

Spring 2018
MW 12:00-1:15 PM
East 122
Office Hours: MW 2:30-3:30 and by appointment

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HISTORY 389-002: THE WAR OF 1812

“America’s Forgotten War” does not occupy much space in public consciousness, but this wide-ranging conflict was essential in shaping the political, military, geographic, and economic future of the new United States, as well as the futures of Canada, Florida, three European empires, and Native American communities both east and west of the Mississippi. In this class, we will explore the events, origins, and ultimate significance of this forgotten war, covering topics ranging from the high politics of the Jefferson, Madison, and Monroe administrations to the daily lives of American soldiers and sailors to Native American independence movements in the heart of the continent. While the outcome of the war may have been indecisive in the short term, the long-term consequences of the conflict held tremendous significance for the United States and the peoples of North America. In order to understand this conflict and its significance, we have to think in new ways about American history, moving beyond the internal national history of the new United States to explore Atlantic and continental contexts and the whole range of actors within those contexts.

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND GRADING

Class Participation and Preparation: This course is heavily based on discussion—your attendance and active participation are crucial to its success. Not coincidentally, participation is a significant portion of your grade. Evidence of preparation (i.e. having done and thought about the reading and any discussion questions), quality of discussion, engagement with other students’ ideas, and appropriate behavior all factor into the class participation grade. Obviously, if you are not in class, you are not participating.

Preparation includes bringing a copy of the reading, something to write with, and paper to write on in order to be ready for any in-class writing or exercises we may do. (This is subject to accommodation for students with disabilities that may interfere with their ability to write using traditional media.)

For more information, please see the Guidelines to Expectations for Class Participation document, posted in the Syllabus and Overview section of the course Blackboard site.

Short Assignments: These are written assignments based on the readings or other exercises (in or out of class) used to encourage thought and discussion. Often these will simply be reactions to the reading; other times they might be explorations of primary sources available through various databases; sometimes they might be brief thought pieces asking you to

reflect on what we've done so far. They don't usually require much sustained writing, but they should be the result of significant consideration and effort. These will be graded on a check-plus, check, or check-minus scale, with a check-plus being the equivalent of an A, a check the equivalent of a B, and a check-minus the equivalent of a C. Work that falls short of that standard will only receive nominal credit.

Please note: Short assignments may not be turned in late—they are due at class time on the day for which they are assigned. I will drop the one lowest grade on these (or the two lowest grades if we end up having more than 10 total short assignments), so there is a bit of a built in cushion for unavoidable, unplanned absences. If you know ahead of time you will be absent on a day when a short assignment is due, you may email the completed assignment *before* class.

Also note: When assigned ahead of time, these must be word processed and printed. In-class exercises may be hand-written. In both cases, make sure to put your name on it.

Essays: You will write two five- to six-page essays based on course materials, one in the first half of the semester and one in the second half. *Details of these assignments will be distributed in class.*

Final Exam: There will be a take-home final exam in the course, due by 5:00 pm on Monday, May 14.

Grading:

Participation	20%
Short Exercises	20%
Papers (together)	40%
Final	20%

LAPTOP & DEVICE USAGE GUIDELINES

Recent research suggests that taking notes by hand is significantly more effective than typing on a computer: it requires more effort to think about what you are hearing and figure out what's important to write down, and thus promotes greater retention of class material. Laptops can provide nearly endless possibilities for distraction, not just for the student but for others in the class as well. It is also extremely distracting for the professor when it is obvious someone is looking at something on their computer rather than paying attention to class—we can usually tell. So please take some time to consider whether that laptop is necessary or if it will prove a hard-to-resist distraction.

If you do decide to use a laptop in class, you must **TURN OFF YOUR WIFI CONNECTION WHILE IN CLASS** in order to avoid the distractions mentioned above.

I reserve the right to ask people to close their computers for periods of the class, to switch seats, or to turn off their computers if they prove distracting to you, me, or your classmates.

IN-CLASS BEHAVIOR

Behaviors such as frequent tardiness, leaving early, packing up to leave before class is over, sleeping, eating, talking when others are speaking, texting, checking email, using social media, and doing work for other classes are signals to me and to the rest of the class that you do not take the course seriously. All of these have a strong negative effect on your own learning as well as on your classmates' ability to concentrate in class. These behaviors will adversely affect your participation grade.

LATE PAPER POLICY:

All assignments are officially due at the beginning of class on the day they are due (although in practice they're usually collected at the end of class). Essays turned in later the same day are subject to a penalty of three (3) points (out of 100). Essays turned in the following day are subject to a five-point (5) penalty. Each subsequent day, a similar 5 point penalty will accrue, which means eventually the penalty would outweigh the total value of the assignment. Don't let this happen.

