Fall 2022
History 389

Veterans in American History

TR 3-4:15 PM, synchronous on Zoom

Instructor: Dr. Lair, mLair@gmu.edu

Office hours: after class & by appointment on Zoom.

HOW TO USE THIS DOCUMENT: This is a traditional syllabus, but ours is an online course. You still have to engage with Blackboard. There is additional information about the course, particularly assignments and Zoom best practices, in our Blackboard course page. This document is not a substitute for opening every folder in our course page.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

Though only a small fraction of the American public ever serves in the military, veterans have long been a powerful force in American life. This course will consider veterans as both a social group, capable of exerting political pressure on issues of national import, and as cultural icons of gender and civic virtue. More specifically, we will examine the homecoming experience, the postwar recovery process for injured veterans, the role of military service in electoral politics, the veterans' role in expanding the powers of the federal government, and depictions of veterans in American popular culture, from the 18th century to the present. Our synchronous online classes will be a mix of lecture and discussion, and assessment will consist of a series of short research and writing assignments. Skills developed in the course include analyzing sources, framing questions, critical thinking, formal and informal writing, and oral communication.

REQUIRED READINGS

The required readings for this course consist of documents, articles, and book excerpts posted on Blackboard under "Your Class Prep." You will find several folders meant to be opened sequentially as we progress through the semester. Inside each folder are .jpg or .pdf files of the readings or a citation for a reading that you will access online through the GMU Library. (This creates an opportunity to practice your research skills!)

To prepare for class, you should read each item carefully, take notes on its contents, and be prepared to discuss it or answer questions about it. I may also ask you to reflect on course readings on the course discussion board.
ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

This class is an online synchronous course, in which students are required to attend synchronous class sessions as they would an in-person course. Course sessions will not be recorded. The pace of this course will be brisk. Students should anticipate doing several hours of work for this class each week.

Course grades will be based on completion of a series of assignments and consistent, substantive, meaningful participation in the life of our class.

7 Writing Assignments (70%)
- The writing assignments are described under the week they are due (see “Your Class Prep”).
- Each assignment is worth 10% of your final grade and should therefore represent substantial effort on your part.
- Students must turn in 7 of these assignments in the week they are due.
- Students may write an 8th assignment and replace that grade with their lowest assignment grade.
  o This option is only available to students who complete 7 assignments.

Homework & consistent, substantive engagement in the life of our class. (30%)
Our class is a community, at a time when we really need it! Your engagement in our community is appreciated but also required. I will give engagement grades quarterly over the course of the semester so that you can track your progress.

This grade consists of the following:
- Thoughtful, substantive, informed participation during our synchronous online class sessions.
  o Students are expected to do the course readings, take notes on them, and come to class prepared to discuss them.
- Occasional discussion board posts & comments.
- Completion of required homework assignments.

The bulk of this grade will be based on your participation in class. I track attendance, late arrivals, early departures, cameras on/off, preparation, participation, and the quality of participation for each student in each class. A grade of 0 is definitely possible for students who attend class but don’t do their homework and never participate.

For more a grading rubric with specific criteria by which I will evaluate your written work, please see Assessment Overview >> Assignment Grading Rubric in our Blackboard course page.

Calculating Your Course Grade
Students are responsible for knowing how they are doing in their courses. The Blackboard grade center provides some hint at your course grade, but you should not regard the "Total" column (a column that instructors cannot delete) as the definitive statement on your course grade. You will have a clearer picture if you calculate your weighted grade yourself using the following formula:

(your writing assignment average x .7) + (the average of your quarterly engagement grades x .3)

If you’re not sure how you’re doing in the course, or you want to discuss your status or how to improve, you can also reach out to me!
THOUGHTS ON PARTICIPATION

How to participate in the life of our class:
1. Ask/answer a question or make a comment in class, orally or in the chat.
   • Oral participation is preferable to the chat, because students need to practice this valuable skill. However, some students may not have an audio connection that facilitates oral participation. Also, I would rather have shy students participate via the chat feature than not at all. But I urge everyone to push themselves to get comfortable speaking in front of others and to become more effective with the Zoom medium.
2. Meet with me in office hours or email me to discuss course material.
3. Post and/or comment thoughtfully on threads that I or other students create on the course discussion board.

