of academic major—graduate with an understanding of the multi-faceted and complex dimensions of national security, and the inherent conflicts embedded in the development and implementation of national security strategy.

### III. USAFA Outcomes for this Course

History 345 supports the USAFA Outcome of National Security of the American Republic in a Complex Global Environment as a course that supports the Academic Advanced Sociocultural Core Choices—the “Advanced Basket.”

History 345 students will develop the following proficiencies throughout the course:

#### ***Constitutional Foundations of National Security in the American Republic***

Proficiency 2: Identify the constitutional foundations of civilian control of the military in the United States. (Includes the Air Force Commissioning Education Learning Outcomes (CELOs) listed under sub-competencies A2.6.2: Government Organization and Processes)

#### ***Development of U.S. National Security***

Proficiency 6: Describe the evolution of U.S. foreign policy and national security strategy. (Includes the Air Force CELOs listed under sub-competencies A2.6.3: Global, Regional and Cultural Awareness).

Proficiency 7: Describe the evolution of strategic theory and technology regarding air, space, and cyberspace, and its influence on potential areas of conflict and cooperation.

### IV. Course Objectives

History is the **interactive interpretation of the past and the present**. What we believe about the past colors our views of the present, and our cultural context colors what we think about the past. In making interpretations, historians engage in (1) **gathering facts accurately**, (2) **questioning, analyzing, and conceptualizing** those facts, and (3) **communicating** their findings. Cadets involved in the study of history must learn both the content and the process of history. The Department of History teaches cadets in stages of increasingly complex methods of working with historical data. All history students must recall information accurately and learn how historians have worked with data. More advanced students must be able to pursue research independently and to make their own interpretations.

**By the end of the course, besides the above proficiencies, each student will be able to:**

1. Understand and describe the foundations of American military thought.
2. Demonstrate acquisition of historical knowledge and authors’ interpretation of events.
3. Understand the nature of U.S. military history and defense policy and its importance in the history of the nation.
4. Understand the place of the military in a democratic republic.
5. Understand the evolution of the military institutions.

**To achieve these objectives each student must be able to:**

1. Read critically and comprehensively, and retain significant information.
2. Analyze ideas effectively in classroom discussion.
3. Apply historical research skills.
4. Recognize key works in American military historiography.
5. Contribute to discussions of class readings during seminar sessions.
6. Write effective scholarly papers in accordance with Turabian’s *A Manual for Writers of Term Papers, Theses, and Dissertations*, 9<sup>th</sup> ed. or [MLA formatting](#), and communicate these ideas effectively in an oral presentation.

History centers on searching for and accurately analyzing and representing historical facts and themes. As you work through this and all your history courses, you need to be aware of the reliability of your sources. Issues such as the capriciousness of memory, political agendas, authorial integrity, ethics, and many others affect source and author reliability and credibility. In sifting and judging incomplete and often conflicting information, you will develop critical thinking skills that are crucial to presenting logical, well-constructed, and convincing historical arguments.

## **V. Textbook(s) and/or Assigned Readings**

### Books:

Millett, Allan R., Peter Maslowski, and William B. Feis. *For the Common Defense: A Military History of the United States from 1607 to 2012*. 3<sup>rd</sup> ed. New York: Free Press, 2012. (M&M)

[Wright, Robert K., Jr., and Morris J. MacGregor, Jr. \*Soldier-Statesmen of the Constitution\*.](#)

Washington, D.C.: Center of Military History, 1992. (W) (Online:  
<https://history.army.mil/html/books/071/71-25/index.html>)

Articles and Videos: The course also offers a mix of scholarly articles, popular history, and videos. It is imperative that you complete all of the homework and arrive ready to analyze and synthesize the material. To ease the burden of finding the articles/videos, everything accessible online is hyperlinked on the Course Calendar. [Attachment 1](#) provides a detailed breakdown of the articles/videos. Your instructor will also upload a copy to Blackboard and Teams for your convenience. If a link does not work, please let the course director know immediately.

