

Spring 2019  
HIST 370: WAR & AMERICAN SOCIETY  
MW 3-4:15, Planetary Hall 120

DR. LAIR  
Robinson B341  
[mlair@gmu.edu](mailto:mlair@gmu.edu)

OFFICE HOURS  
MW after class  
& by appointment



### IMPORTANT DATES

First Day of This Class:	Jan. 23	Spring Break	March. 11-15
Last Day to Add/Drop:	Jan. 29 (no tuition liability)	Selective Withdrawal:	Feb. 26-March 25
Last Day to Drop:	Feb. 5 (no tuition refund)	Last Day of This Class:	May 6

### COURSE DESCRIPTION & LEARNING OUTCOMES

America has been defined by war: the U.S. won its independence through one war, redefined its national principles in another, and rose to global prominence through its participation in the World Wars of the twentieth century. This course will examine war as a theme in American society from the colonial period to the post-Cold War era, including how military institutions, war, and the preparation for war have affected American society; and how Americans have thought about military service, experienced war, and transitioned to peacetime throughout their history. Special emphasis will be placed on civil-military relations, mobilization, and the role of war and militarism in American culture.

The course will combine readings, lecture, documentary films, and discussions. Students' active participation in class is encouraged and required. Skills developed in the course include formal and informal writing, textual analysis, discussion participation and public speaking, and critical thinking.

### ASSESSMENT

Your grade will be based on completion of the following. See the separate assignment guide for details.

- 2 essays chosen from a variety of topics. (20% each)
  - Students may write a 3<sup>rd</sup> essay and drop their lowest essay grade.
- In-class quizzes & homework assignments. (30%)
  - Students may drop their lowest in-class quiz/homework assignment grade.
  - These exercises will cover that day's readings or the previous day's lecture.
  - Quizzes will be unannounced, and the total number of them is undetermined.
- A final exam. (30%)

### A NOTE ON GRADES

Grades represent an assessment of work, not a reward or sanction. A's are reserved for truly excellent work; B's are for accomplished work; C's are for average work; D's are for below-average work; and F's are reserved for work that suggests a lack of comprehension or care. Failure to complete an assignment or answer a question will result in a grade of zero. Any distribution of final grades is possible; there will be no "curve" in the class.

### REQUIRED READINGS

The required readings consist of documents, articles, and book excerpts posted on Blackboard. Go to <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu> to log into the course page for our class. You will find several folders that correspond to the topics for the course. Inside each folder are .jpg or .pdf files of the readings. You should read each document carefully, take notes on its contents, and be prepared to discuss it or answer questions about it when you come to class on the day it is due.

## COURSE POLICIES

Please read these policies and make sure you understand them. If you have questions, please ask. You are expected to know these policies and to plan your work schedule, transportation, etc. accordingly.

### Academic Integrity

Mason students are bound by an Honor Code (<https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/>), which states, "Student members of the George Mason University community pledge not to cheat, plagiarize, steal, or lie in matters related to academic work." The principle of academic integrity is taken very seriously, and violations are treated gravely.

In this course, academic integrity means that:

- When you are responsible for a task, you will perform that task.
- When you rely on someone else's work in any aspect of the performance of that task, you will give full credit in the proper, accepted form.
- All aspects of the class will be conducted with civility and respect for differing ideas, perspectives, and traditions.
- You will tell the truth about the status of your work.

For a discussion of what constitutes plagiarism, go here: <https://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/what-is-plagiarism/>.

If you have questions, please ask for guidance and clarification. Academic dishonesty will not be tolerated. I will report students suspected of dishonesty to the University's Honor Board for disciplinary action, including failure of the course.

### Attendance, Punctuality, and Coming to Class Sick

Regular attendance is required; you can't participate if you're not in class. Also, please arrive to class on time. If you need to arrive late or leave early, please sit near the door to minimize the disruption. But it is also important to take care of yourself and your fellow students. Please do not come to class if you have a serious illness, especially a fever or an uncontrolled cough.

### Communication

I will be using Blackboard to email the class via the Announcements feature. Emails sent through Blackboard may be found under "Announcements" on the course Home Page for the duration of the semester. Please write to me only from your GMU account, and please check your GMU account regularly or forward your GMU email.

### Decorum

I expect you to be physically and intellectually present in class, to behave in a professional way, and to be respectful of others. Please refrain from eating, sleeping, talking when others have the floor, talking over others, passing notes, using your phone, multitasking on a laptop, doing other work, or anything else that demeans our class.