What is productive participation?
Use your words. Discussion board posts provide a great opportunity to practice rendering complete thoughts in writing.

Be informed. Spend time with the course readings, and render opinions or thoughts that are informed by evidence from the course readings.

Make connections between lectures & readings and/or between our course materials. It's also great to make connections to what you have learned or observed elsewhere, but not at the expense of engaging with our required course readings.

Support your ideas with evidence. Be concise but specific. Explain unfamiliar terms. Quote or cite your sources (but try to put ideas into your own words).

Stay on topic. If you're going to share, you should have a relevant point to make about course topics or materials. If you're responding to a question, you should answer the question being asked.

Practice being thorough but succinct. “Brevity is the soul of wit!” Don't filibuster (that's my job), and keep Zoom in gallery mode so that you can see all of your classmates at once. (The reminder that you are not speaking to a void helps to keep comments short.)

Innovate, don’t replicate. This is especially relevant for the discussion board. Don’t just say, “I agree with so-and-so.” Offer your own opinion in your own words, even if it challenges what someone else says or writes. We want to hear what you think!

GRADING SCALE

Grades represent an assessment of your work, not a reward, sanction, or evaluation of you as a person. A’s are for 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 for work that suggests a lack of comprehension or care. Any distribution of final grades is possible; there will be no “curve” in this class.

Course grades will be assigned based on the following scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A+</td>
<td>97-100</td>
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<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>94-96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-</td>
<td>90-93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B+</td>
<td>87-89</td>
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<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>84-86</td>
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<tr>
<td>B-</td>
<td>80-83</td>
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<tr>
<td>C+</td>
<td>77-79</td>
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<tr>
<td>C</td>
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<td>C-</td>
<td>70-73</td>
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<td>D</td>
<td>60-69</td>
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<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>&lt;60</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
COURSE POLICIES

Please read these course policies and make sure you understand them. If you have questions, please ask! You are expected to know these policies and to plan your schedule accordingly. That being said, I understand that we are all facing a lot of uncertainty in our health, our loved ones’ health, employment, and housing. Please keep in touch with me about your circumstances.

Academic Integrity: Mason students are bound by an Honor Code (http://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/full-honor-code-document/), 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.

Plagiarism is the most common form of academic dishonesty in a course of this type. Writers must cite their sources when they quote a source verbatim (and they must use quotation marks); paraphrase a source closely; discuss information that is not common knowledge; rely on or discuss an author's interpretations. It is also academic dishonesty for a writer to deploy fake citations or to convey that they have read sources that they did not read.

The Office of Academic Integrity also discusses plagiarism here: http://oai.gmu.edu/mason-honor-code/what-is-plagiarism/

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 and even expulsion.

Attendance & Punctuality: Our class is synchronous online, and I expect you to attend. If you take ill, have technical problems, or have other emergent circumstances that cause you to miss class or a deadline, please notify me by email at your earliest convenience.

Cameras & Audio: In order to foster a productive learning environment, students must have their cameras on during class and be able to engage in discussion. If you have technology problems that preclude your camera being on or inhibit your participation in discussion, you will need to discuss that with me. I also recommend that you put Zoom in "Gallery" mode during class so that you can see everyone in the class rather than just the person speaking.

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 welcome page for the duration of the semester. Please use your GMU account to write to me, and please check your GMU email regularly or forward your GMU email. Please preface the subject of your emails to me with “HIST 389.”

Decorum: I expect you to be physically and intellectually present in our online class, to behave in a professional way, and to be respectful of others. If you wouldn't do it in an in-person class, you
probably shouldn’t be doing it in our online class sessions. Please review "Our Zoom Classroom" for specifics on etiquette in our synchronous classroom and during office hours.

Disabilities: If you are a student with a disability and need academic accommodations, please see me privately and contact Disability Services (https://ds.gmu.edu/). All academic accommodations are codified by that office, but implementing them will fall to me. Accommodations begin only once I am notified about them in writing. Accommodations cannot be retroactive.