## VI. Course Calendar

Q = Quiz

LSN	Date	Title of Lesson	Reading Assignment
1	9/10 Aug	Administration and Introduction	Syllabus, Study Guide
2	11/12 Aug	Core Concepts, Theories, Study Tips	M&M, pp. v-xviii; Weigley Intro
3	13/16 Aug	An American Way of War – Revisited	<a href="#">Linn/Weigley Article</a>
4	17/18 Aug	Early Colonial Warfare	M&M, 1-19; Grenier <a href="#">Intro</a>
5 Q	19/20 Aug	Prelude to Revolution	M&M, 34-44; <a href="#">Anderson article</a>
6	23/24 Aug	The American Revolution, Part I	M&M, 44-66; <a href="#">Norman Article</a>
7	25/26 Aug	The American Revolution, Part II	M&M, 66-76; <a href="#">Higginbotham Article</a>
8	27/30 Aug	The Articles of Confederation & the Army	M&M, 77-81; W, 25-33; <a href="#">Pencak Article</a>
9	31 Aug/1 Sept	Fight for Ratification	W, 33-46; Fed/Anti-Fed
10 Q	2/3 Sept	Operating under the Constitution	W, 46-57; <a href="#">Kohn article</a> , GW Farewell address
11	7/8 Sept	War of 1812	M&M, 95-107
12	9/10 Sept	New Military Professionalism	M&M, 113-141
13	13/14 Sept	The Civil War, Openings	M&M, Ch. 6 (142-180)
14	15/16 Sept	The Civil War, Fight's On	M&M, Ch. 7 (181-217)
15	17/20 Sept	The Civil War, End <b>Interview Paper</b>	<a href="#">Linn Article</a>
16	21/22 Sept	Reconstruction, the Frontier, Strikebreaking	M&M, 218-235
17	23/24 Sept	Imperialism & Reform	M&M, 236-251; <a href="#">Mahan Intro</a> (para [1]-[13])
18	27/28 Sept	<b>Graded Review #1</b>	Study for GR
19	29/30 Sept	Birth of an American Empire	M&M, Ch. 9 (252-281)
20	1/4 Oct	Fighting the “War to End All Wars”	“ <a href="#">Iron General</a> ”, <a href="#">Crash Course</a> , & <a href="#">Great War</a>
21	5/7 Oct	Military Policy Between Two World Wars	M&M, Ch. 12 (339-366)
22	8/12 Oct	The U.S. and World War II, 1939-1943	<a href="#">Victory Through Air Power</a>
23	13/14 Oct	The USAAF and Its Doctrine in WWII	<a href="#">McFarland Article</a>
24	15/18 Oct	The U.S. and World War II, 1943-1945	M&M, Ch. 14 (404-439)
25 Q	19/20 Oct	Cold War Origins and National Strategy	M&M, 440-453
26	21/22 Oct	Foundations of American Nuclear Strategy	<a href="#">Brodie Article</a>
27	25/26 Oct	Korea and Implications for Containment	M&M, 453-474
28	27/28 Oct	Waging Cold War	M&M, 475-488, 496-506; Taylor Ch. 1
29	29 Oct/1 Nov	In Dubious Battle: Vietnam, 1961-1967	M&M, Ch. 17 (507-536)
30 Q	2/4 Nov	The Lost War: Vietnam, 1968-1975	M&M 537-543, <a href="#">Clark vid: Elusive victory...</a>
31	5/8 Nov	A New Military Strategy – Iran & SOCOM	<a href="#">Bowden Article</a>
32	9/10 Nov	The Cold War Ends	M&M, 569-589; McInnis, 1-11 (pdf p. 5-15)
33	12/15 Nov	New Threats: Gulf War I	<a href="#">Boot Article</a> ; Vid: <a href="#">Air Campaign of Desert Storm</a>
34	16/17 Nov	American Way of <b>Battle</b> ?	<a href="#">Echevarria Article</a>
35	18/19 Nov	<b>Graded Review #2</b>	Study for GR
36	22/23 Nov	World Disorder of the 1990s/Allied Force	Vid: <a href="#">Breakup of Yugoslavia</a> ; <a href="#">Haulman article</a>
37	TBD	9/11 & OEF <b>Paper Due</b>	Vid: <a href="#">Camp Victory, Afghanistan</a>
38	TBD	OIF and GWOT	TBD
39 Q	TBD	Operation soup & beyond (OND/OIR, etc)	TBD
40	TBD	<b>Group Presentations</b>	

\*Note: The AWOW Podcast is an excellent review that will greatly aid your studying.  
Find it at: <https://www.podomatic.com/podcasts/daniel-morgan>

## VII. Course Grading

Graded events include:

Event	Points
Quiz / Homework	100
Interview Write-up/Discussion	100
Graded Review #1 (Lesson 18)	150
Instructor Prerogative	50
<b>PROG TOTAL</b>	<b>400</b>
Quiz / Homework	100
Reflection Paper	150
Graded Review #2 (Lesson 35)	150
Group Project	150
Instructor Prerogative	50
<b>COURSE TOTAL</b>	<b>1000</b>

## VIII. Graded Events

Reading is essential for successful discussion in our class. We encourage reading through the use of near-daily or weekly **quizzes**. **Graded Reviews** will be held during class Lesson 18 and 35 that will focus mainly on material specific to that GR (e.g., GR#1 is over lessons 1-17 and GR#2 is over lessons 19-34). These assessments will consist of objective questions and subjective essays to assess your ability to comprehend factually accurate historical data, as well as to analyze and apply historical data critically.