### Disabilities

If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me privately and contact the Office of Disability Resources at 703-993-2474. All academic accommodations must be arranged through that office. If you anticipate needing any type of accommodation in this course or have questions about physical access, please talk to me as soon as possible (though you can wait until office hours, in the interest of privacy). <http://ods.gmu.edu>

### Diversity

George Mason University strives to maintain a quality environment for work, study, and personal growth. Diversity is broadly defined to include such characteristics as, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, gender, religion, age, disability, and sexual orientation. Diversity also entails different viewpoints, philosophies, and perspectives. Attention to these aspects of diversity will help promote a culture of inclusion and belonging, and an environment where diverse opinions, backgrounds and practices have the opportunity to be voiced, heard and respected. **If you ever feel uncomfortable or unwelcome in class for any reason, please come talk to me.**

### Inclement Weather

On bad-weather days, consult the University's homepage for cancellation information. If the University is open, we will be having class, including scheduled exams and in-class writing exercises.

## IT Policy

I would like my students to be intellectually and emotionally present in class, and it is my responsibility to forge a productive classroom culture that encourages best-practices for learning. Studies have shown that students retain more information when they take notes by hand. Further, laptops and cell phones provide intense temptation to multitask, dividing the user's attention. The screens' contents are distracting to other students, and the glazed look of disengaged students staring at said screens is distracting to me.

**Phones:** Please silence your phones, put them away before class, and refrain from checking them during class.

**Laptops:** If you use a laptop to take notes, you will sit in the back row with no one behind you. You should also be prepared to send me your notes on a moment's notice via Mason's wireless.

Please join me in creating a space for learning and discussion, in which we are all focused on these important topics, our own learning and improvement, and each other!

## Late Assignments

Since there are several different writing assignment options available to you, late assignments will not be considered. Simply do a later assignment. However, you are also obliged to distribute your assignments across the semester, which will cause you to come against a hard deadline. If that happens, then students will forfeit one letter grade for every 24 hours their assignment is late, starting at 3:01 PM on the day it is due. If you have extenuating circumstances (serious illness, a genuine family emergency, etc), be prepared to provide documentation.

## Make-ups

You are required to provide documentation of an acceptable reason (serious illness, a genuine family emergency, or a required University field trip) for missing an exam or in-class writing assignment. You are allowed to drop your lowest homework/in-class writing assignment grade, so there will be no make-ups for your first missed assignment. A make-up for missing a second assignment will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and you will need to provide documentation of your situation.

## Office Hours

I encourage you to meet with me to discuss any facet of the course. My preferred time to meet with students is directly after class, often in the lobby area outside of class. If you need to speak with me but are not able to meet during this time, or you would like to speak to me in an environment with more privacy, please see me briefly after class or send me an email to set up an appointment in my office for another time.

## Submitting Your Work

Unless otherwise specified, your written work will be submitted in hard copy at the start of class. Please do not use a separate cover sheet/title page or any kind of folder or cover. Just paper and a staple will do! If possible, please your work double-sided.

## USEFUL CAMPUS RESOURCES

**Academic Advising for History Majors:** <http://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/undergraduate/history-advising>

**Blackboard:** <https://mymasonportal.gmu.edu/>

**Counseling and Psychological Services** (for free counseling): SUB I Room 3129, 703-993-2380, <http://caps.gmu.edu>

**Financial Literacy** (assistance understanding your finances and financial aid):  
<https://www2.gmu.edu/admissions-aid/financial-aid/financial-literacy>

**Learning Services** (for free coaching & academic skills workshops): <https://learningservices.gmu.edu/>

**Mason Alerts:** Sign up at <https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/> for alerts related to campus emergencies and closings.

**The Office of Academic Integrity:** <https://oai.gmu.edu/>

**Office of Disability Services:** <http://ods.gmu.edu>

**Patriot Pantry** (for free food assistance): Email [pantry@gmu.edu](mailto:pantry@gmu.edu) to make an appointment to use the pantry.  
<https://ssac.gmu.edu/patriot-pantry/>

**Patriot Web** (to register for courses or view your transcript & degree evaluation): <https://patriotweb.gmu.edu/>

**Stay Mason Student Support Fund** (for students in acute financial distress who are at risk of dropping out):  
<https://ulife.gmu.edu/forms/stay-mason-student-support-fund-application/>

**Student Support & Advocacy Center** (for health, well-being, and support): SUB I Suite 3200, 703-993-3686, <https://ssac.gmu.edu/>

### University Policies

The University Catalog, <http://catalog.gmu.edu>, is the central resource for university policies affecting student, faculty, and staff conduct in university academic affairs. Other relevant policies are available at <http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/> and <http://chssundergrad.gmu.edu/>. All members of the university community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.

**Writing Center**, Robinson A114, 703-993-1200, <http://writingcenter.gmu.edu>