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. Please strive to keep your politics out of the classroom and your work. If you feel uncomfortable or unwelcome in class for any reason, please come and talk to me.

IT Policy: I would like you to be physically and intellectually present in our online 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, though this is admittedly problematic for saving notes and making them searchable. Further, computers and cell phones provide intense temptation to multitask, dividing the user’s attention.

- **Phones**: Please silence your phone and put it away during our synchronous online class.
- **Computers**: If you use your computer to take notes during our synchronous online class, please refrain from multitasking.

Please join me in creating an online space for learning and discussion, in which we are all focused on the course topics, our learning and improvement, and each other!

Late Assignments: Assignments will be accepted late, but a grade penalty may attach. Please notify me at your earliest convenience if your circumstances require an extension on an assignment.

Office Hours: after class & by appointment. I encourage you to meet with me online to discuss any facet of the course. I will remain in our course meeting room after class ends. If you cannot remain after class, or there are other students in the "room" and you want privacy, please reach out about setting up a private time to meet on Zoom.

Submitting Your Work: Submit written work as Word documents (not PDFs) via Blackboard. Please save your files as follows: Your_Last_Name.HIST389.Name_of_Assignment.SUM22.doc(x).

University Enrollment Policy: Students are responsible for verifying their enrollment in this class. Schedule adjustments should be made by the deadlines published in the Schedule of Classes. (Deadlines each semester are available on the Registrar’s website: https://registrar.gmu.edu/calendars/) Major Registrar deadlines may be found in the schedule below.

Zoom Etiquette & How-To’s: Please visit "Our Zoom Classroom" in the left-hand menu of our Blackboard course page to learn more about course Zoom policies, expectations, and troubleshooting.
REQUIREMENTS FOR WRITTEN WORK

These are requirements, not suggestions! For hypertext links, view this material on Blackboard.

1) Papers/essays must:
   - Be typed.
   - Be double-spaced.
   - Have 1" to 1.25" margins
   - Be written in a reasonably sized, sans-serif font like Arial. (Sans-serif fonts are easier to read onscreen.)

2) Begin with an outline. An outline is a planning document that will save you time in the long run, by keeping you on task, organizing your thoughts/arguments, and preventing you from writing text you don’t need.

3) Write in formal prose.
   - Every sentence should be a complete sentence.
   - If the prompt requires a complete essay, include an introduction that states your thesis and a conclusion that wraps things up.
   - In between, organize your ideas into paragraphs. Each paragraph should have a central idea that is expressed in a clear topic sentence that in some way supports the thesis of the paper.
   - Write in 3rd person (he/she/they/it), unless quoting directly or the writing prompt requires you to write in the 1st person (I/me/we/us).
   - For long assignments, consider using subheadings. They are very useful in rough drafts and can be stripped out later.
   - Avoid all of the following, except in a direct quotation:
     - Passive voice
     - Contractions (it’s, don’t, etc.)
     - Slang
     - Profanity
     - Vague words like “thing” and “stuff”

4) Craft a thesis statement. Regardless of the simplicity or practicality of any essay, even a discussion board post, it should have a clear thesis.

5) Provide a title. Titles are an important way to identify what your work is really about. A good title will reflect both an assignment’s topic and the essay’s argument. Be creative!

6) Cite your sources in notes and provide a bibliography.
   - History majors should use footnotes (not endnotes) in proper Chicago style. Students in other majors may use the citation format appropriate to their major.
   - The complete Chicago Manual of Style is available to GMU students for free via the GMU University Library’s online database collection.
   - Be mindful that footnote (note) and bibliography format are slightly different. Your bibliography should include all the works cited but also additional works that you consulted that strongly informed your thinking. (Be judicious with the latter.)
7) **Conduct yourself ETHICALLY.** Citation is not busywork. It is foundational to scholarship because it demonstrates the architecture of the writer's research and thought process and invites the reader to check the writer's work.