IT IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY TO MAKE SURE I GET THE PAPER. If you do not turn in the paper in class, you assume all risk of any mischance. Papers are not considered to be turned in until I hold them in my hands, or, in the case of electronic submissions, when I email you to confirm trouble-free receipt. Please save and send your paper as a Microsoft Word (.doc or .docx), PDF, or Rich Text Format (.rtf) document. You assume all risk of unopenable or missing attachments.

Extensions will be granted at my discretion in appropriate circumstances IF YOU CONSULT WITH ME BEFORE THE DUE DATE. In appropriate circumstances and entirely at my discretion, I will negotiate a new due date for papers that are already late, assessing a fixed penalty rather than the daily one outlined above. BUT, failure to meet the new deadline will result in failure (no credit) of the assignment.

In general, if you have any kind of problem that interferes with your work for the class, please consult with me as soon as possible.

HONOR CODE:

All work in this course is governed by the George Mason University honor code:

*To promote a stronger sense of mutual responsibility, respect, trust, and fairness among all members of the George Mason University community and with the desire for greater academic and personal achievement, we, the student members of the university community, have set forth this honor code: **Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work.***

More information can also be found at the GMU [Office of Academic Integrity](#).

All suspected violations of the honor code will be presented to the Honor Board.

OTHER POLICIES AND IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

Administrative Dates

Last day to add & to drop with no tuition penalty: Monday, January 29

Last day to drop with 33% tuition penalty: Monday, February 12

Final drop deadline (67% tuition penalty): Friday, February 23

Selective Withdrawal period: Monday, February 26 to Friday, March 30

Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and you need academic accommodations, please see me and contact the Office of Disability Services (ods.gmu.edu) at (703) 993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office.

GMU Email Accounts

Students must use their Mason email accounts to receive important University information, including messages related to this class. See masonlive.gmu.edu for more information.

Useful Resources

Writing Center (writingcenter.gmu.edu): A114 Robinson Hall, (703) 993-1200.

Counseling and Psychological Services (caps.gmu.edu): SUB I, Room 3129, (703) 993-2380.

University Catalog: catalog.gmu.edu.

Other university policies: universitypolicy.gmu.edu.

REQUIRED TEXTS

The following book is required reading for this class, and is available for purchase at the GMU Barnes and Noble in the Johnson Center as well as through online merchants like Amazon, which sometimes offer better prices:

- Eustace, Nicole. *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*. Philadelphia, University of Pennsylvania Press, 2012. (NOTE: this book is also available online via JSTOR. But depending on what you have to pay for printing, it may be cheaper to buy the book, and it will certainly be more convenient to have the physical copy.)
- Stagg, J.C.A. *The War of 1812: Conflict for a Continent*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2012.

Additional required readings listed on the syllabus are available via Blackboard or through GMU's subscriptions to various online databases, which can be accessed via the GMU Library's homepage (library.gmu.edu).

Other readings may be handed out in class or distributed electronically, and those will also be considered part of the required reading.

You should ALWAYS bring a hard copy of the reading to refer to in class.

SCHEDULE OF CLASSES

(NOTE: this schedule is subject to change due to a variety of factors—weather, illness, class interest, etc... Any changes will be announced in class, and an updated syllabus will be uploaded to Blackboard. Please make sure to keep informed about any changes.)

WEEK ONE: INTRODUCTION

M, Jan. 22: Course Introduction

W, Jan. 24: The History of History: Interpretations of the War of 1812

Reading:

- Stagg, "Introduction," in *The War of 1812*, pp. 1-17.

WEEK TWO: SHAPING THE NEW UNITED STATES

M, Jan. 29: Tensions and Challenges in a New Nation

Reading:

- George Washington's Farewell Address (September 19, 1796)
http://gwpapers.virginia.edu/documents_gw/farewell/transcript.html
(The important substantive stuff starts around page 5.)

W, Jan. 31: Political Partisanship and the Election of Thomas Jefferson

Reading:

- Kevin M. Gannon, "Escaping 'Mr. Jefferson's Plan of Destruction': New England Federalists and the Idea of a Northern Confederacy, 1803-1804," *Journal of the Early Republic* 21:3 (Fall 2001): 413-443.

WEEK THREE: CONTINENTAL POLITICS

M, Feb. 5: The Long War for the West

Reading:

- François Furstenberg, "The Significance of the Trans-Appalachian Frontier in Atlantic History," *American Historical Review* 113:3 (June 2008): 647-677.

W, Feb. 7: Native Perspectives on Continental Politics

Reading:

- Jeffrey Ostler, "'To Extirpate the Indians': An Indigenous Consciousness of Genocide in the Ohio Valley and Lower Great Lakes, 1750s-1810," *William and Mary Quarterly* 72:4 (October 2015): 587-622.

WEEK FOUR: ATLANTIC POLITICS

M, Feb. 12: The New Nation in an Atlantic World

Reading:

- Lawrence A. Peskin, "The Lessons of Independence: How the Algerian Crisis Shaped Early American Identity," *Diplomatic History* 28:3 (June 2004): 297-319.