**Interview Write-up/Discussion (100 pts):** The overall goal of this course is to answer four (4) main questions:

- (1) *Is there a distinct American way of war?*
- (2) *If so, what is it, and if not, how do we categorize the way in which America wages war?*
- (3) *How did it develop?*
- (4) *Why is that information useful today?*

For this assignment you will find *at least* three (3) individuals, schedule a separate interview with each of them, and ask them those same four (4) questions. You must interview one Enlisted member, one CGO (2Lt to Captain), and one FGO or GO (Major to General – bonus if you interview a General or active strategic leader). All three of your interviewees should be serving on Active Duty or actively engaged in national security. While this remains an interview, consider it more of a discussion of how America wages war, both now and in the past.

Once you complete the interviews, develop a properly formatted write-up that details their answers and how the overall discussion progressed. Make sure that you relay and/or summarize their overall feelings towards an American way of war. There is no predetermined length to your interview (the transcript/recording should be listed as an attachment or a recording), but your write-up is limited to between **750-1,250 words**.

Your instructor will grade you on how you met the stated requirements (meeting with three individuals and discussing the four questions), the completeness of your interview record, and your thoughts on their combined answers, including any similarities and/or differences between them.

**\*NOTE:** The above requirements are minimums. You are encouraged to interview more than three individuals and to develop a running dialogue with willing participants. Also, the default is a *live conversation* (Teams, Facetime, etc. is acceptable), not email. You may use email/chat for follow-up discussions. The expectation is to interview active duty military members. While a Reservist or Guard member satisfies the requirement, check with your instructor before interviewing a retiree. The intent is to interview someone who is currently serving in today's military environment. Contact your instructor early if you are having trouble finding interviewees, we have multiple contacts willing to talk with you. Remember, shoot for the stars.

**Reflection Paper (150 pts):** The Reflection paper is an outgrowth of the interviews you accomplished earlier in the semester. Review your Interview Write-up and craft an essay that compares your interviewee's answers with at least three (3) of the historians/scholars we have discussed in class. Make sure you elucidate the major historical arguments surrounding an American way of war and address how your interviewee's answers met or challenged those arguments. In other words, compare and contrast how modern military leaders view an American way of war against the historical and scholarly arguments surrounding an American way of war. Include historic examples as evidence to back up your arguments. Conclude with a detailed synthesis regarding *your* thoughts on an American way of war (saying "it is complex" does not meet the intent of elucidating your thoughts – make a claim and argue it using your interviews, scholars, and history). This assignment **should be between 1,500 and 2,500 words**.

**Group Project/Presentation (150 pts):** This final project and presentation will have the students research the question of how society views an American way of war through the media. In other words, how does the media portray the military application of air, space, and cyberspace in war, and how does that contribute to the "American way of war"? Is their portrayal accurate based on your knowledge of American military history and our scholars/theorists' viewpoints? What does society think about American warfare based on what they see in the media?

You may use a broad definition of "media" to include Hollywood, TV, news, social media, books/magazines, propaganda, etc.

Important: this is *not* a movie review – it is designed to synthesize your knowledge of scholars and warriors with mainstream societal views of the military.

The instructors will organize the teams and offer a more-detailed explanation of the question early in the semester. However, each group will provide a Talking Paper, IAW the *Tongue and Quill, Military Writing and Speaking Guide* (AFH 33-337), to accompany the brief. Part of the grade will be a self-assessment by the students of their team. Contact your instructor early for extra guidance and with group ideas. While this is planned as an in-person group presentation, it may transition to an online project in the event of a COVID-19 dispersal. Plan to **brief for approximately 10-15 minutes per group; exceeding the time limit will cause a significant grade reduction**. Short (~2 min) video/audio clip(s) are highly encouraged, but too many will detract from your grade. Remember, we are grading your scholarly analysis, not your A/V editing skills. At the same time, you must be familiar enough with the equipment that technical pauses are kept to a minimum (wasting time waiting for YouTube commercials to end before a clip begins is unacceptable). In short, complete a dry run of your presentation prior to the due date.