- Use quotation marks to indicate when you are quoting someone else's words verbatim. Failure to do so implies that those are your words, which is intellectual theft.
- Provide citations for the evidence you use to support your own (original) assertions. Failure to cite your sources may make you guilty of plagiarism!

You must cite a source when you:

- Use a direct quotation. (You must also use quotation marks in the text.)
- Paraphrase an author (when you quote someone but change a few words).
- Reference an idea or interpretation that is not your own.
- Discuss information that is not common knowledge.

Other forms of academic dishonesty:

- Using a citation to pretend that you read something that you did not read.
- Using fake citations that lead nowhere or do not contain the information you are deploying in your essay.
- Lying about the status of your work.

8) **Proofread carefully.** Run a spelling & grammar check, and have someone else read your work. The gold standard for proofreading your work is to print it and read it out loud. Holding a piece of paper and using a pen engages more of your brain and will help you to identify problems that you might not notice on a screen. Reading work out loud similarly engages your brain to find errors that you otherwise would not notice. It also helps you to identify prose that is technically correct but difficult to understand.

9) **Submitting your work.**

- The assignments and their upload portals will be found in the folder for the week they are due, under "Your Class Prep."
- Submit written work as a Word document, not a PDF.
- Before you submit something, please read the formatting requirements, below, to make sure you're following best practice for this course.
- Use the following file name: Your_Last_Name.HIST389.Name_of_Assignment.FA22.doc(x) for your written work.

10) **Do your best.** Writing is a generative act of craftsmanship, like woodworking, car detailing, painting, or building a website. One gets better at it through practice and by taking care to get the details right.

    *Make the most of yourself, for that is all there is of you. -- Emerson*
GMU CAMPUS RESOURCES

Academic Advising for CHSS students: [https://academicaffairs.chss.gmu.edu/undergraduate-students](https://academicaffairs.chss.gmu.edu/undergraduate-students)

Advising for History majors & minors. [https://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/undergraduate/welcome](https://historyarthistory.gmu.edu/undergraduate/welcome)

Career Services: For networking, mentors, and assistance applying for jobs. SUB 1 Room 3400, 703-993-2370, careers@gmu.edu, [https://careers.gmu.edu](https://careers.gmu.edu)

Chosen Name & Pronoun Policy: For information on how to update your chosen name and pronouns. [https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/](https://registrar.gmu.edu/updating-chosen-name-pronouns/)

Counseling and Psychological Services: For free counseling. SUB I Room 3129, 703-993-2380, [http://caps.gmu.edu](http://caps.gmu.edu)

COVID-19 Safe Return to Campus: [https://www2.gmu.edu/coronavirus](https://www2.gmu.edu/coronavirus)

Disability Services: [http://ods.gmu.edu](http://ods.gmu.edu)

Financial Well-Being: Assistance understanding your finances and financial aid. [https://ssac.gmu.edu/fwb/](https://ssac.gmu.edu/fwb/)


Information Technology Services: [https://its.gmu.edu/help-support/](https://its.gmu.edu/help-support/)

Learning Services: Free coaching & academic skills workshops. [https://learningservices.gmu.edu/](https://learningservices.gmu.edu/)

LGBTQ Resources: [http://lgbtq.gmu.edu](http://lgbtq.gmu.edu)

Library Info Guides: [http://infoguides.gmu.edu/](http://infoguides.gmu.edu/)

Mason Alerts: Sign up at [https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/](https://ready.gmu.edu/masonalert/) for alerts related to emergencies and closings.

Office of Academic Integrity: [https://oai.gmu.edu](https://oai.gmu.edu)

Patriot Pantry: For free food assistance or to make donations. [https://ssac.gmu.edu/patriot-pantry/](https://ssac.gmu.edu/patriot-pantry/) or email pantry@gmu.edu to make a private appointment to use the pantry.