W, Feb. 14: Why So Much Concern for Sailors?

Reading:

- Robert E. Cray Jr., “Remembering the USS Chesapeake: The Politics of Maritime Death and Impressment,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 25:3 (Fall 2005): 445-474.
- Paul A. Gilje, “Free Trade and Sailors’ Rights: The Rhetoric of the War of 1812,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 30:1 (Spring 2010): 1-23.

WEEK FIVE: DECLARING WAR

M, Feb. 19: American Diplomacy in a World at War

Reading:

- Stagg, Chapter 1, “War,” in *The War of 1812*, pp. 18-47.

W, Feb. 21: The Politics of Declaring War

Reading:

- Jasper M. Trautsch, “‘Mr. Madison’s War’ or the Dynamic of Early American Nationalism?” *Early American Studies* 10:3 (Fall 2012): 630-670.

WEEK SIX: FALSE STARTS AND FAILURES

M, Feb. 26: 1812

Reading:

- Stagg, Chapter 2, “1812,” in *The War of 1812*, pp. 48-78.

W, Feb. 28: Thinking about Canada

Reading:

- Alan Taylor, “The Late Loyalists: Northern Reflections of the Early American Republic,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 27:1 (Spring 2007): 1-34.

WEEK SEVEN: PAN-INDIAN INSURGENCY IN THE OLD NORTHWEST

M, Mar. 5: The Prophet and the Warrior

Reading:

- Alfred A. Cave, “The Shawnee Prophet, Tecumseh, and Tippecanoe: A Case Study of Historical Myth-Making,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 22:4 (December 2002): 637-673.

W, Mar. 7: 1813

Reading:

- Stagg, Chapter 3, “1813,” in *The War of 1812*, pp. 79-108.

WEEK EIGHT: SPRING BREAK

M, Mar. 12: No Class—Spring Break

W, Mar. 14: No Class—Spring Break

WEEK NINE: CULTURAL MEANINGS OF THE DRIVE FOR WAR**M, Mar. 19:** Population, Passion, and United States Nationalism**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Preface and Chapter 1 (pp. ix-35).

W, Mar. 21: Explaining Failure**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Chapter 2 (pp. 36-75).

WEEK TEN: REPRESENTATIONS OF WHAT THE FIGHT WAS FOR**M, Mar. 26:** Honor and Romance**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Chapter 3 (pp. 76-117).

W, Mar. 28: Family**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Chapter 4 (pp. 118-167).

WEEK ELEVEN: THE CHESAPEAKE CAMPAIGN**M, Apr. 2:** 1814**Reading:**

- Stagg, Chapter 4, “1814,” in *The War of 1812*, pp. 109-139.

W, Apr. 4: The Star-Spangled Banner**Reading:**

- William Coleman, “‘The Music of a well-tun’d State’: ‘The Star Spangled Banner’ and the Development of a Federalist Musical Tradition,” *Journal of the Early Republic* 35:4 (Winter 2015): 599-629.

WEEK TWELVE: SLAVERY AND THE WAR**M, Apr. 9:** Disruptions of Slavery in the Chesapeake**Reading:**

- Alan Taylor, *The Internal Enemy: Slavery and War in Virginia, 1772-1832* (New York: W.W. Norton & Co., 2013), Chapters 5 and 8 (pp. 145-173, 245-273).

W, Apr. 11: Burning the Capital**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Chapter 5 (pp. 168-210).

WEEK THIRTEEN: ENDING THE WAR**M, Apr. 16:** A Negotiated Peace**Reading:**

- Stagg, Chapter 5, “Peace,” in *The War of 1812*, pp. 140-170.

W, Apr. 18: Winning the Peace**Reading:**

- Eustace, *1812: War and the Passions of Patriotism*, Conclusion (pp. 211-235).

WEEK FOURTEEN: AMERICAN EXPANSION AFTER THE WAR**M, Apr. 23:** American Expansion after the War**Reading:**

- Eliga H. Gould, Chapter 6, “The New World and the Old,” in *Among the Powers of the Earth: The American Revolution and the Making of a New World Empire* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2012), pp. 178-209.

W, Apr. 25: The Strange Career of James Wilkinson**Reading:**

- David E. Narrett, “Geopolitics and Intrigue: James Wilkinson, the Spanish Borderlands, and Mexican Independence,” *William and Mary Quarterly* 69:1 (January 2012): 101-146.

WEEK FIFTEEN**M, Apr. 30:** Looking Back**Reading**

- “Interchange: The War of 1812,” *Journal of American History* 99:2 (September 2012): 520-555.

W, May 2: Catch-up and Review for Final**TAKE-HOME FINAL EXAM: DUE BY 5PM, MONDAY, MAY 14**