**General instructions for all writing assignments.** Follow Turabian/Chicago *or* MLA format for all of the writing assignments—no cover page is necessary (please just use an appropriate name/course/date block). Use Times New Roman size 12 for your font. Use 1-inch margins on all sides; references will be per Turabian/Chicago or MLA (we prefer Turabian but will not subtract points for properly formatted MLA). Hardcopies of your papers are due at the *beginning* of the lesson designated as the due date. Also, upload an *electronic* copy of the paper to Blackboard on the same day prior to the start of class. Finally, type a word count (all inclusive) below the documentation statement of your paper.

**Instructor Prerogative Points.** We will base your IP score largely on class participation, your military bearing, demonstrated work ethic, and professionalism. This course relies on active in-class dialogue.

## **IX. Course Administration**

Plagiarism: Plagiarism is a serious academic and professional issue. Broadly defined, plagiarism is the failure to give credit in your paper for the original ideas advanced by other writers. Be certain to avoid even the appearance of wrongdoing by carefully consulting your instructor and course materials in order to ensure proper documentation. Your final word for understanding documentation is the style manual listed in this syllabus. We encourage you to discuss your written work with instructors and other cadets before you turn it in, but we require you to document any outside help received. That help may range from developing ideas for a paper to proofreading the final product for content or grammar. You must specify those individuals who provided any assistance. Statements like "C1C Greene read my paper" are inadequate. You must cite the exact nature of the help (e.g., "C1C Morgan read my paper for grammar and spelling" or "Lt Col Knox helped me develop the idea that technology played an integral role in warfare").

Bear in mind that instructors have the right to award no credit for an assignment that they believe to be intellectually dishonest regardless of any conclusions reached by wing honor boards. A zero on any major assignment can lead to a failing grade in the course regardless of final percentages. The Department of History reserves the right to use any methods at its disposal (including on-line plagiarism software) to detect plagiarism. Papers deficient in documentation are subject to a significant reduction in grade.

Documentation of Electronic Sources: All scholars carefully cite their sources when preparing their work both to give credit where it is due and to permit other scholars to locate and verify all research. The rapid proliferation of electronic sources requires all students to include the necessary information about the source's electronic format when using electronic books or digital sources instead of printed versions, in accordance with the most recent edition of the MLA Handbook or Turabian's Manual for Writers. Instructors may restrict students from using some or any digitally-accessed sources, and will check citations for accuracy and completeness, either for a grade or to ensure that students have upheld the standards of the discipline of History and the Air Force Academy.



Textbook Policy: You must own or rent all of the required textbooks for your courses either in paper or electronic format. They must be the proper editions and hard copies must be in good condition. If your textbooks are unfit for use, instructors may suspend you from class and recommend appropriate military punishment.

Paper Policy: Cadets are not allowed to turn in the same paper for two different courses. Cadets may write papers on the same topic for different courses, but there should be no more than 25% commonality between papers. Each paper should include substantially different bibliographies and footnotes that reflect significant additional research. Be sure to coordinate with your instructor(s) if you anticipate commonalities between papers.

Extra Instruction/Instructor Conferences: Your instructor will be available Monday through Friday for consultation; an appointment is highly recommended. If you make an appointment and cannot keep it, notify your instructor as early as possible but always prior to the appointed time.

Absences from Class: Always notify your instructor of known/projected absences by email before the class meeting time. If you miss a class, you must check with a classmate or your instructor to determine what you missed and decide if you need to schedule extra instruction. Your instructor is NOT responsible for notifying you that you missed important notices or significant course material. Within 24 hours of your return to duty you must communicate with your instructor to schedule makeup work. If hospitalized, work through your AOC/AMT/Cadet Staff to schedule missed exams. Finally, you must understand that your instructor has no authority to excuse you from class; work with your AOC, your medical care giver, or the SCA process to obtain appropriate approvals.

Unexcused Lates/Absences: Your instructor will explain the academic penalties associated with unexcused lates and absences. Penalties will not exceed 2% of the total course points per occurrence.

Penalties for Late Work: If you are aware of an impending absence or other problem that could prevent you from turning in an assignment on time, you must make prior arrangements with your instructor. Unless the instructor specifies otherwise, assignments are due at the beginning of the period assigned. The course director may penalize late work up to 10% of the assignment value for every day late. Late assignments must still be turned in even if they receive no credit. Failure to turn in late work at all may result in a failing grade for the course or a controllable incomplete grade.

Examinations: Adhere to allowable resources and academic security statements on your exams. Turn off cell phones and internet-connected devices before the start of the examination and leave those devices on the desk for the duration of the exam.

Supplemental Work: No supplemental work or extra credit work is authorized. Cadets should notify their instructors ahead of time should an issue arise that would preclude them from taking an exam or completing an assignment on time.