Stay Mason Emergency Assistance Fund: For degree-seeking students in acute financial distress who are at risk of dropping out. NOTE: The application process takes awhile, and funds are limited. But, it’s worth a try! [https://ulife.gmu.edu/forms/stay-mason-student-support-fund-application/](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](https://ssac.gmu.edu)

University Policies: All members of the Mason community are responsible for knowing and following established policies.
The Catalog, http://catalog.gmu.edu
University Policies http://universitypolicy.gmu.edu/
CHSS Policies https://academicaffairs.chss.gmu.edu/ugradpolicies

Writing Help: In addition to talking to me, you can get help with your writing and research here:

- University Writing Center: Multiple locations. 703-993-1200, http://writingcenter.gmu.edu, wccenter@gmu.edu
- University Libraries “Ask a Librarian”: http://library.gmu.edu/ask
- History Liaison Librarian Alyssa Fahringer (afahring@gmu.edu) for help navigating the library’s website or finding specific types of research material.

Please see Mental Health and Interpersonal Violence Resources in our Blackboard course page for additional campus and off-campus resources.
**COURSE SCHEDULE**

This schedule may change, including the addition or subtraction of readings, at my discretion. See “Assessment Overview” for a discussion of grading and “Your Class Prep” for your daily class preparation. All assignment upload portals may be found in the corresponding folder in “Your Class Prep.” Visit “Requirements for Written Work” and Assessment Overview >> Assignment Grading Rubric for formatting and submission guidelines and information about how work will be evaluated.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Class Topics</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>August 23</td>
<td>Introductions &amp; Expectations</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August 25</td>
<td>Ideas about Veterans</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>August 29</td>
<td>Last day to add a class.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Part I: Making Veterans</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>August 30 &amp; September 1</td>
<td>Veterans of What? An Overview of American Military History</td>
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<td>3.</td>
<td>September 5</td>
<td>University closed ~ Happy Labor Day!</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Last day to drop. (100% tuition refund)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 6</td>
<td>Why Did They Fight? Enlistment Motivations in American History</td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 8</td>
<td>Who Served &amp; Who Stayed Home?</td>
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<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>September 13</td>
<td>Last day to drop. (50% tuition refund)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 14</td>
<td>Unrestricted withdrawal period begins. (No tuition refund)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 13 &amp; 15</td>
<td>Coming Home</td>
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<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td><strong>Part II: Helping Veterans</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>September 20</td>
<td>The Wounds of War: Physical Injury</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 22</td>
<td>The Wounds of War: TBI, PTSD, and Moral Injury</td>
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<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>Unrestricted withdrawal period ends.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 27</td>
<td>The Wounds of War: TBI, PTSD, and Moral Injury</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 28</td>
<td>Selective withdrawal period begins. (No tuition refund)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>September 29</td>
<td>The Wounds of War: Chronic Illness</td>
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<tr>
<td>Week</td>
<td>Date</td>
<td>Class Topics</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>October 4 &amp; 6</td>
<td>Veteran Activism</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>October 11</td>
<td>No class! (Monday classes meet on Tuesday.)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 13</td>
<td>Veterans and the Growth of the Welfare State</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>October 18</td>
<td>Veterans and the Growth of the Welfare State</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 20</td>
<td>Veterans Benefits &amp; Social Engineering</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>October 24</td>
<td>Selective withdrawal period ends.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>October 25 &amp; 27</td>
<td>Prosecuting Veterans</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>November 1 &amp; 3</td>
<td>Veterans &amp; Electoral Politics</td>
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<td>12.</td>
<td>November 8</td>
<td>The Idea of the Veteran</td>
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<td></td>
<td>November 10</td>
<td>Veterans in American Popular Culture</td>
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<td>13.</td>
<td>November 15</td>
<td>Stolen Valor: Faking Veteranhood</td>
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<td></td>
<td>November 17</td>
<td>Veterans in the Workforce</td>
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<td>14.</td>
<td>November 22</td>
<td>Going Back: Veterans &amp; Conflict Tourism</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>November 24</td>
<td>No class ~ Happy Thanksgiving!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>November 29 &amp; December 1</td>
<td>Making History: Commemorating Veterans</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We made it!  

Congratulations, December graduates!  
Thanks for a great class, and have a wonderful holiday break!