Restrooms: Leaving class to go to the bathroom is discouraged, as this activity disrupts both your learning and that of your classmates. Of course, if you experience an emergency and must use the latrine during class, quietly stand and exit the classroom. My expectation is that such self-excusals will be very rare and take the minimum time possible.

Electronics: Computers, cell phones, and other electronic devices (to include headphones) will NOT be used before or during class. The only exception to this rule is for electronic books used for the course. If you need to use some electronic device in a given class period to access a book, discuss this with me at the start of the class period.

# ATTACHMENT 1

## Assigned Articles and Videos

### Articles:

- [Linn, Brian M., and Russell F. Weigley. "The American Way of War' Revisited." \*The Journal of Military History\* 66, no. 2 \(April 2002\): 501–533.](#)
- [Anderson, F. W. "Why Did Colonial New Englanders Make Bad Soldiers? Contractual Principles and Military Conduct during the Seven Year's War." \*The William and Mary Quarterly\* 38, no. 3 \(July 1981\): 395–417.](#)
- [Norman, Geoffrey. "Big Win at Saratoga." \*Military History\*, October 2007.](#)
- [Higginbotham, Don. "Ch IX: Cowpens and its Consequences." \*Daniel Morgan: Revolutionary Rifleman\*. Chapel Hill, UNC Press \(1961\).](#)
- [Pencak, William. "Samuel Adams and Shay's Rebellion." \*The New England Quarterly\* 62, no. 1 \(Mar., 1989\): 63-74.](#)
- [Kohn, Richard. "The Washington Administration's Decision to Crush the Whiskey Rebellion." \*The Journal of American History\* 59, no. 3 \(Dec., 1972\): 567-584.](#)
- [Linn, Brian. "The American Way of War." \*OAH Magazine of History\* 22, no. 4 \(Oct., 2008\): 19-23.\)](#)
- [Mahan, A. T. \*The Influence of Sea Power Upon History, 1660-1783\*. New York: Dover Publications, 1987.](#)
- [McFarland, Stephen L. and Wesley Phillips Newton. "Chapter 3: The American Strategic Air Offensive Against Germany in World War II." \*Case Studies in Strategic Bombardment\*. DC: Air Force Museums and History \(1998\): 183-252.](#)
- [Brodie, Bernard. "The Development of Nuclear Strategy." \*International Security\* 2, no. 4 \(Spring, 1978\): 65-83.](#)
- [Taylor, General Maxwell D. \*The Uncertain Trumpet\*. Harper & Brothers, 1960.](#)
- [Bowden, Mark: \[https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/05/the-desert-one-debacle/304803/?utm\\\_source=share&utm\\\_campaign=share\]\(https://www.theatlantic.com/magazine/archive/2006/05/the-desert-one-debacle/304803/?utm\_source=share&utm\_campaign=share\)](#)
- [Boot, Max. "The New American Way of War." \*Foreign Affairs\* 82, no. 4 \(Aug., 2003\): 41-58.](#)
- [Echevarria, Antulio J. "Toward an American Way of War." \*Strategic Studies Institute, US Army War College\* \(2004\).](#)
- [Haulman, Daniel L. "The U.S. Air Force in the Air War Over Serbia, 1999." \*Air Power History\* 62, no. 2 \(Summer 2015\): 6–21.](#)

### Videos:

- [Green, John. "America in World War I" \*Crash Course US History\*, 30. YouTube. \(2013\). <https://youtu.be/y59wErqg4Xg>](#)
- [Nidell, Indiana. "The Battle of Saint-Mihiel" \*The Great War\*, 216. YouTube \(2018\). <https://youtu.be/fC0EyP5AmYk>](#)
- [\*Victory Through Air Power: Animated History of Aviation\*. Walt Disney Studios \(1942\). <https://archive.org/details/VictoryThroughAirPower>](#)
- [Clark, Wesley. "Elusive Victory in Southeast Asia," \*American Military History\* 19. The Great Courses. Kanopy \(2018\). <https://usafa.kanopy.com/video/elusive-victory-southeast-asia>](#)
- [\*Air Campaign of Operation Desert Storm, 1991\*. U. S. Air Force Documentary. YouTube \(2013\). <https://youtu.be/LNH-kCdtEaw>](#)
- [\*The Breakup of Yugoslavia\*. WonderWhy, YouTube \(2016\). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=oiSgAiM0d8A>](#)
- [Dysinger, Carol. \*Camp Victory, Afghanistan\*. Cargo Film & Releasing. Kanopy. 2010. <https://usafa.kanopy.com/video/camp-victory-afghanistan>](#)